

1 PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY

2 TOWN OF COLONIE

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4 ALDIS FOOD MARKET  
1881 AND 1885 CENTRAL AVENUE  
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 7:44 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 Chuck Voss, PE, Barton and Loguidice

23 Kevin Parisi, Trinity Realty Group

24 Bruno Lourenco, Aldi's

25 Rob Osterhout, Bohler Engineering

1           CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, the next applicant is Aldi's  
2 Food Market, 1881 and 1885 Central Avenue. This is a  
3 Sketch Plan Review. This is a 17,023 square foot  
4 supermarket.

5           MR. LACIVITA: This project was actually before us  
6 at the DCC on February 12, 2014. Again, this is another  
7 section of the rebirth that we're starting to see on  
8 Central Avenue. The applicant and his partner have  
9 acquired a couple of parcels. I'm going to let them  
10 tell them the story because you're starting to see two  
11 parcels that are side by side and potentially three down  
12 the road.

13           Also, what this parcel does is it actually gets  
14 rid of one of the hotels on Central Avenue  
15 addressing the efforts of our Supervisor.

16           So, I'm going to turn it over to Mr. Parisi so  
17 he can tell the story and a little bit about the  
18 project.

19           MR. PARISI: Good evening, everyone. My name is  
20 Kevin Parisi and I'm with Trinity Realty Group. We're  
21 actually based here in Colonie at 18 Computer Drive  
22 East. I also live at 21 Jester Court in the Town of  
23 Colonie and a couple of my partners are here with me.  
24 Tonight with me are Rob Osterhout from Bohler  
25 Engineering, Mary Elizabeth Slevin from Stockli Greene

1 and Slevin and Bruno Lorenzo from Aldi. That's if  
2 anyone has any comments or questions in general.

3 I just wanted to take a quick minute and walk  
4 you through a little bit of history of the project  
5 and what brings us here today.

6 We acquired this parcel about two years ago.  
7 It entailed 1881 Central Avenue and 1885 Central  
8 Avenue which is currently the vacant lot and the  
9 Dragon Buffet along with the motel that wraps in an  
10 L-shape off the rear of the existing Dragon Buffet.  
11 After doing about a year of marketing we came up  
12 with several different concepts. On tap was always  
13 to redevelop the site. When we acquired the parcel  
14 it was through a bankruptcy/foreclosure type  
15 process. Our intension was to figure out a way to  
16 develop the parcel next door as well as clean up  
17 what is existing there today.

18 I personally travel by the site every day on my  
19 way home. My children go to school at the  
20 elementary school, so it's pretty near and dear to  
21 us so we're really excited about what we have been  
22 able to accomplish and work with the Town and tried  
23 to go through.

24 There were some setback changes that we had to  
25 make in order to make the grocery store setback to

1 go within 100 feet of the rear yard at the back of  
2 the parcel.

3 We just recently in January were able to  
4 acquire 1893 Central Avenue which was Sushi X, which  
5 was also on a foreclosure sale. As you know, it's  
6 been abandoned and frankly it's quite an eyesore.  
7 Our intension is to hopefully clear this whole  
8 project up. This is kind of our kick-off start to  
9 it and hopefully we can get this done as soon as  
10 possible.

11 Just to walk everyone though, we thought that  
12 it was important to talk a little bit about what  
13 we've done in the last 13 months. This was the  
14 original plan that we went to DCC with in February  
15 of 2014. The building is very similar to date.  
16 It's the same approximately 17,000 square foot  
17 grocery store. This is the existing Dragon Buffet  
18 (Indicating), but as you can see from this plan we  
19 were originally planning on removing the motel as  
20 well. That was really, from day one, always our  
21 intension to do so.

22 There were some concerns with initial feedback  
23 from the group with DCC. The biggest concern was  
24 the access point. There is an alignment issue  
25 currently with the Colonie Plaza across the street

1 and right now this is currently a blinking red light  
2 that exits this site onto Central Avenue  
3 (Indicating). We have spent a lot of time and  
4 thought process on how to fix this site and frankly  
5 had a real difficult time coming up with the right  
6 plan. So, the plan that we have now entails -- once  
7 we were able to acquire 1893 Central Avenue, we were  
8 able to actually take the existing building that we  
9 had originally proposed and shift it over onto the  
10 1893 parcel which is also -- we're going to be  
11 asking for a lot line adjustment onto the 1892  
12 parcel. With that, we have opened up access onto  
13 that parcel as there is a lot of a mutual partner so  
14 it's an easy situation to deal with cross easements  
15 and all the agreements that we need to do. What we  
16 are real excited about is how we've been able to fix  
17 this intersection (Indicating). We now line up very  
18 well with this. There is no, what I call,  
19 checkpoints leaving the site or entering it. It's a  
20 much cleaner entry and exit. We think that frankly,  
21 it will be much safer. We've hired a traffic  
22 engineer who is very familiar with this corridor  
23 that is going to do a full traffic study and really  
24 make sure that what we are planning here and that  
25 this intersection gets improved properly and gets

1           what it really needs.

2           We also took the dumpsters and we removed all  
3           the dumpsters from the rear of the parcel. We're  
4           going to be putting the Dragon Buffet dumpster which  
5           is currently kind of up in this corner back here  
6           (Indicating) and quite frankly, needs to be fixed --  
7           that will be moving right up to the building and  
8           basically as far as we could make it away from the  
9           residents in the rear. The Aldi dumpster is tucked  
10          inside of this loading area. The good news is that  
11          we are able to maintain a lot of the natural  
12          vegetation that is already in the rear. We really  
13          have no need to impact any of it or move a lot of it  
14          so we think that it was the best move of a different  
15          option to keep what is there existing.

16          We're also looking at putting new fencing and  
17          some -- stone piered or whatever the Town would like  
18          us to put up for decorative fencing.

19                 CHAIRMAN STUTO: The fancy stuff?

20                 MR. PARISI: The nice fancy stuff. As long as it  
21                 doesn't block Bruno's visibility, he's fine with it.

22                 There are a couple of waivers that we are going  
23                 to be needing in order to get the project approved.  
24                 We spent a lot of time and energy trying to make  
25                 sure that we didn't need to ask for a lot of

1 variances and we believe that we're able to  
2 accomplish that. So, generally we're very excited  
3 about it. We're excited to move forward.

4 I'm glad to open it up if there are any  
5 questions.

6 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I'm going to ask our Town  
7 Designated Engineer to comment.

8 The building on the right towards the front is  
9 going to remain. It's a Chinese restaurant?

10 MR. PARISI: Correct.

11 CHAIRMAN STUTO: And it's going to stay that?

12 MR. PARISI: It is going to stay that.

13 CHAIRMAN STUTO: That was the only question that I  
14 heard and was my question, too.

15 If you don't mind, we'll hear from the Town  
16 Designated Engineer.

17 MR. PARISI: I did forget to bring up a point that  
18 I think as a resident is very, very important. We are  
19 also planning in this process a major renovation to the  
20 exterior of the buffet. This is not just going to just  
21 include tearing down the motel and say thumbs up, we're  
22 on our way.

23 I have an elevation here that I will show you  
24 in a second. We haven't finalized the architectural  
25 design of it, but it's the commitment that we've

1 made to Aldi's. It's a commitment that the partners  
2 have made. It's a commitment that we made when we  
3 talked to Joe and everyone else in the Town. It  
4 will essentially look like it's brand new. That's  
5 the whole point.

6 CHAIRMAN STUTO: That's great to hear. I generally  
7 think that it's great. The technicalities are the  
8 things in my mind that we have to look through.

9 MR. VOSS: Peter, we're at sketch plan. We did  
10 attend the DCC meeting where we looked at the project  
11 initially a couple of weeks ago. I think that Peter, as  
12 you said, the layout of this plan versus the original  
13 plan is 100% better. It's a much more efficient use of  
14 the site. The building fits proportionately much better  
15 with this plan than it certainly did with the other one.  
16 The parking, which they really didn't touch on, is  
17 configured much more efficiently in this newer plan as  
18 well. You have the stormwater management issues on the  
19 site that is relatively flat. Basically it's a  
20 redevelopment site from a stormwater management  
21 perspective, so we are going to be looking at what types  
22 of facilities that they can come up with to basically  
23 deal with the existing stormwater. Again, we think that  
24 the site certainly can handle that.

25 The utilities are all on the site; sewer and

1 water. We did have a meeting with Pure Waters about  
2 a week or so ago where there is a watermain that  
3 exists basically between the two parcels just to the  
4 west of where the building sits. Pure Waters was in  
5 agreement with the applicant that the main could be  
6 moved at the applicants expense, which allows for  
7 the building to be placed where it is now while  
8 still kind of creating that connection through the  
9 site for the existing watermain. We think that is a  
10 good alternative. Again, the access is key here for  
11 a site that could generate some traffic. Given who  
12 the tenant is, the reconfiguration of their primary  
13 driveway is much more efficient and it utilizes that  
14 existing signalized intersection. So, we're happy  
15 to see that. We're also happy to see the  
16 interconnect with this site, with the site to the  
17 west; the Sushi X site. Potentially as that site  
18 redevelops, it could be done in concert with this  
19 one and use good access management. Again, seeing  
20 the Dragon Buffet rehab - I used to live not too far  
21 from here as well years ago and drove by the site  
22 and it was kind of tired looking building. Again,  
23 Pure Waters is looking to work with the applicant on  
24 updating the internal facilities - the grease traps  
25 and those kinds of things internal to that

1 restaurant.

2 From a general standpoint, we're pretty happy  
3 with what we see so far. I think that all in all,  
4 it's technically a pretty sound project.

5 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, we'll go down the line.

6 Craig?

7 MR. SHAMLIAN: From what you have presented so far,  
8 it looks to be a great redevelopment.

9 MR. LACIVITA: Can you show them the potential  
10 elevations as well, going forward?

11 MR. PARISI: This is looking at the site looking as  
12 you're standing across the street, basically at Key Bank  
13 or Paisans (Indicating). Aldi's will be on the left and  
14 the right would be the Dragon Buffet. We're trying to  
15 come up with a concept which gives an image of -

16 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can you walk that in front of the  
17 Board?

18 MR. PARISI: Sure.

19 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I know of two Aldi's in the area.  
20 Are there more?

21 MR. LOURENCO: We have one in Ballston Spa and  
22 there are several in the central part of the state.  
23 We're building one in Pittsfield, Massachusetts.

24 MR. LANE: But this one would be the first one in  
25 Colonie. It will be the first one in Albany County.

1           CHAIRMAN STUTO: There is no doubt that you will do  
2 well in that location.

3           Here is a question. Tim said that he wasn't  
4 sure about the parking. When I have gone to Aldi's  
5 -- what is the average shopping time at Aldi's?

6           MR. LOURENCO: Under 11,000 square feet is actually  
7 sales floor. The rest is storage. There are five  
8 aisles. It has a cooler and a freezer. Typically it's  
9 a pretty quick shop. It would be an hour at the most.  
10 You only have one product of each item; one ketchup and  
11 one mustard.

12          CHAIRMAN STUTO: Is that part of the whole business  
13 plan?

14          MR. LOURENCO: Yes, sir. It's an efficient  
15 business. That's why we can keep our prices so low.

16          CHAIRMAN STUTO: I'm guessing that probably impacts  
17 parking.

18          MR. LOURENCO: Typically, we have opened stores  
19 with 60 parking spaces. Our prototype is 75 at minimum.  
20 Some towns require a lot more and some require a lot  
21 less.

22          CHAIRMAN STUTO: Do you want to talk about how much  
23 parking you have here and why you think that it's  
24 enough?

25          MR. OSTERHOUT: My name is Rob Osterhout and I'm

1 from Bohler Engineering.

2 From a parking perspective we've got shared  
3 parking between the two uses; the restaurant use and  
4 the Aldi market. We have 148 spaces on the plan  
5 that we are proposing and that is in accordance with  
6 the Town requirement. We've got for the retail  
7 business, one space per 200 square feet or an 85  
8 space requirement. For the restaurant, we have 160  
9 seats in the restaurant and one per three seats  
10 yield 53 spaces.

11 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can you talk about the hours of  
12 operations of both the restaurant and the store? It  
13 seems like they may complement each other.

14 MR. LOURENCO: Aldi's is open Monday through  
15 Sunday. It's open 9:00 to 8:00 at night and Sundays  
16 it's open 10 to 7. We are closed six major holidays  
17 including Easter Sunday.

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: So, you're open all day pretty  
19 much all day long.

20 MR. LOURENCO: We're open every day but not 24  
21 hours. We close the doors at 8:00 most days - six days  
22 a week and then 7 on Sundays.

23 CHAIRMAN STUTO: So, the restaurant does a lunch  
24 and a dinner, I guess.

25 MR. MION: I know that they very often have busses

1 going into the restaurant. Are you making any special  
2 accommodations for the busses?

3 MR. OSTERHOUT: That's a good question. I should  
4 have pointed that out. In between these two landscaped  
5 islands (Indicating), we have accommodated for three bus  
6 parking stalls here. Right now what happens out on the  
7 site is if there are busses, they kind of park over in  
8 this area and it's not striped or set up for them. they  
9 just kind of pulled in.

10 MR. MION: That's where your store is.

11 MR. OSTERHOUT: That's right. That's where the  
12 store is going to go. Typically we see one bus out  
13 there on the site. I'm sure that everyone has driven by  
14 and maybe seen a bus. We want to make sure that we had  
15 capacity in case there was more than one. We have three  
16 and it might be a little overkill and we might be able  
17 to pick up some passenger car parking instead of the  
18 three bus spaces, but that's what we are showing at this  
19 point.

20 MR. SHAMLIAN: And you have accounted for tractor  
21 trailers getting into the Aldi's?

22 MR. OSTERHOUT: Yes, absolutely. That was part of  
23 the 13-month process that we have been looking at the  
24 site. When Kevin pointed out the original DCC plan, we  
25 had this constraint because of the property line

1 configuration and the location of the existing traffic  
2 signal and access - we had this constraint that we were  
3 trying to come in and turn the driveway and align it so  
4 we could make everything fit within the zoning setbacks  
5 by accommodating the lot line adjustment or the exempt  
6 subdivision by Town standards. We were able to push  
7 that building over and straighten out that driveway.  
8 So, that has been a significant improvement in the plan  
9 here.

10 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Any other questions?

11 (There was no response.)

12 Do you think that there are any efficiencies?  
13 Have you looked at parking real hard and  
14 circulation? Have we gone through that due  
15 diligence already? I think that I'm fine with it,  
16 but I'm not an engineer.

17 MR. VOSS: We'll certainly take a look at it as the  
18 traffic analysis comes in, Peter. We haven't seen  
19 anything yet at sketch.

20 MR. LACIVITA: I think that one of the other  
21 positive things here is that the applicants have  
22 acquired the building next to it so as this starts to  
23 develop and you start to see any constraints, I think  
24 that when the project comes in, we could maybe offset  
25 some of that.

1           CHAIRMAN STUTO: That cross connection is fabulous  
2           too. There is a lot of good things about the  
3           redevelopment.

4           Tim, did you have something?

5           MR. LANE: Yes, just one quick question. I don't  
6           know if I see any notations for lot lights.

7           MR. PARISI: There will be area lights within the  
8           parking lot. They will be restricted to the 18-foot  
9           height per Town standards.

10          CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, we look forward to seeing  
11          your application.

12          MR. OSTERHOUT: As far as waivers are concerned, I  
13          just wanted to touch on that with the Board.

14          We have three waivers that we have identified  
15          for the project. That would be the maximum front  
16          yard setback, parking in the front yard and in the  
17          frontage build-out we have the fencing and the piers  
18          that we have indicated on the front. We just wanted  
19          to talk about that with the Board and see if there  
20          were any concerns or issues that we need to address.  
21          It sounds like everybody is on-board with what we  
22          are talking about.

23          MR. LACIVITA: We are merging these lots, aren't  
24          we?

25          MR. OSTERHOUT: We are merging these lots; correct.

1           MR. LACIVITA: So, why doesn't the one there take  
2 over the setback and make it that you have met the  
3 standard? That waiver may go away.

4           MR. OSTERHOUT: That's perfect. We didn't know the  
5 answer to that, Joe, without getting an interpretation.  
6 That's great. We thought that might play into the  
7 picture and obviously that helps us with our frontage  
8 build-out as well.

9           CHAIRMAN STUTO: I like the decorative fencing when  
10 I see that. I think that's a nice addition,  
11 particularly in that area it will be well received.  
12 That will dress up that area very well.

13          MR. OSTERHOUT: That definitely will. It will be a  
14 great improvement.

15          CHAIRMAN STUTO: With respect to the other waivers,  
16 I personally don't have any trouble. Thank you.

17          MR. OSTERHOUT: Thank you.

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20                   (Whereas the above referenced proceeding was  
21 concluded at 8:10 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

