

1 PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY

2 TOWN OF COLONIE

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4 1 MILL ROAD APARTMENTS  
5 1 MILL ROAD  
6 SKETCH PLAN REVIEW

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8 THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above  
9 entitled matter by NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART, a  
10 Shorthand Reporter, commencing on March 26, 2013  
11 at 8:07 p.m. at The Public Operations Center, 347  
12 Old Niskayuna Road, Latham, New York

13 BOARD MEMBERS:  
14 PETER STUTO, CHAIRMAN  
15 LOU MION  
16 BRIAN AUSTIN  
17 KAREN GOMEZ  
18 SUSAN MILSTEIN  
19 KATHY DALTON  
20 TIMOTHY LANE

21 ALSO PRESENT:  
22 Rebekah Nellis Kennedy, Esq., Counsel to the Planning Board  
23 Joe LaCivita, Director, Planning and Economic Development  
24 Joe Grasso, PE, Clough Harbour and Associates  
25 Frank Fazio, PE

1           CHAIRMAN STUTO: Joe LaCivita, do you want to do  
2 an introduction on this?

3           MR. LACIVITA: Sure. This project is in the COR  
4 zoning district. It was before the DCC January 13,  
5 2013.

6           In your package you're also going to see the  
7 calculation of how Chris and Chuck came to the  
8 numbers, as well as Frank. It's zoned  
9 appropriately and it actually has the number based  
10 on the density calculations. And I'll turn it  
11 over to Frank Fazio.

12          MR. FAZIO: Thank you, Joe. I'm Frank Fazio and  
13 I'd like to just to give you a little history of the  
14 site here.

15          It's on the corner of Route 7 and Mill Road.  
16 The building on the west side of the property used  
17 to be a residence at one time and it now belongs  
18 to Hudson Montana and they renovated that  
19 building. As you can see, they did a very nice  
20 job on it. They put an addition on it, and also  
21 they refurbished the barn to give it that original  
22 look. That's where their offices are right now.  
23 They have developed an apartment building with six  
24 units. The building is approximately 7,848 square  
25 feet. It has six units in it; four will be two

1 bedrooms and two will be one bedroom units. The  
2 building is situated perpendicular to Route 7.  
3 The reason for that is to give it an appearance to  
4 be able to come in and keep the character of the  
5 site. If you've noticed, the parking lot with the  
6 stone around that - we want to continue that to  
7 keep the continuity in there. We're trying to  
8 give it an appearance of a little plaza setting.  
9 The problem is that if we put the building facing  
10 Route 7, we would have to have the parking behind  
11 it. We also gain 45 feet deeper which requires us  
12 to do a lot of removal of fill of the hillside in  
13 here (Indicating) and put in retaining walls and  
14 it would really change the character of the site.  
15 So, we're trying to keep the look of that. The  
16 barn will remain where it is and we can put the  
17 circulation behind it. So, the access would be  
18 off of Mill Road in excess of the office building  
19 right now.

20 We are required to have 12 parking spaces;  
21 two for each unit. Based on the calculations for  
22 the office, we are required to have 20 and we put  
23 in 11 and that is what they require right now. We  
24 did show on the site that there could be nine  
25 banked space locations for it. So, we're trying

1 not to disturb the site as much as possible, but  
2 we do show locations where should it at some point  
3 in time be required, we can accommodate all of  
4 that.

5 We've been to the DCC meeting and there are  
6 some comments made. We have water hookup and  
7 you'll see from the map that it was brought up by  
8 Latham Water that we can connect the waterline  
9 into Route 7 versus going out to Mill Road.

10 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I can see where you want the new  
11 building. I saw that there was work going on, but I  
12 want to clarify what the existing conditions are as we  
13 speak. There was a house there.

14 MR. FAZIO: There was a house at this location  
15 right here.

16 CHAIRMAN STUTO: And is that still a house?

17 MR. FAZIO: It's where they have their offices.  
18 They have two offices here where they put an addition  
19 onto it.

20 CHAIRMAN STUTO: And then there is a barn.

21 MR. FAZIO: There is a barn right in here  
22 (Indicating). It was retained and refurbished.

23 CHAIRMAN STUTO: So, those are the only two  
24 buildings on the site.

25 MR. FAZIO: Right.

1                   CHAIRMAN STUTO: And it shows on our tax map as  
2 two lots.

3                   MR. FAZIO: Right. What happened is that they  
4 purchased it as one parcel and what we intend to do to  
5 meet the calculation requirements is that these two  
6 must be merged to be 1.25 acres total. That's how we  
7 came up with he calculations of six apartments.

8                   We're going to continue the screening along  
9 the front with the stone wall that was put in  
10 front of the office building. We'll keep that  
11 character going in. There are several trees along  
12 Route 7 here (Indicating). We're going to try to  
13 retain those trees that are there right now that  
14 are existing. As you can see, we have porches and  
15 decks for each side of the front so the people in  
16 the back would be facing a wooded area or an open  
17 space on their decks there. Parking would be  
18 along the front and we wanted to keep the  
19 stormwater light, so we may put some porous pavers  
20 in there, in that regard.

21                   We wanted to keep the character of the site -  
22 the countryish look and the barn style. This  
23 would be the building that we are proposing. As  
24 you can see it's an apartment building that will  
25 be a little more expensive than normal, but they

1 wanted to keep that look there so that it ties in  
2 with the office building. So, you have this stone  
3 area and the boards on the top. It will fit very  
4 well into the site.

5 CHAIRMAN STUTO: What is going to face Route 7?

6 MR. FAZIO: This side right here (Indicating).

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: And the other? Show me where the  
8 other one is.

9 MR. FAZIO: This is the front elevation  
10 (Indicating). When you drive up, this is what you'll  
11 see. You'll see the facade here and the windows. It's  
12 the back here where you have your decks and porches.

13 CHAIRMAN STUTO: What material finishes are going  
14 to be on there?

15 MR. FAZIO: The lower portion will be stone and  
16 the upper will be a clapboard wood.

17 MR. AUSTIN: How many bedrooms in the apartments?

18 MR. FAZIO: Four of the units will have two  
19 bedrooms, and two of the units will have one bedroom.  
20 There will be six units total.

21 MS. DALTON: Who do you intend to market to? Is  
22 there a particular market?

23 MR. FAZIO: No, I don't think so. It would  
24 probably be a younger person since there will only be  
25 one or two bedrooms.

1 MR. AUSTIN: And your price point would be?

2 MR. FAZIO: About \$1,400 a month. They're going  
3 to be for professionals. That's what we are targeting.

4 MS. DALTON: How many square feet would each  
5 apartment be?

6 MR. FAZIO: From 1,000 to about 1,300 square feet.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: No garages in the building,  
8 correct?

9 MR. FAZIO: No.

10 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Separate entrances?

11 MR. FAZIO: Yes, there are two entrances to the  
12 building and from there, you go upstairs or you can  
13 access the downstairs.

14 MS. DALTON: Is that North Colonie schools?

15 MR. FAZIO: Yes, that's North Colonie.

16 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Joe, do you want to make  
17 comments?

18 MR. GRASSO: Just a few. Obviously, for sketch  
19 plan review we don't have a letter. We commend the  
20 applicant for trying to work within the zoning and the  
21 restrictions and come up with what we perceive as a  
22 reactively creative proposal of development of the  
23 site. The things that we like about it is the theme  
24 and trying to keep in context with that farmstead theme  
25 that you really get the feel of when you visit the

1 site, and that converted farmhouse into an office  
2 building.

3 We like the fact that there could be a shared  
4 parking arrangement and they are obviously  
5 proposing some land banked parking to try to  
6 reduce the amount of parking that they are looking  
7 to build, which we think is a positive attribute.  
8 The architecture of the building is nice and we've  
9 got a good model to the architectural style of  
10 what we see out there already. So, we know  
11 exactly what the architecture is going to look  
12 like. They've done a good job of the renderings  
13 at this point.

14 In terms of the access, the access to the  
15 project is off of Mill Road, which is important  
16 because if the project didn't have access on Mill  
17 Road, we would be looking at a curb cut onto Route  
18 7. When you're dealing with multifamily or  
19 apartment units and the need for school busses  
20 that stop on Route 7, that can be a dangerous  
21 situation because it's a four-lane road. So,  
22 there is a lot of things going for it in terms of  
23 the project.

24 One of the issues that was brought up by the  
25 Planning Department is that the waivers that would



1 be required. The design standards require that  
2 the front facade of the building has to face  
3 toward the street. Because the building is  
4 located generally along Route 7, we're looking at  
5 the side of the building. I think that they have  
6 tried to address that through the architecture and  
7 with the access coming from Mill Road, I think  
8 that it lends itself to an presentation of the  
9 building in that direction. That said, It's  
10 important for the Planning Board to understand  
11 that the zoning looks to try to have the access  
12 towards Route 7. In terms of this building, I  
13 think that it's more important to look at the  
14 traffic driving along Route 7. They're going to  
15 be able to see the back of the building. I think  
16 that needs to be addressed either through screening  
17 or landscaping or somehow to provide an element of  
18 privacy towards the back of the apartment  
19 buildings. So, that's one of the things that they  
20 should continue to focus on when it comes back  
21 before the Planning Board.

22 There are some other comments by the Planning  
23 Department. They are comments regarding mail  
24 kiosks and pedestrian accommodations, which I  
25 think are all easy things for the applicant to

1 build into the project. That's where we are at.

2 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Susan, do you have any comments  
3 or questions?

4 MS. MILSTEIN: No.

5 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Karen?

6 MS. GOMEZ: I think it looks nice.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Tim?

8 MR. LANE: No.

9 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I'm going to make a couple of  
10 specific comments. I think that architecturally, the  
11 thing is gorgeous. It has the potential to really look  
12 nice from everywhere, taking into consideration the  
13 comments that Joe made about the screening and so  
14 forth. I would ask the applicant and Joe to consider -  
15 and if you think that it's not a good idea, say why  
16 next time - separate entrances for each unit. Also, to  
17 think about the sound for the people being on a main  
18 road.

19 One of the first houses I bought when I was  
20 still relatively young was on a main road. The  
21 price was right and it fit my needs in every way.  
22 I got awful tired of the noise. Even when the  
23 windows were closed. If soundproofing would help,  
24 I would at least like you to address that and let  
25 me know one way or the other. Whether you you

1 think that it's necessary for the people that live  
2 on Mill Road or not. If you don't see a reason  
3 for this, just please be prepared to tell me why.  
4 Those are my two comments.

5 Actually, the third comment I had was that we  
6 are seeing a number of proposed apartments on main  
7 roads. I think that we're used to seeing  
8 apartments that are set off from the main road one  
9 way or another. We're starting to see them in a  
10 COR district, where they are permitted on the main  
11 roads. I question the market for that and I  
12 question whether that's the best development, but  
13 it is currently zoned that way. That's just a  
14 general comment.

15 Brian?

16 MR. AUSTIN: I think that it's one of the best  
17 looking apartments plans that have come before us in  
18 awhile as far as architecturally and aesthetically.  
19 Like Peter said, it's gorgeous. It really looks nice.  
20 It will really complement the existing building that's  
21 on there as well. It really adds to that corner quite  
22 nicely. I think it's going to be great.

23 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Lou?

24 MR. MION: I think it's all been said. I love the  
25 project. It looks great.

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Kathy?

2 MS. DALTON: I live around there and I've watched  
3 you renovate the building. You've done a really nice  
4 job on the one that you've already done. Thank you.  
5 It really looks nice.

6 I would just encourage you to move forward  
7 and I've done this with some of the other projects  
8 - in North Colonie, we attract a lot families that  
9 like those public schools. With those two bedroom  
10 apartments, you may get parents or kids or  
11 whatever. It's kind of hard to tell, but as you  
12 plot it out I would really keep safety in mind so  
13 that the kids could have a way - if there are kids  
14 in that building, they're going to have a way to  
15 get to a bus stop. They're going to be able to go  
16 out without going too much into a parking lot and  
17 that kind of thing. I know this area very well  
18 and I know that there is a lot of greenspace there  
19 now. I don't have too much of a problem with kids  
20 having a place to play there, but the safety  
21 aspects - I would encourage you to look at them.

22 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, that's our feedback. Thank  
23 you.

24 MR. FAZIO: Thank you, very much.

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1                   (Whereas the proceeding was concluded at  
2                   8:20 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 April 1, 2013

