

1 PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY

2 TOWN OF COLONIE

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THE CROSSINGS APARTMENTS
32 AND 40 AVIATION ROAD
SKETCH PLAN REVIEW

5 *****

6 THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above entitled
7 matter by NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART, a Shorthand
8 Reporter, commencing on August 26, 2014 at 7:03 p.m.
at The Public Operations Center, 347 Old Niskayuna
Road, Latham, New York

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10 BOARD MEMBERS:
11 PETER STUTO, CHAIRMAN
12 LOU MION
13 SUSAN MILSTEIN
14 TIMOTHY LANE
15 KATHY DALTON
16 TINA GOODWIN SEGAL

14

15 ALSO PRESENT:

16 Kathleen Marinelli, Esq., Counsel to the Planning Board
17 Peter L. Lilholt, Jr, PE, CHA
18 Nick Costa, PE, Advanced Engineering and Surveying
19 George Olsen, Olsen and Associates Architects

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1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Good evening, everyone. Thank you
2 for coming to the Town of Colonie Planning Board
3 meeting.

4 We have several items on the agenda today which
5 we will get to fairly quickly.

6 Joe LaCivita is not here. The department is
7 represented by Mike Tengeler.

8 Mike, do you have any introductory remarks
9 before we start calling the applicants?

10 MR. TENGELER: No, nothing administrative. We can
11 get right into it.

12 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, the first item on the agenda
13 is a sketch plan for the Crossings Apartments. This is
14 32 and 40 Aviation Road.

15 Do you have any comments before we start?

16 MR. TENGELER: Not much. We had a DCC meeting back
17 in August. It's a 7.63 parcel and the address is 40
18 Aviation Road.

19 I know that Crisafulli Associates is here
20 represented by Nick Costa. We can just turn it over
21 to Nick and let him get started.

22 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay.

23 MR. COSTA: Good evening. My name is Nick Costa
24 and I'm with Advanced Engineering and Surveying. Here
25 tonight with me is Mike Crisafulli, Sr. and Mike

1 Crisafulli, Jr.

2 CHAIRMAN STUTO: They're welcome to come up and sit
3 with you, if they'd like.

4 MR. COSTA: And George Olsen, as well.

5 We have prepared a sketch plan for the proposed
6 Crossings which is located on two parcels on
7 Aviation Road; 32 and 40 Aviation Road. The parcels
8 in aggregate are about 7.6 acres and all the
9 infrastructure for servicing the proposed two
10 buildings that are being proposed at these locations
11 are within the street right of way of both Metro
12 Park and Aviation Road.

13 The proposal is to construct two buildings and
14 one will have 120 units, three stories, 4 units per
15 story. The second building will be smaller at 55
16 units and 15 units per floor with three floors.

17 As it's shown on the sketch plan, there is
18 plenty of greenspace. We're over 35 percent and
19 there is sufficient parking.

20 The parking ratio is two to one for apartments.
21 We're at 1.8. We do have an overflow parking area
22 that would help us with the parking that is
23 required. We have been in front of the Development
24 Coordination Committee and we're here tonight to
25 make this presentation to the Planning Board and get

1 some of your input, and also alert you of this
2 project being proposed.

3 It's zoned commercial/office/residential and
4 we're proposing 175 apartments. Residential is
5 allowed in the commercial/office/residential, but
6 not 100 percent development. There would either
7 have to be a commercial or office component to that.
8 We do not have that so we will be going to the Town
9 Board and requesting a PDD.

10 Again, we met with the DCC and we have also met
11 with the Planning Department and we have explored
12 some of the benefits that we're looking at. We're
13 talking to the Planning Department and we're talking
14 about sidewalks. We're talking about potential
15 improvements to the Wolf Road pump station. We
16 think that it's a great location. It's adjacent to
17 the Crossings Park. It provides access to the
18 Ciccotti Center.

19 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can you show us where they are in
20 relation to the site?

21 MR. COSTA: Sure. This is the parking lot for the
22 Ciccotti Center (Indicating). These are some of the
23 trails that will go through the Crossings. Obviously,
24 if it's near Wolf Road, within walking distance there
25 are shops and offices. It's a great location for this

1 type of project and we hope that you agree with us on
2 that.

3 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Do you want to show us the
4 elevations?

5 MR. COSTA: Sure. Actually, George Olsen will come
6 up and walk you through the elevations.

7 MR. OLSEN: I'm George Olsen from Olsen and
8 Associates Architects.

9 Computers these days look final, but they are
10 very conceptual. It really is intended to give you
11 the idea of the mass of the building and the
12 vocabulary of the architecture. The Crisifullis
13 have said that the architecture and the park - the
14 buildings that are already in part lend themselves
15 to this residential look, as well. So, we are going
16 to be borrowing from that vocabulary of the
17 buildings in the park. What we are kind of showing
18 is the fence out here along the street (Indicating).
19 It will be more like -- not a grand hotel, but the
20 massing will be broken up with a different series of
21 gables and other architectural elements. To that
22 extent, we have some balconies pushing and pulling.
23 There are quite a bit of windows and corner windows
24 that will open the building up. So, we are trying
25 to break up that massing with a number of windows

1 and a different roof line.

2 In general, this is the elevation along
3 Aviation Road. It's the smaller parcel. There is a
4 National Grid easement in the middle and then the
5 larger parcel across there (Indicating). They may
6 not look exactly the same when we get them put
7 together. The colors may change and things like
8 that. This is like the general feel of what we are
9 starting to look at.

10 CHAIRMAN STUTO: What amenities will you have in
11 there for the residents?

12 MR. OLSEN: At this point we're talking about
13 typical amenities; a small exercise area and things like
14 that and a lounge areas for the tenants inside.

15 CHAIRMAN STUTO: What level of apartment do you
16 envision there in terms of level of finish and rents and
17 so forth? What do you think about the market?
18 Everybody is doing apartments now.

19 MR. CRISAFULLI JR: The market rate apartments
20 are, I think, a little more on the luxury side. I think
21 that we'll get a lot of empty nesters in the building.
22 I don't think that we'll get a lot of kids in the
23 building. People who are looking to downsize have all
24 the amenities right there.

25 CHAIRMAN STUTO: What size apartments? How many

1 square feet and how many one-bedrooms and two-bedrooms?
2 I know that this is only a sketch plan.

3 MR. CRISAFULLI JR: We don't even have the floor
4 plans yet, to be honest. Maybe a 60/40 mix of the two;
5 1,000 to 1,100 square feet and things of that nature.

6 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Have you thought about the
7 connectivity in terms of the sidewalks - pedestrian
8 connectivity to the other areas?

9 MR. COSTA: As we have been talking to the Planning
10 Department, there was some schematics that were shared
11 with us as far as what the overall goal is to improve
12 that area. Obviously, with the connection of Aviation
13 to the Albany Shaker roundabout there are several
14 pedestrian improvements that are going to be made there.
15 There is a continuation all the way down to Aviation,
16 which the name is then going to be called Maxwell Road
17 Extension. That connection naturally goes out to Wolf
18 Road along Metro Park.

19 We would like to make some connections to the
20 Crossings - the park itself. There will be
21 connections across the National Grid parcel. There
22 is going to be a road connection as shown on the
23 plan.

24 CHAIRMAN STUTO: They're pretty tough on those
25 things. They're going to let you do that?

1 MR. COSTA: Mike and myself met with a young lady
2 at National Grid and there is actually a reserved
3 crossing when that easement was acquired by - I can't
4 remember the company that acquired it, but eventually it
5 became National Grid.

6 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Anything else you want to add
7 before we turn it over to our TDE? I'm sure that we'll
8 have some back and forth too.

9 MR. COSTA: We've been working to respond to some
10 of the comments that were made in the DCC.

11 CHAIRMAN STUTO: The original note said 200 units
12 and now it's 175. Why was it reduced?

13 MR. COSTA: The parking was one thing. We were
14 down to a 1.5 parking ratio. This is the 1.8. We feel,
15 like I mentioned before, that this is much more doable
16 plan to support the waiver for the parking.

17 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Anything else before we turn it
18 over? I'm sure that we'll have questions from the
19 Board.

20 CHA is our Town Designated Engineer. Peter
21 Lilholt is representing them.

22 Peter, you have reviewed the plans. Do you
23 have any comments for us?

24 MR. LILHOLT: Yes, just a few comments. As Nick
25 mentioned it's in the COR zone and according to the Land

1 Use Code, up to 80 percent of the base commercial
2 density may be converted to residential use. So, based
3 on the 7.6 acre parcel and a maximum base commercial
4 density, you could have by code 36 residential units in
5 about 27,000 or 28,000 square feet of commercial space
6 per the underlying zone.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: So, is this more square footage or
8 less than the maximum? Have you done any density
9 analysis? Can anybody answer that?

10 MR. COSTA: It's more residential density and there
11 is no commercial -

12 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We understand that.

13 Total square footage - what you are proposing
14 as opposed to the maximum build-out under the
15 current zone?

16 MR. COSTA: The building coverage is about 21
17 percent. That's less than what would be allowed -

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I'm talking about total square
19 footage and not just the footprint. You probably
20 haven't done it. Why don't you think about it before
21 you come back?

22 MR. LILHOLT: What's being proposed is a planned
23 development district which would allow the 175
24 residential apartment units. It would appear that this
25 is very compatible with the adjacent land uses and the

1 underlying zone - the commercial space which is close
2 by, the office space and residential. We support the
3 use.

4 As Nick mentioned, the Town would look for some
5 form of public benefit and the public benefit that
6 was suggested by the Planning Office was extension
7 of sidewalks and associated drainage systems along
8 Metro Park Road out to Wolf Road. Additionally,
9 along the property frontage on Aviation Road which
10 will become Maxwell Road out to Computer Drive East.

11 CHAIRMAN STUTO: You're saying drainage or
12 pedestrian?

13 MR. LILHOLT: Sidewalks. When you install the
14 sidewalks, you have curbing. If you have curbing, you
15 have to install drainage systems to collect the
16 drainage.

17 Some other potential public benefits, as Nick
18 had suggested, was potential improvements to the
19 Wolf Road pump station which had some limitations
20 and capacity issues. There are other options as
21 well.

22 CHAIRMAN STUTO: When we look at the PDDs which are
23 a kind of exception for us, the public benefit, in my
24 estimation, is very important to this Board. That is
25 going to be something to really think about. It's

1 important to the Town Board, too, I think.

2 On that point, the other thing that was
3 mentioned by Joe Grasso, your colleague, was
4 possibly the Crossings might be a turn lane at the
5 front and I'm not saying that this is necessarily --
6 you know, those are other things in that area that
7 would improve the Crossings, the park and the
8 adjacent areas. I just want to say those thoughts
9 for the record.

10 The pump station and the sewer -- did you say
11 that already?

12 MR. LILHOLT: Yes.

13 MR. LANE: Would it be possible to list those
14 options and the associated costs?

15 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Sure.

16 MR. COSTA: That would be something that we would
17 look at and analyze. Obviously, the project has to
18 support some of those improvements.

19 MR. LILHOLT: In terms of other infrastructure
20 items we've looked for a traffic evaluation, especially
21 at the intersection of Metro Park Road and Aviation
22 Road. I think that the volumes that were projected when
23 the connection is made which becomes the extension of
24 Maxwell Road -- the left hand turn motions from Metro
25 Park northerly on what will become Maxwell Road queues

1 up some traffic so you may be looking at a right hand
2 dedicated turning lane at Metro Park and Aviation Road.

3 In terms of the overall design, it looks like a
4 very attractive building. In keeping with the
5 Comprehensive Plan and some of the COR design
6 standards, we would recommend that the apartment
7 building be shifted up closer to the front street
8 line so that the street facade isn't dominated by
9 the backs of the garages. We prefer to see the
10 garages and the parking toward the rear of the site
11 or at least to the sides of the site.

12 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can you put the other picture up?

13 MR. LILHOLT: The two proposed apartment buildings
14 are the large brown buildings there (Indicating). We
15 are suggesting that they moved up closer to along the
16 road frontage and have the garages toward the back -
17 garages and parking to the rear of the site.

18 In terms of the parking, as they pointed out
19 the Town Code is two parking spaces per apartment
20 unit. They are a little short of that. They are
21 probably in the ballpark with this aggregate of 1.8.
22 I think that includes some overflow parking.

23 Maybe you could point that out?

24 To the south, there are some areas south of the
25 existing access to the Rudy Ciccotti Center that

1 they would designate as additional parking if
2 needed.

3 CHAIRMAN STUTO: So, you would bank parking.

4 MR. COSTA: Yes.

5 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Does our Code provide based upon
6 bedrooms or just based upon number of residential units?

7 MR. LILHOLT: Good question. It's just based on
8 simply the number of units. If you look at the IT
9 parking demand, there is a correlation between the
10 number of bedrooms in the apartment -

11 CHAIRMAN STUTO: If you could do a little analysis
12 on that, it would be helpful.

13 MR. LILHOLT: Something else to consider is that
14 the parking count includes not only the surface parking,
15 but the garage parking as well which is something that
16 at times we might want to look at closer if the project
17 runs through the site plan review process. There are
18 times when you see garage spaces which are occupied or
19 turned into storage and they're not actually utilized as
20 parking for vehicles. So, that will be a point of
21 discussion, I'm sure, in the future about restriction of
22 storage of boats, and RVs, and unlicensed vehicles and
23 use of the garage space for storage units. We don't
24 want to see that.

25 MS. DALTON: Do you know where the nearest bus stop

1 is?

2 MR. COSTA: I believe that it's out on Wolf Road.
3 I don't believe that CDTA makes a turn down this way.

4 CHAIRMAN STUTO: They don't go back off of Wolf
5 Road anywhere in that development? They don't go to
6 Beltrone or anywhere?

7 MR. LILHOLT: I haven't seen that.

8 MS. DALTON: I would also be interested in where on
9 Wolf Road. Right on the corner of Metro Park is one
10 thing, but if you have to turn on Wolf Road and it's two
11 or three blocks -

12 MR. COSTA: I believe that it's pretty close to the
13 intersection of Wolf Road and Metro Park.

14 MS. DALTON: I think that would be important.

15 MR. LILHOLT: You bring up an excellent point which
16 is the proximity to other modes of transportation.
17 Another point of extending the sidewalks is you provide
18 biking and pedestrian access which could get you to the
19 bus transportation and other forms of transportation.

20 MS. DALTON: Part of the value of that site from my
21 perspective is how close it is to everything. So, a lot
22 of that you can walk to anyway and you could take a bus
23 too. That makes me a little bit more comfortable about
24 the density as well.

25 MR. LILHOLT: And then finally just in terms of

1 access and circulation, the latest sketch plan is an
2 improvement from the DDC plan, but we continued to kind
3 of recommend avoiding dead-end parking wherever
4 possible. I think that Nick has tried to accommodate
5 that as much as possible. We have to run some turning
6 templates and make sure that we can get emergency
7 vehicles in and out of the site and that sort of thing.
8 That will be down the road when we get into the site
9 plan review.

10 In terms of the process, we are here for sketch
11 plan review tonight for the PDD. If it's being
12 acceptable to the Planning Board, they would make a
13 formal application to the Town Board for a planned
14 development district application. The Town Board
15 again would refer it back to the Planning Board for
16 findings - we draft formal findings back to the Town
17 Board and the Town Board would establish the PDD.
18 Once the PDD is established, they come back for site
19 plan review.

20 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We'll open it up to the Board for
21 comments or questions.

22 Anything stand out to anybody?

23 MR. MION: I think it's a great project. It's nice
24 looking.

25 MR. COSTA: Thank you.

1 MS. DALTON: I think that the location is great. I
2 have a little bit of concern about the banking and
3 density.

4 MR. LANE: It would be interesting to have numbers
5 and how many students that you figure will add to the
6 school district, etcetera.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I'll just repeat that with the
8 PDD, which is a special animal before this Board - with
9 the give-back to the community and interconnecting this
10 -- sometimes they have community rooms and everybody can
11 use those or walking paths. It doesn't look like this
12 is conducive to walking paths or nature areas or
13 anything like that. I don't know if it is for a park
14 that could be shared, although the park is right near
15 there. The community benefit is very important with
16 PDDs with this Board.

17 As Kathy noted, it would be interesting to see
18 what your density could be under the current zoning
19 and what you're proposing -- not just the footprint,
20 but the square footage. Obviously, we'll be
21 interested in traffic and all that stuff. I don't
22 think that you're getting any major opposition.

23 Okay, thank you.

24 MR. COSTA: Thank you.

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1 (Whereas the above referenced proceeding was
2 concluded at 7:19 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 September 8, 2014

