

1 PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY

2 TOWN OF COLONIE

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4 AESTHETIC SCIENCE INSTITUTE  
922 TROY SCHENECTADY ROAD  
5 SKETCH PLAN REVIEW

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7 THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above entitled  
8 matter by NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART, a Shorthand  
9 Reporter, commencing on March 24, 2015 at 8:11 p.m.  
at The Public Operations Center, 347 Old Niskayuna  
Road, Latham, New York

10 BOARD MEMBERS:  
11 PETER STUTO, CHAIRMAN  
12 LOU MION  
13 SUSAN MILSTEIN  
14 TIMOTHY LANE  
15 CRAIG SHAMLIAN  
16 BRIAN AUSTIN

17 ALSO PRESENT:

18 Kathleen Marinelli, Esq, Counsel to the Planning Board

19 Joseph LaCivita, Director, Planning and Economic  
20 Development

21 Michael Tengeler, Planning and Economic Development

22 Joseph Grasso, PE, CHA

23 Christopher Longo, PE, Ingalls and Associates

24 Chuck Poe

25 Michelle Brenner, Aesthetic Science Institute

1           CHAIRMAN STUTO: Next project is Aesthetic Science  
2           Institute, 922 Troy Schenectady Road. This is a sketch  
3           plan review. This is a two-story with ground floor  
4           level 10,150 square foot school.

5           MR. LACIVITA: This project was before us on March  
6           11th when Michelle and Randy Brenner came to the DCC for  
7           the Aesthetic Science Institute. It's part of the  
8           rebirth of the Russ and Rebel parcel that currently  
9           exists. If you remember, part of the application team  
10          here - Chuck Poe and Chris Connors across the street  
11          brought the apartment complex along with their Hudson  
12          Montana development, so I think that this is a nice  
13          complement across the street. They're actually involved  
14          with the project, looking to help the Brenners through  
15          and get this approved and move forward. I'll turn it  
16          right over to Christopher.

17          MR. LONGO: Thanks, Joe. I'm Christopher Longo  
18          from Ingalls and Associates, engineers for the  
19          applicant, the Brenners. Again, Chuck Poe is here as  
20          well, consulting on the project.

21          As Joe mentioned, we were at the DCC a couple  
22          of weeks ago and received very detailed comments  
23          from each of the departments. Also, as part of this  
24          project we are going through the SEAMAB Board for  
25          some of the environmental constraints that are going

1 on.

2 As for the project, as Joe said, it's a  
3 redevelopment of the Russ and Rebel site. The  
4 building is a proposed 10,000 square feet. It's  
5 going to be two floors with also a third floor  
6 basement level access and floor space on the  
7 basement level. It's kind of the way that building  
8 is set up now with the access through the parking  
9 lot. The parking lot would remain and be utilized  
10 to the full extent that exists there today. There  
11 would be some extension to it to allow for the  
12 required number of parking spaces. The way that we  
13 have shown the parking and shown what is required -  
14 because this is an educational use, the way that the  
15 Code describes parking requirements for educational  
16 use is more geared toward the highschool education  
17 so, here being adult education, there is a lot more  
18 vehicular traffic and there is potential that each  
19 student could be driving themselves to their  
20 classes.

21 The way that we set up that parking is based on  
22 the staff and the students - basically the maximum  
23 occupancy of this building and we came up with the  
24 required parking of 47 spaces and we have shown 49  
25 which include the two handicapped. That actually

1 does compare pretty well with the 10,000 square feet  
2 if this were say, a general office or general  
3 business, they would require five spaces per 1,000  
4 square feet and that would be about 50, so we do  
5 feel that if there were ever a change in use here,  
6 that this would be an adequate number of parking  
7 spaces for the proposed building.

8 This site is less than an acre so the DEC  
9 stormwater requirement - the threshold isn't met  
10 there. We are providing a stormwater retention area  
11 to off-set any increased impervious area. There is  
12 a portion of the parking lot that would be new for  
13 the new parking spaces.

14 There is water service to the building right  
15 now. That service would be repositioned to the new  
16 building. There is also right now no sewer service  
17 to this building, but the sewer is just on the other  
18 side of the Shaker Creek and this new building would  
19 be connected to the sewer.

20 We have already been at the SEAMAB Board - the  
21 environmental review board and received comment and  
22 feedback from them. Some things that have changed  
23 from the plan that you have since we have been in  
24 front of that Board is we reduced the parking aisle  
25 width and that would be along the eastern portion of

1 the parking lot. We have reduced the stall width at  
2 the request of their Board to eight and a half feet  
3 rather than the required nine to stay away from the  
4 Shaker Creek as much as possible and limit any  
5 impact in that area. We are avoiding environmental  
6 impacts to the maximum extent here. The majority of  
7 the site in the south is wetland and we are  
8 proposing less than one-tenth of an acre impacts to  
9 that to kind of square off of the parking area and  
10 the stormwater grading.

11 In the eyes of the Army Corp, the regulators  
12 there said that there is a minor impact. The site  
13 is actually an acre and a half and there is almost  
14 eighth tenths of an acre of wetlands on this site.  
15 We feel that the development has been kept pretty  
16 much in keeping where the site has been developed  
17 already; in the area of the asphalt and in the area  
18 of the building. There is actually a second  
19 building on the site that is a garage or shed  
20 building. So, the footprint of this new building  
21 would pretty much cover the area that those  
22 buildings do.

23 CHAIRMAN STUTO: You're knocking the building down.  
24 Is that correct?

25 MR. LONGO: Yes.

1           CHAIRMAN STUTO: Do you know what the building is  
2 going to look like? Do you have any renditions?

3           MR. LONGO: I do. Chuck has provided us with some  
4 elevations. Maybe Chuck might want to add a little bit.  
5 This would be, as I mentioned, appear as three stories  
6 as you come in from the side. This is the side view  
7 (Indicating) where the existing building has the  
8 entrance door right now, pretty much in the same  
9 location and then as you looked at it from Route 7, from  
10 the street, it would be about a two and a half story  
11 view.

12          CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can you tell me how the square  
13 footage works? I forgot what the numbers are. It says  
14 10,150 in different areas and 4,015.

15          MR. LONGO: The basement is about half the  
16 floorplace and about half unexcavated. It's not a full  
17 three stories. It's three stories and a portion and two  
18 stories and a portion.

19          CHAIRMAN STUTO: And that's going to be finished  
20 space and utilized.

21          MR. POE: What we are trying to do is utilize the  
22 existing grades of the site. The way that it enters now  
23 is that you come into the basement and we're going to  
24 use it as the entrance lobby. There will be some  
25 storage and there may be an office and a bathroom down

1           there also. We're really going to utilize that basement  
2           for that. I would say that about one-third of it to 40%  
3           will be storage and mechanical room. It's really not  
4           the main portion of the building.

5                     With regard to the elevation, we're still  
6           working on the materials. It's a work in progress.  
7           We're looking at either exterior tile or a masonry  
8           product for this. It's going to be a flat roofed  
9           building. We have a large section of curtain wall  
10          on the front corner which is really the main  
11          architectural element of the building. You'll see  
12          it from both sides of travel on Route 7. Again,  
13          it's still a work in progress, but we're looking at  
14          some type of a masonry or tile produce down below.

15                    CHAIRMAN STUTO: It looks somewhat drab, but I'll  
16          take your word for it.

17                    MR. POE: We haven't done a color rendering yet.  
18          When we figure out what those colors are, we'll present  
19          them at our concept.

20                    CHAIRMAN STUTO: Is that a flat roof?

21                    MR. POE: It will be a flat roof so we can place  
22          our HVAC equipment up there.

23                    MR. SHAMLIAN: What other comments did SEAMAB have?

24                    CHAIRMAN STUTO: There's a former SEAMAB member.

25                    MR. LONGO: We did have a lengthy discussion with

1 the Board and flushed out a lot of back and forth and I  
2 think that we really came to some good conclusions and  
3 met each other kind of half way on some things. They  
4 were mainly concerned with getting away from the stream  
5 as much as possible and there is actually flood plain on  
6 here as well. A portion of this site is existing and  
7 still be in the flood plain. Their intent was to limit  
8 disturbance in that area as much as possible. Also  
9 their comment was that they did not want the run-off, as  
10 it does today -- the existing asphalt kind of just runs  
11 right off into the stream. So, rather than just  
12 extending -- because we are extending the asphalt to  
13 accommodate the additional parking spaces. Rather than  
14 extending that asphalt and letting it continue that flow  
15 path, what we have done after discussions with them at  
16 the Board meeting, we revised the plan to have a swale  
17 which would slope back towards the detention area so  
18 that it is held here for a portion until it overflows  
19 and goes through the wetlands and back into the stream.  
20 They really wanted to see us limit the amount of  
21 stormwater that gets directly into the stream that first  
22 minute that it falls. That was something that we had  
23 added was this swale along the backside of the pavement.  
24 Also, what we have done is at the request of that Board  
25 as well -- these parking spaces along the greenspace

1 edge, they would be 17 feet in length rather than the  
2 required 18. I'll get to the full list of waivers that  
3 we're talking about in a minute. We would like to go  
4 with 17 foot depth and then provide one foot of river  
5 rock or a gravel edge so that the front buffer could  
6 hang off on top of that rock, it would still act as if  
7 it was an 18-foot stall which is required, but it would  
8 limit the amount of impact because we would need that  
9 rock there on the edge of the pavement anyway to prevent  
10 any erosion and run-off of the asphalt.

11 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We have a Town Designated  
12 Engineer, CHA, represented by Joe Grasso. I'm going to  
13 ask for his comments and the one question that I have in  
14 mind if Joe could address is adequacy of parking. I see  
15 this use doesn't really have a metric.

16 MR. GRASSO: It's probably going to be the most  
17 critical issue that we need to work through as part of  
18 the application. We generally consider it a very good  
19 redevelopment project. We commend the applicant for  
20 looking to take on a redevelopment project in the Town.  
21 Obviously, we know that they're more expensive than  
22 greenfield projects.

23 The use is unique and like Chris had mentioned,  
24 there are no good metrics in the Town Code as well  
25 as in published data to support getting a really

1 good handle on the parking needs. Fortunately, they  
2 have an existing business so that we can extract  
3 some empirical data from their existing parking  
4 demands. That's going to be really important to us.

5 The other thing that makes the parking very  
6 important here is that it's a very constrained site,  
7 as they were describing. Most of the sites that we  
8 see in Colonie have the opportunity for some form of  
9 shared parking. This one, there is none. We have  
10 to make sure that the parking is adequate. We'll  
11 need to look into how the use and the turnover - the  
12 space turnover of this parking spaces as classes  
13 come and go - is it just maximum occupancy of the  
14 building which is what they are currently using or  
15 is there that turnover where some people are leaving  
16 one class and the next class arriving -- those are  
17 the things that I think we'll need to look at as we  
18 review the application.

19 Based on our initial review, we do feel that  
20 parking is adequate and they're basically trying to  
21 build as much parking on the site as they can.

22 I appreciated Chris' comments about looking at  
23 this like a general office building, if the use ever  
24 changed in the future. They are providing enough  
25 parking that could support a possible future change

1 in use. It's something that we'll take a close look  
2 at. We've talked to them at the DCC meeting. They  
3 are going to put together some additional  
4 information and support of the proposed parking.  
5 This is one that we think that the tenants know  
6 their parking demands as good as the Town will, and  
7 obviously they understand the importance of having  
8 adequate parking for their patrons. The use is  
9 unique because it's not only education, but it's  
10 also some form of retail use. I think that it's  
11 important coming on that the board understands how  
12 that dynamic is going to work and how it may  
13 translate into additional parking demands on the  
14 site.

15 Off of the parking, that's really our primary  
16 concern. There are some waivers that are required.  
17 We support the waivers. The waivers are also  
18 supported by the Planning Department. I'm not sure  
19 if Chris actually needs to go through those.

20 We raised a comment at DCC about the curb cut.  
21 They were looking to narrow this up but that is  
22 something that because we're on Route 7 and cars are  
23 coming down at 45 miles an hour, we want to make  
24 sure that there is adequate width there and that a  
25 car doesn't need to come to a complete slow down

1 before they can turn into the site. Obviously, we  
2 know about the traffic conditions out on Route 7 and  
3 requiring a wider width curb cut could accommodate  
4 that three lane section where if someone is looking  
5 to take a left out, that's where they are going to  
6 have to typically stop and stage. You can let right  
7 turn exiting vehicles go by if we retain a wider  
8 width there.

9 It's pretty straight forward. They've done a  
10 good job on the plans so far. We look forward to  
11 working with them through concept.

12 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I'd like to turn it back to the  
13 applicant to describe your business model. I'll display  
14 my ignorance in now knowing what Aesthetic Science is.

15 MS. BRENNER: That's all right. I'm Michelle  
16 Brenner, applicant.

17 The Aesthetic Science Institute -- currently  
18 I'm right down the street at 1202 Troy Schenectady  
19 Road in the Plaza 7 - the old CHP Plaza that's down  
20 there. I've been there for 13 years.

21 The Aesthetic Science Institute is an aesthetic  
22 school. It's a skin care school. It's similar to a  
23 hair or cosmetology school, all we do is skin care.  
24 In the State of New York, in order to practice, you  
25 have to have a license. So, there are mandatory

1 hours required by the State of New York that you  
2 have to finish and then you take your State Board  
3 Exam. So, it's 600 hours. We have full-time and  
4 part-time programs. It's throughout the day and we  
5 have part-time programs in the evening and Saturday  
6 programs as well. As I said, I have been in  
7 business for 13 years now.

8 CHAIRMAN STUTO: How many square feet do you have  
9 over there?

10 MS. BRENNER: We have 5,600 square feet right now.  
11 We've grown and grown and in the current location and we  
12 don't have any more room to expand to. The school has  
13 grown considerably with class size. We're really  
14 compacted into the location that we have now. As Joe  
15 had mentioned, in addition we have a full operating  
16 clinic. Anything that the students learn, practically  
17 speaking, we also offer to the public as a service by  
18 students that are supervised. So, while students are  
19 there at certain given clinic times, the clinic is open  
20 to the public to come in for a facial treatments, body  
21 treatments or whatever it is that we are doing. Clinic  
22 hours vary along with class start and finish times.  
23 Usually in the clinic times, there are a maximum of six  
24 to eight customers coming and going at any time.  
25 They're there for an hour and half or an hour and 45

1 minutes. Our classes run in seven hour increments and  
2 then evening until 9:00.

3 MR. SHAMLIAN: How many people are typically in a  
4 class?

5 MS. BRENNER: We have 12 to 16 students in a class.  
6 Sixteen is our absolutely maximum. We have a full-time  
7 class that is there Monday through Friday and then we  
8 have a part time Monday/Tuesday and a part time  
9 Wednesday/Thursday. So, we never have -- I can show you  
10 a floor plan. There are three different classrooms. We  
11 never have all three classrooms packed at any given  
12 time. However, what we do often do several times  
13 throughout the year is continuing Ed classes or guest  
14 speakers. So, at those times we invite our graduates  
15 back or people in from the public. We wanted to  
16 maximize the space with a beautiful new location in  
17 order to serve our purposes as we grow.

18 MR. SHAMLIAN: So, could you have three classes and  
19 a clinic going at the same time?

20 MS. BRENNER: That would be awesome; but no, we  
21 wouldn't. Usually what also happens is that clinic runs  
22 half of a given class time. We never have a time when  
23 we have three full classes and a clinic going at those  
24 times. There always has to be someone in that clinic  
25 going at those times and it only runs for a four hour

1 gap at any given time.

2 MR. LACIVITA: Part of the clinic where the  
3 students run - is that part of their 600 hours too?

4 MS. BRENNER: Yes, it's mandatory. It's a  
5 mandatory part of the curriculum. They have to have  
6 so much theory and they have to have so much hands-on.  
7 So, all of the curriculum in the school is approved by the  
8 New York State Department of Education and the Licensing  
9 Department.

10 We also received last year an international  
11 certification in skin care. We're one of only 10  
12 schools in the United States to have the curriculum  
13 and 200 in the world. That brings the students that  
14 are coming internationally and coming in to study.  
15 It's mandatory that they have a certain amount of  
16 theory hours and then a certain amount of hands-on  
17 practical application with every single thing that  
18 they learn. So, we have to document not only the  
19 time that they are there, but the application that  
20 they are doing, as well.

21 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Thank you.

22 Any questions?

23 (There was no response.)

24 MS. BRENNER: You're welcome to come in for a  
25 facial. You'll have a much better understanding.

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We have to pay, if we go.

2 MR. LANE: What's the current address?

3 MS. BRENNER: The address is 1202 Troy Schenectady  
4 Road. We're at the Berkshire Bank Plaza, right behind  
5 the bank.

6 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Anything else?

7 (There was no response.)

8 Okay, thank you. We look forward to your  
9 application.

10 Can you just walk your elevation by so that we  
11 can get a closer look?

12 MS. BRENNER: Sure.

13 MR. LACIVITA: Michelle or Chuck, where are you  
14 going to go with signage. How are you going to do  
15 signage?

16 MS. BRENNER: There is a spot on the front of the  
17 building where it says ASI right now. Currently where  
18 Russ and Rebel is they have a sign out front -- ideally  
19 it will be to use the exact same location. That would  
20 be perfect.

21 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Thank you.

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24 (Whereas the above referenced proceeding was  
25 concluded at 8:29 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 20, 2015

