

1 PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY

2 TOWN OF COLONIE

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4 BERKSHIRE BANK  
LOUDON SQUARE PHASE II  
5 399 ALBANY SHAKER ROAD  
SKETCH PLAN REIVEW

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7 THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above  
8 entitled matter BY NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART,  
a Shorthand Reporter, commencing on September  
9 25, 2012 at 7:20 p.m. at the Public  
Operations Center, 347 Old Niskayuna Road,  
Latham, New York 12110.

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11 BOARD MEMBERS:

12 PETER STUTO, CHAIRMAN  
13 KATHY DALTON  
LOU MION  
14 BRIAN AUSTIN  
TIMOTHY LANE  
MICHAEL SULLIVAN.

15

16 Also present:

17 Elena Vaida, Esq., Counsel to the Planning Board

18 Michael Tengeler, Planning and Economic.

19 Joe Grasso, PE, Clough Harbour and Associates.

20 Joe Bianchine, PE, ABD Engineers.

21 Patrick Quinn, Green Meadows Civic Association.

22 Kathy Ordway, Green Meadows Civic Association.

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1                   CHAIRMAN STUTO: The next project is  
2                   the Berkshire Bank, Loudon Square Phase  
3                   II, 399 Albany-Shaker Road, sketch plan  
4                   review.

5                   Sketch plan is just a presentation by  
6                   the applicant. We're not taking any vote and  
7                   it's just to give a little bit of feedback  
8                   and that's what we're here to do.

9                   Mike, do you want to give us an  
10                  introduction on this?

11                  MR. TENGELER: That was an accurate  
12                  description of the sketch plan. This project  
13                  is actually the second phase is what is known  
14                  as Loudon Square at 399 Albany-Shaker Road.

15                  During the initial review for  
16                  Phase I, it was known that a pad site would  
17                  exist for the future development of a branch  
18                  bank. It's been determined that this branch  
19                  bank is going to be Berkshire Bank.

20                  Joe Bianchine from ABD is here to  
21                  present.

22                  MR. BIANCHINE: Thank you.  
23                  As some of you may recall, Loudon Square was  
24                  approved by the Town back in 2009. Mike  
25                  Crisafulli is the owner and the applicant for

1 this. Mike developed the site. Previously  
2 there was a fencing company there and stuff  
3 all over the place. He cleaned all of that  
4 up. He built a two-story medical office  
5 building. It's a little less than 24,000  
6 square feet in total. The building is now  
7 fully occupied.

8 He built the parking lot. The parking  
9 lot currently has 104 parking spaces at the  
10 site. There is a retaining wall along the  
11 backside and along the south side. There is  
12 a fence along the backside, and again along  
13 the south side. The buffer screens the  
14 project from the adjoining residential  
15 properties. There s landscaping along those  
16 two sides and around the building and along  
17 even in front where this project is going.

18 Mike also made some modifications to  
19 the traffic signal at the intersection of  
20 Albany-Shaker Road and Everett Road. All of  
21 those improvements were done up front. He  
22 left about a little less than half an acre of  
23 the site unpaved and just vegetated with  
24 grass for Phase II because at the time that  
25 he built this, he didn't have a tenant. It

1 was approved for a 2,100 square foot building  
2 either being retail or a branch bank.

3 Berkshire Bank has recently come and  
4 signed a contract with Mike. They would like  
5 to locate here. Their building is a little  
6 bit bigger. We have a 2,100 square feet and  
7 this is 2,430 square feet. Back here, the  
8 bank would have a drive-thru window, an ATM  
9 on the west side and a bypass lane  
10 (Indicating). The traffic would still enter  
11 through the intersection, which is  
12 signalized. It will circle up and either go  
13 into the parking lot of the bank here, or  
14 here, or go through the drive-thru teller on  
15 the western side, here and back out and go  
16 back out the main entrance (Indicating).

17 The parking, as I indicated, we're  
18 adding parking there. We're adding a total  
19 of 13 parking spaces. Previously there was a  
20 waiver on the number of parking spaces;  
21 required is 132. We installed 104, but with  
22 this, we'll be up to 117. We have a previous  
23 waiver of 12 spaces. We need another waiver  
24 of three spaces for this. If anybody has  
25 been out to this site, even with this

1 building fully occupied --, I've been out  
2 there several times and every time I've  
3 counted cars that are parking here, it's  
4 always been in the 30's. We have over 100  
5 parking spaces but generally, no more than 40  
6 cars at any one time in the parking lot. So,  
7 there is plenty of parking here and we do ask  
8 for that waiver.

9 We are providing landscaping. We'll  
10 provide landscaping and additional  
11 landscaping across the front and across the  
12 western side, around the building, along the  
13 entrance and the islands that would be  
14 created here (Indicating). We will provide a  
15 fence along the front.

16 Our lighting will be the same as the  
17 lighting that's there now. We'll just add a  
18 couple of more poles around the bank to  
19 provide lighting to the bank.

20 Utilities are there - the water and  
21 sewer - we'll make those connections compared  
22 to what was proposed in the original plans  
23 that were proposed.

24 Stormwater will be covered by  
25 infiltration into the ground. We did an

1           underground infiltration system for the first  
2           phase. It's all good sand there. I believe  
3           that we meet all the setback requirements in  
4           terms of front yard setback. I think that  
5           we're 43.7 feet back from the property line.  
6           We're 25 feet from the side line. Even  
7           though this is done in a COR zone, the  
8           adjoining property has both the commercial  
9           and the residential use. So, we have to be  
10          25 feet rather than the standard - I think  
11          that it's 10 or 15 feet. We meet the 25 foot  
12          setback, and we meet the 10 foot setback for  
13          the pavement from the adjoining property  
14          line.

15                 With that, I'd like to ask John  
16                 Ineson, who is the architect to describe the  
17                 outside of the exterior of the building.

18                 MR. INESON: Thank you. I'm John  
19                 Ineson, I-N-E-S-O-N with EDM Architects  
20                 and Engineers. I just wanted to briefly  
21                 go over the exterior of the building.

22                 Hopefully the color renderings are  
23                 part of the packet. The exterior of the  
24                 Berkshire Bank building has traditional  
25                 materials. We're looking to do a pitched

1 roof, an architectural grade shingle on the  
2 roof itself. It's going to be paint and  
3 stucco in the upper gables. At this point,  
4 the signage is very suggestive. That has to  
5 go through the separate permitting process  
6 for the signage. Down below you have the  
7 painted double cement board siding and then  
8 there is a stone veneer base that's part of  
9 that --

10 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Do you have another  
11 bank around Town that looks the same?

12 MR. INESON: Yes, right up Route 9 in  
13 Latham.

14 MS. DALTON: Is it like the one next  
15 to Rumors?

16 MR. INESON: I'm not familiar with  
17 that.

18 MR. BIANCHINE: Yes.

19 MR. INESON: Essentially, that's  
20 going to be the same color palate. There  
21 will be a difference in the shingle, I  
22 believe, on the roof. But other than  
23 that, the exterior materials and color  
24 tiles will be the same.

25 The difference is that this branch has

1 the drive -tthru. That branch has one  
2 ATM/night drop lane and two teller lines for  
3 the drive-thru. This one has one ATM/night  
4 drop lane and one teller line. So, that side  
5 gable, if you will, that extends off the side  
6 of the building will be shorter.

7 The balance of the building is a store  
8 front in a green color with storefront  
9 framing.

10 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, we'll take  
11 questions from the Board.

12 Kathy, do you have any?

13 MS. DALTON: I have none.

14 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Lou?

15 MR. MION: I have nothing.

16 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Brian?

17 MR. AUSTIN: Nothing.

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Tim?

19 MR. LANE: You have comments from  
20 CHA's letter in relation to parking.  
21 There was an issue regarding the number of  
22 spaces available and something about the  
23 narrowing of the entryway.

24 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I probably should  
25 have let Joe go through his letter.



1           That's my fault. We'll let Joe go through  
2           the letter now.

3           MR. GRASSO: If you can tell me what  
4           the issues are -- we did issue a comment  
5           letter on September 7th. Let it be known  
6           that the applicant provided a lot more  
7           detail than we typically see at sketch  
8           plan, so we were able to get into a lot  
9           more detail in terms of our review.

10          Since this letter - and there were  
11          actually some comments provided before this  
12          letter - the applicant has responded with a  
13          revised set of plans. So, the plan that  
14          you're seeing here I think is in response to  
15          the comments that you'll see in our September  
16          7th letter.

17          There has been some concerns by our  
18          office regarding the layout of the access  
19          drive as it comes off Albany-Shaker Road  
20          regarding the alignments there. There was a  
21          connection from the drive-thru exit right  
22          near the intersection. We had a concern with  
23          that due to potential conflicting turning  
24          movements. We weren't keen on the alignment  
25          of the access drive. It was shrinking up the

1 curb to curb width a bit and some areas  
2 there. This plan is much more acceptable to  
3 us from that perspective.

4 There is one issue that I think that  
5 Joe, you have a 20-foot curb to curb width up  
6 by the corner of the office building which we  
7 would like to see that capped approximately  
8 24 feet wide and the normal two-way access  
9 drive. That's a minor issue and we don't  
10 think that it's going to result in a  
11 significant change to the site plan that  
12 you're looking at.

13 We also had a comment regarding the  
14 parking that's provided. By eliminating that  
15 one-way drive out by the intersection there,  
16 he was able to pick up two more spaces. We  
17 thought that he would be able to pick up  
18 three more. So, we've got a comment five,  
19 which supported a waiver request in the  
20 parking reduction down to 118 spaces. He's  
21 actually going to be proposing 117 spaces.  
22 Based on the information that he has provided  
23 us and based on the current usage of the  
24 site, we feel comfortable that 117 spaces is  
25 adequate to accommodate both uses. So, we're

1 in support of that waiver.

2 Some of the comments are rather  
3 technical in nature and are still under our  
4 detail review, but we're confident that it  
5 won't result in changes to the site plan as  
6 it moves forward.

7 Comment 4 is regarding the dumpster  
8 location. When the site plan was originally  
9 proposed, it had a dumpster -- was it up by  
10 the bank building?

11 MR. BIANCHINE: It was up in this  
12 area right here (Indicating). It  
13 currently exists right about here  
14 (Indicating).

15 MR. GRASSO: With this revised plan,  
16 a little bit further to the back of the  
17 project site, it was in the location where  
18 we had recommended a possible cross-access  
19 connection to the property to the west.  
20 So, in order to not block that cross  
21 connection from occurring at some point in  
22 the future, Joe has shifted the dumpster  
23 around so that it's outside of the drive  
24 aisle, basically.

25 MR. BIANCHINE: It still has to be 25

1 feet from the property.

2 MR. GRASSO: That's because it's a  
3 design requirement.

4 CHAIRMAN STUTO: So that services the  
5 larger building as well?

6 MR. BIANCHINE: Yes.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: So we felt that  
8 dumpster location was acceptable to us.  
9 Obviously, it's at the purview of the  
10 Planning Board.

11 Again, this is up for sketch plan  
12 review. If it's acceptable to the Planning  
13 Board, we will recommend that it be brought  
14 back before the Planning Board quickly for a  
15 concept review, understanding that the  
16 applicant is working hard ot get what we  
17 would consider final site plan changes.

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: And the public will  
19 have two opportunities for comment; both  
20 at the concept and at the final approval.

21 MR. GRASSO: Yes. They have initiated  
22 the SEQRA process. No SEQRA determination  
23 would need to be made until we make it to  
24 final site plan consideration. As of  
25 right now, there is no additional

1 environmental assessment that we feel is  
2 needed to make a determination of  
3 significance.

4 CHAIRMAN STUTO: There are no issues  
5 that jump out at me, but I'll be  
6 interested to see what the neighbors have  
7 to say when they come back. We've had a  
8 lot of discussion on the development of  
9 that property so far.

10 MR. GRASSO: Nobody here from the  
11 public tonight?

12 CHAIRMAN STUTO: On the sketch plan,  
13 we normally don't.

14 MR. QUINN: Mr. Chairman, may a  
15 member of the public speak?

16 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We normally don't do  
17 that at sketch plan because we have two  
18 more meetings to hear this. This is just  
19 to sort of show everybody what they're  
20 going to propose.

21 MR. QUINN: It's based on a point of  
22 order.

23 My name is Patrick Quinn. I'm a  
24 member of the Bboard of the Green Meadows  
25 Civic Association. Our President is here,

1 Kathy Ordway.

2 Some of you remember the long drawn  
3 out discussions that we had about the  
4 development of this site, originally. We  
5 were very very pleased at the way that Mr.  
6 Crisafulli has gone about it and the way that  
7 he has maintained the idea of the commercial  
8 property here. That seems to work in the  
9 nature of the planned development that was  
10 proposed, accepted and approved. However, it  
11 is important and we stipulated this at  
12 several meetings - that members of the  
13 neighborhood, through this Civic Association,  
14 ought to be notified that such a proposal is  
15 in fact, coming up. I'm pleased that the  
16 Berkshire Bank is one of the candidates to  
17 develop it because the character of their  
18 buildings is quite amenable to the kinds of  
19 things that we are discussing. Nevertheless,  
20 it is important to notify the neighbors and  
21 we found out rather indirectly that this was  
22 happening. So, I think that we would all be  
23 pleased if we were given some information and  
24 perhaps the sketch plans could be shared with  
25 us so that we they can be discussed with our

1 Board.

2 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, you made your  
3 point and now I'm going to address that.

4 You're welcome to my set of plans for  
5 the neighborhood.

6 This meeting is advertised on the web  
7 site and in our normal agenda. You will be  
8 more formally notified for concept approval  
9 and for final.

10 MS. ORDWAY: Kathy Ordway from Green  
11 Meadows.

12 I just wanted to point out something -  
13 that we found out on the web site and that's  
14 why three of us from the Board are here  
15 tonight. Not to speak to it, although, I  
16 agree with Patrick and Christine's article  
17 that we are very pleased that Berkshire Bank  
18 is going in there. We're sharing that with  
19 the neighborhood. So, I just wanted to be  
20 clear that what I'm sharing is correct.

21 I had one question for Joe about the  
22 25 feet from the residence - particularly the  
23 dumpster. Are we talking about from the side  
24 or from the back of the property? There are  
25 residences on both sides.

1 MR. BIANCHINE: We're talking from  
2 the property line here (Indicating).

3 MS. ORDWAY: What about the property  
4 line here?

5 MR. BIANCHINE: This is in excess of  
6 25 feet here. We're in excess of that.  
7 We would have to meet the 25 feet, but  
8 we're probably about 30 feet.

9 CHAIRMAN STUTO: If you have an  
10 objection about that later, you can talk  
11 to us.

12 MS. ORDWAY: I just want to be able  
13 to report.

14 The other thing because the dumpster  
15 was brought up in the neighborhood - it was  
16 supposed to be a closed dumpster. Will it be  
17 enclosed?

18 MR. BIANCHINE: It will be enclosed,  
19 yes.

20 MS. ORDWAY: I go by there all the  
21 time and I support Joe's request for a  
22 waiver because the parking lot has lots of  
23 empty spaces and in fact, the Crisafullis  
24 were kind enough to let the employees of  
25 Papa Johns park there during busy times



1 when there is no employee parking  
2 available at the restraint.

3 Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Thank you, and we'll  
5 be back two other times.

6 MS. ORDWAY: I will also.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We look forward to  
8 it.

9 Do any other Board Members want to  
10 speak to this?

11 (There was no response.)

12 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, thank you.  
13 We'll see you next time.

14  
15 (Whereas the above entitled proceeding was  
16 concluded at 7:41 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.

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NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART

Dated September 26, 2012

