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PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY TOWN
OF COLONIE

BERKSHIRE BANK
LOUDON SQUARE PHASE II
399 ALBANY-SHAKER ROAD
APPLICATION FOR FINAL SITE PLAN

THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above entitled
matter BY NANCY STRANG VANDEBOGART, a Shorthand
Reporter, commencing on November 13, 2012 at 7:28
p.m. at the Public Operations Center, 347 Old
Niskayuna Road, Latham, New York 12110.

BOARD MEMBERS:

MICHAEL SULLIVAN, ACTING CHAIRMAN
LOU MION
TIMOTHY LANE
KATHY DALTON

Also present:

Elena Vaida, Esq., Counsel to the Planning Board
Michael Tengeler, Planning and Economic
Development
Joe LaCivita, Director, Planning and Economic
Development
Joe Grasso, PE, Clough Harbour and Associates
Luigi Palleschi, ABD Engineers and Surveyors
John Ineson, EDM Architects and Engineers
Patrick Quinn
Jim Kitts
John Romaniuk
Paula Cichon

1 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: Next on the
2 agenda is Berkshire Bank, Loudon Square Phase
3 II, 399 Albany-Shaker Road, application for
4 final site plan. This is presented by ABD
5 Engineers and Surveyors.

6 Joe, do you have an introduction on this
7 project?

8 MR. LACIVITA: Sure. This project was
9 here a few weeks ago before us for sketch plan
10 review. It was basically to bring the Board up
11 to speed. This project was a two-parter and
12 this is a Phase II of the original Loudon
13 Square project that was previously approved and
14 in fact, is already constructed.

15 The applicant before us tonight, Crisafulli
16 Associates, is here tonight to bring us Berkshire
17 Bank, which is a 2,430 square foot bank to the
18 site. This will be the final phase of the site
19 that was previously approved. We are here tonight
20 for final approval. We will talk about the
21 elevations and review that project.

22 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: The floor is
23 yours.

24 MR. PALLESCHI: Thank you. My name is
25 Luigi Palleschi from ABD Engineers and

1 Surveyors here tonight with the architect, John
2 Ineson.

3 Mr. LaCivita pretty much gave an exact
4 description here. We were here a couple of weeks
5 ago and from a couple of weeks ago there was no
6 change to the site plan. So, I'll keep it brief.

7 As you know the site is located right on
8 Albany-Shaker Road and Everett Road at the current
9 intersection there. There is an existing medical
10 office building totaling just under 24,000 square
11 feet that's fully occupied right now. The main
12 entrance to the site is a signalized intersection
13 that will be utilized here going into the site.
14 The proposal tonight is Phase II of Loudon Square
15 where we are proposing the 2,430 square foot
16 Berkshire Bank - it's a branch bank and it has two
17 drive-thru lanes with a by-pass lane.

18 After exiting the drive-thru and by-pass you
19 would loop right around through the parking lot
20 and out through the main entrance at the signalize
21 intersection. The proposed phasing will have
22 adequate landscaping. You can see that shown on
23 the plan here (Indicating). It's very well
24 landscaped. Lighting, again, will be the same
25 lighting type of lighting that is there now.

1 We'll be adding a few light poles, as proposed.

2 Sewer and water -- we're going to connect to
3 the existing utilities that are out there - the
4 public water and sewer. The usage is very minimal
5 for a bank and there are no impacts to that
6 dumpster location. Again, there were a few
7 comments on that. It hasn't changed, but it is
8 located in this rear portion over here
9 (Indicating).

10 I'll turn it over to Mr. Ineson for the
11 architectural.

12 MR. INESON: Thanks, Luigi.

13 I'm John Ineson with EDM Architects and
14 Engineers. I'm here to speak on the exterior
15 elevation of the building. It really has not
16 changed since the sketch plan review. Again, I'll
17 try to do an overview and keep things brief.

18 Traditional materials are on the exterior.
19 There is a pitched roof, architectural grade and
20 asphalt shingles. We have some double siding and
21 a stone veneer water table that wraps the
22 building. There are architectural style columns
23 on the exterior and painted DC trim. As Luigi
24 mentioned, it's a 2,430 square foot branch. The
25 main entry is the south elevation here

1 (Indicating). It's facing the common access drive
2 into the site.

3 As was mentioned, there are two drive-thru
4 lanes, and there is an ATM bank drop lane and
5 there is one drive-up.

6 The finishes about as accurate as we can
7 represent to you in the color print technology,
8 but there is also in terms of the aluminium store
9 front. It's a dark green. The trim is all
10 painted white and basically the gables are
11 synthetic stucco material. The signage right now
12 is just representative as we realize that we need
13 to go through the approval for the signage. So,
14 that is really representative at this point in
15 time.

16 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: Thank you.

17 The TDE on the project is Clough Harbour and
18 Associates.

19 Joe Grasso, do you have any comments?

20 MR. GRASSO: Yes, I'll go through our
21 review. The project is up for consideration
22 for final site plan approval by the Planning
23 Board. The comments that we've raised during
24 the course of the review of the project have
25 primarily been centered around vehicular

1 circulation around the site; the drive-thru
2 configuration and changes to the existing
3 access road that goes out to Albany-Shaker
4 Road, as well as the dumpster location and the
5 comments relating to the lighting and the
6 landscaping. All of our comments have been
7 addressed.

8 The plans that you have before you tonight
9 and included in the he Planning Board packet --
10 there is a letter from our office dated November
11 2nd stating that all of our previous comments have
12 been addressed.

13 I'm just going through the Planning Board
14 packet, regarding the State Environmental Quality
15 Review.

16 The project, because of it's relative small
17 size, is a Type II action pursuant to SEQRA. That
18 determination has been supported by the Town
19 Attorney's office. Because it's a Type II action,
20 no SEQRA review or determination is required
21 before the Planning Board acts on the site plan
22 application.

23 The project will require a few waivers from
24 the Town's Land Use Laws. Those waivers include
25 that the building is set back greater than a

1 maximum of 25 feet from Albany-Shaker Road right
2 of way. The drive-thru access aisle is located
3 between the building and the public road frontage.
4 Then, the third being the number of parking spaces
5 proposed as part of the project is less than what
6 would otherwise be calculated if you took each of
7 the land uses proposed on the site and did the
8 calculation based on the Town's parking
9 requirements -- they are proposing less parking.

10 Wwhat i have to pass out tonight is a draft
11 Resolution for consideration by the Planning Board
12 regarding the approval of those waivers. Assuming
13 that the Board is willing to consider approval for
14 final site plan, I'll go through those in more
15 detail after we hear public comment and comments
16 by the Planning Board.

17 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: Thank you, Joe.

18 Anyone in the audience here to comment on
19 this project?

20 MR. QUINN: I have just a few questions
21 for the architect.

22 My name is Patrick Quinn and I live in Green
23 Meadows.

24 The question that I have is that I think that
25 you mentioned that the main entrance is on the

1 shared driveway, rather than from the parking lot.
2 Does that present a problem with the cars parking
3 when people are dropped off at the main entrance?

4 MR. GRASSO: If you could just address all
5 your questions to the Planning Board and then
6 the Planning Board will either respond or ask
7 the applicant to respond.

8 MR. QUINN: I'm not clear where they main
9 entrance of the bank is. It says the south
10 side, but we know that this building has only
11 southeast and northwest. It's not clear from
12 the elevations where it relates to the
13 entrance.

14 The other question that I have is: Are there
15 four, five or six -- how many gables?

16 The third part of my question is that I think
17 that I heard you say that since these are green
18 aluminium finish, how does that relate to the
19 bronze finish on the windows over the project
20 which Mr. Crisafulli's labored so long to make
21 something so harmonious? I'm just wondering how
22 the architects plan to make this building relate
23 to the existing building. Thank you.

24 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: Can the
25 applicant address those questions?

1 MR. PALLESCHI: I'll start with the main
2 entry question. You're absolutely correct. I
3 was sort of generalizing the south side being
4 the side facing the access drive of where Mr.
5 Crisafulli is building here (Indicating). So,
6 this side of the building is the main entrance
7 of the building. It's right on the angle, so
8 to speak. That is the main entrance to the
9 building. What's labeled here as the south
10 elevation or the southeast -- that is the main
11 entry to the building.

12 That said, Berkshire Bank also does a
13 community room concept in all their branches to
14 make that available to community groups for
15 meetings. So, on the east side of the building,
16 or really this side of the building (Indicating),
17 there is another entrance for that community room.

18 With regard to the gable question, I guess
19 there are many gables, as you can see on the
20 elevations. There is the main building gable that
21 runs through from one side of the building to the
22 other. Then the drive-up canopy and the entry
23 canopy runs across the gables.

24 I believe the last question was with regard
25 to the aluminium store front. The green color on

1 the store front is really just a Berkshire Bank
2 corporate identity. That's the reason for the
3 green. It's not a random color. It's part of
4 their image and their look.

5 MR. GRASSO: I think that part of the last
6 question was the design thought process
7 regarding the architectural style of the bank
8 versus the existing commercial office building
9 on the site.

10 MR. PALLESCHI: And I think that while I
11 would respect that, we also don't want to make
12 it look too much -- other than probably the
13 signage that has a little bit of green color in
14 it -- other than a beige or an off-white, if
15 you will, that's probably not the only color in
16 the building, itself, and the storefront.

17 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: Is there anyone
18 else in the audience that would like to speak
19 on this project?

20 MR. KITTS: I'm Jim Kitts. I just want to
21 say that I appreciate this plan versus what we
22 had gotten with the office building. This will
23 effect the neighborhood and Green Meadows is
24 supporting this plan.

25 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: Thank you.

1 MR. ROMANIUK: My name is John Romaniuk
2 and I live at 52 Clover Field Drive in Green
3 Meadows.

4 Is the building going to look similar to the
5 new Berkshire Bank on Wolf Road? Is it going to
6 look like that?

7 MR. GRASSO: Very similar.

8 MS. DALTON: I think that it's also like
9 the one on Route 9.

10 MR. PALLESCHI: Yes, it is.

11 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: Is there anyone
12 else in the audience that wishes to comment?

13 MS. CICHON: I'm Paula Cichon and I live
14 at 48 Clover Field. This bank will be in my
15 backyard, literally.

16 I just wanted to confirm - are there any
17 other lights going up around the bank? There are
18 ones that are already installed, but are there new
19 ones and what direction will they be facing?

20 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: Can the
21 applicant address that, please?

22 MR. PALLESCHI: Here is the existing
23 lighting that's there now (Indicating). I've
24 plotted that on the plan here. There will be
25 four sets of new lights, primarily around the

1 bank in this quadrant of the site (Indicating).

2 MS. CICHON: So, one pole and two lights?

3 MR. PALLESCHI: Four poles, essentially.

4 They'll be downward type lights.

5 MR. GRASSO: Luigi, are there any building
6 mounted lights, or wall packs or anything that
7 could cause a glare to the adjacent neighbors?

8 MR. INESON: I'll address that. There are
9 no wall packs. There are two small globe wall
10 sconces by the main entry. Also, on the
11 community room side there are two recessed
12 down-lights in the gable itself, but there is
13 no high-intensity wall pack lighting.

14 MS. CICHON: So, the ATM is going to be on
15 the outside and you'll have to drive up through
16 the ATM? It's not inside the building?

17 MR. INESON: That's correct.

18 MS. CICHON: Just out of curiosity, what
19 are the hours?

20 MR. PALLESCHI: Excellent question; I'm
21 not sure I have an exact answer.

22 MS. CICHON: I mean, people use the ATM at
23 4:00 in the morning. That could happen.

24 MR. INESON: The hours of operation are
25 pretty typical of a bank. Saturdays they would

1 be open from 9 to 12:30 or 1:00.

2 MS. CICHON: Just to clarify, the
3 drive-thru is going to be on west side of the
4 bank. So, if you're at a stop light and you
5 drive in, the entrance is on your left hand
6 side and you go around the bank to use the ATM?

7 MR. INESON: In order to use the ATM, you
8 would drive up through at this point
9 (Indicating). The drive-thru lane is here
10 (Indicating).

11 MS. CICHON: There is two lanes and this
12 is the by-pass (Indicating).

13 MR. INESON: Yes. And then the by-pass
14 would exit through the front of the Berkshire
15 Bank and they would exit here (Indicating).
16 You can see the lights here - I have one double
17 mounted here and another one here at the
18 entrance (Indicating).

19 MS. CICHON: This is all parking in this
20 area (Indicating)?

21 MR. INESON: Correct.

22 MS. CICHON: I'm all set; thanks.

23 MR. QUINN: If the exit from the ATM is
24 through here, do we have a sufficient turning
25 radius to make it around to the driveway?

1 MR. GRASSO: Yes, and I'll answer that.
2 That was the access to the drive-thru. The
3 exiting of the drive-thru was something that
4 was reviewed closely during the concept review
5 process. The previous proposal you may recall
6 had the drive-thru looping around the front of
7 the building and immediately taking a right
8 hand turn onto the main entrance that comes
9 into the site. Our office had a concern
10 regarding possible conflicting turning
11 movements there and too much congestion so
12 close with the intersection with Albany-Shaker
13 Road. It was our recommendation that the
14 design be revised to push the drive-thru
15 traffic back towards the back of the site and
16 forcing them to loop around. We shared a
17 common concern regarding whether or not they
18 could make those movements and the applicant
19 provided us some modeling of those movements to
20 prove that vehicles could make that turn
21 safely.

22 MR. QUINN: Thank you.

23 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: Thank you,
24 Joe.

25 If there are no other comments from the

1 audience, we'll move onto the waver.

2 MR. GRASSO: If you want, I'll paraphrase
3 the Resolution. It's a waiver for those three
4 items relating to the maximum front building
5 setback of 25 feet, the drive-thru access aisle
6 being located within the front yard and the
7 Town's regulations related to the minimum
8 number of parking spaces required.

9 Whereas the Town of Colonie Planning Board
10 may wave these standards to the extent that it
11 deems necessary in order to secure development of
12 the site; in such case the applicant must
13 establish that there are no practical alternatives
14 to the proposed waiver that would conform to the
15 standard and the Board shall issue a written
16 findings stating the extent and justification; and

17 Whereas access around the building is
18 required for efficient operation of the drive-thru
19 and as such, a drive aisle is needed along the
20 front of the building which dictates the front of
21 the building being shifted toward to rear of the
22 parcel; and

23 Whereas the building developed is part of
24 Phase I of the project meets the maximum front
25 building setback requirement; and

1 Whereas the multiple uses on the site will
2 allow for an effectively and shared parking and
3 access to public transportation available at the
4 site.

5 Now, therefore be it resolved that the Board
6 hereby finds that the extent of the requested
7 waivers are not considered substantial, and be it
8 further resolved that the Board finds the
9 applicant has established that there are no
10 practical alternatives to the proposed waivers
11 that would conform to the standard and that the
12 waivers are necessary in order to secure
13 reasonable development of the project site; and

14 Be it further resolved that the Board hereby
15 issues a waiver from the maximum front building
16 setback of 25 feet; and

17 Be it further resolved that the Board hereby
18 issues a waiver from the prohibition of the
19 drive-thru access aisle being located within the
20 front yard; and

21 Be it further resolved that the Board hereby
22 issues a waiver from the minimum parking
23 requirements to allow 117 parking spaces, whereas
24 132 spaces would normally be required to support
25 the proposed uses; and

1 Be it further resolved that these waiver
2 findings be a condition of final site plan
3 approval of the application and be kept in the
4 project file in the office of the Planning and
5 Economic Development Department.

6 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: Thank you.

7 Any discussion among the Board?

8 (There was no response.)

9 MR. LANE: I make a motion to accept the
10 resolution.

11 MR. MION: I'll second.

12 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: All those in
13 favor?

14 (Ayes were recited.)

15 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: Did you mention
16 that you had outstanding comments?

17 MR. GRASSO: We had no outstanding
18 comments; no. We have received a number of
19 comments from the departments and everybody
20 seems satisfied with the application.

21 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: Joe, are there
22 any outstanding comments from the Town
23 Departments?

24 MR. LACIVITA: No, there isn't.

25 MR. LANE: I think that the project is

1 coming along very well. It seems like it's
2 taken a lot longer. We've been taking a look
3 at this entire parcel for a long time, but I
4 think that you've really done a great job in
5 this coming to fruition and it's very
6 appropriate for the site. I think that they
7 have addressed all the comments. I have
8 nothing more to add to that. I like the
9 Berkshire Bank. I think that they're very
10 appropriate for our Town.

11 MR. MION: I have to echo that sediment,
12 also. I just enjoy going out and looking at
13 Berkshire Banks. They're part of our successes
14 in this process. It's a great project.

15 I'll make a motion.

16 MR. GRASSO: For issuance of final site
17 plan approval.

18 MR. MION: With the waivers as a
19 condition.

20 MS. DALTON: I'll second it.

21 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: All those in
22 favor?

23 (Ayes were recited.)

24 ACTING CHAIRMAN SULLIVAN: It's carried.

25

1 (Whereas the above entitled proceeding was
2 concluded at 7:50 p.m.)
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CERTIFICATION

I, NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART, Shorthand Reporter
and Notary Public in and for the State of New
York, hereby CERTIFY that the record taken by me
at the time and place noted in the heading hereof
is a true and accurate transcript of same, to the
best of my ability and belief.

NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART

Dated November 21, 2012

