

1 PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY
2 TOWN OF COLONIE

3 *****
4 AFRIM'S SPORTS PARK
5 969 WATERVLIET SHAKER ROAD
6 BOARD UPDATE ON TRAFFIC ANALYSIS
7 *****

8 THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above entitled
9 matter by NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART, a Shorthand
10 Reporter, commencing on June 9, 2015 at 9:12 p.m. at
11 The Public Operations Center, 347 Old Niskayuna
12 Road, Latham, New York.

13 BOARD MEMBERS:
14 PETER STUTO, CHAIRMAN
15 LOU MION
16 BRIAN AUSTIN
17 TIMOTHY LANE
18 KATHY DALTON
19 CRAIG SHAMLIAN

20 ALSO PRESENT:
21 Kathleen Marinelli, Esq. Counsel to the Planning Board
22 Joseph LaCivita, Director, Planning and Economic
23 Development
24 Michael Tengeler, Planning and Economic Development
25 Brian Sipperly, PE, Sipperly and Associates
Chuck Voss, PE, Barton and Loguidice
Afrim Nezaj, Afrim's Sports

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Next item on the agenda is Afrim's
2 Sports Park, 969 Watervliet Shaker Road. This is a
3 Board update on traffic analysis. This is an 89,754
4 square foot air supported dome and club house and a 864
5 square foot pavilion.

6 MR. LACIVITA: We will turn it right over to Brian.

7 MR. SIPPERLY: Thank you. Good evening Chairman
8 and Members of the Board. My name is Brian Sipperly
9 with Sipperly and Associates. Here with me tonight is
10 the applicant and owner of Afrim's sports; Afrim Nezaj.

11 Thank you, Peter. We did want to come back and
12 give the Board a sketch update, although we did
13 receive a concept acceptance vote on the March 10th
14 agenda. We felt between the traffic study and the
15 issues on parking, pedestrian movements, banked
16 parking and the overflow parking that before we
17 advance to design further engineering and let the
18 concrete kind of solidify on that, that we get back
19 in front of the Board and talk about the findings of
20 the traffic study and the parking and the pedestrian
21 movements. We've made some updates to the plan
22 resulting in some of the Board's feedback and we'd
23 like to share that with you tonight to get a good
24 litmus test for us to be able to feel confident to
25 move forward through the engineering phase.

1 So, ultimately there was a letter from Barton
2 and Loguidice issued regarding the traffic study as
3 well as a parking count. To spare you the details,
4 Chuck, correct me if I'm wrong, but it appears as
5 though we have addressed and met all of the concerns
6 of the Planning Board of the traffic.

7 In essence, the traffic study really shows the
8 intersection of greatest effect is the T
9 intersection at Sandcreek and Watervliet Shaker
10 Road. Weekend peaks you're going from a C-B to a
11 C-D. So, we are really dropping one level of service
12 on that and it generally remains respectable and
13 acceptable level of service for that.

14 In terms of parking and this one was a little
15 bit hairy at the first go around. We had come up
16 with a bottoms up number for parking based upon how
17 we were interpreting the code for recreation at the
18 dome, how we were building up the parking
19 requirement for the fields and there was an open
20 debate on whether or not you felt that it was going
21 to be an over-parked situation, given your
22 experiences in the past and the other Board Members'
23 experiences whether it be the North Colonie Soccer
24 Plex or other sporting venues around the area.

25 We took a step back from that approach and went

1 to the ITE Parking Gen Manual, fourth edition for
2 soccer use. Really what we found were a couple
3 different conditions that I want to explain.

4 One notes that Saturday peak parking average is
5 58.8 spaces per field so it normalizes sporting
6 events, it normalizes other uses on the site. It
7 doesn't take into account the number of striped
8 spaces on the spot. It just tells you how many cars
9 are parked there, given the use. So, it kind of
10 takes all the other things out of the equation.

11 Second to that, if we go to that manual and use
12 the 85th percentile, which is a perfect design
13 target for us to use, at 65.2 spaces per field - we
14 are using in our math five fields concurrently being
15 used in operation. That equates to 326 spaces
16 required. We are proposing 388. If I got to that
17 manual and go beyond that to the highest measured
18 parking at all, 74 spaces per field at 5 fields is
19 370 spaces. We are proposing 388. We are not even
20 proposing ever to use field fields. I'm using five
21 fields to give the Board and understanding that if
22 we did use all five fields and used a published go
23 to manual for data, we are abandoning the approach
24 at the bottoms up on how we looked at parking and
25 we're going off to a different set of criteria and

1 literature to get that parking and it's all in the
2 traffic study and it's also updated in the most
3 recent narrative. I wanted to make sure that we
4 highlighted the results from the traffic study and
5 how parking came out.

6 Before I move on, are there any questions
7 regarding how that was done?

8 MR. AUSTIN: You say you'll never use five fields.
9 In a tournament situation you would probably just use
10 the four outdoor fields?

11 MR. SIPPERLY: Never is a strong word, Brian; thank
12 you. No, you're right. If you look at the current
13 operating situation that Afrim runs, the outdoor fields
14 - people do not pay the premium fees to go indoors. We
15 feel that is going to be an event driven situation where
16 someone says I need an extra field or something
17 happened. Can we rent the inside? He'll turn the
18 lights on inside and cools the dome down and says it's
19 yours for a few hours, but it's not what I call a
20 typical operating mode.

21 Any other Board Members have questions
22 regarding parking?

23 CHAIRMAN STUTO: You have more than adequate
24 parking by any standard engineering method.

25 MR. SIPPERLY: We do and how we dove-tail into

1 overflow parking - not only your comment letter, Chuck,
2 mentioned that tournaments are regular. They're going
3 to happen. We feel that we don't really want to design
4 for an event driven situations. We'd rather deal with
5 event driven solutions. So, we have asked the applicant
6 to go off and pursue whether it be a commitment letter,
7 a letter of intent of maybe something more formal with
8 the abutting commercial uses within the area; 900
9 Watervliet Shaker Road, an office park with over 400
10 parking spaces not utilized on Saturdays and Sundays,
11 just down the road from CBA, off, Airline Drive and they
12 are not operating on weekends as well. We feel that both
13 of those facilities are close enough to use a possible
14 shuttle service, but there are also sidewalks there and
15 pedestrian accommodations being proposed for this. We
16 kind of feel that it's the best of both worlds that we
17 have perfect event driven solutions for parking, in
18 excess of 2X of probably what we are going to supply
19 on-site very close to the parcel.

20 MR. LANE: In relation to the drive, it's two lanes
21 wide, but will you also have a dedicated bike lane
22 and/or walking path for pedestrians walking in and out?
23 Is that the plan? It doesn't necessarily have to be a
24 sidewalk, but it has to be a dedicated and marked for
25 pedestrians and bikers and so on.

1 MR. SIPPERLY: Was that a question?

2 MR. LANE: Yes.

3 MR. SIPPERLY: We are showing a sidewalk on the
4 east side of the project drive right now.

5 MR. LANE: If you're on a bike, you're not supposed
6 to be on a sidewalk.

7 MR. SIPPERLY: Are you suggesting that we do some
8 type of multi-use path that suggests a larger footprint?

9 MR. LANE: Yes. Because if you're on a bicycle,
10 you're not supposed to be on the pedestrian -

11 MR. SIPPERLY: But I don't make the street wider
12 when the bikes are on it, though. A bike is supposed to
13 be accommodating to the laws of the road and be on the
14 pavement with the cars. I think that the point is taken
15 well and we just want to point out that we feel that we
16 have adequate ability to bring guests into the site for
17 the overflow event driven situations such as
18 tournaments.

19 MR. LANE: I asked a question before with regard to
20 people going to and from the main building from the
21 fields and if they'll be crossing paths and so on
22 directly on either side of the building and when they go
23 to the restrooms and the concession stands, etcetera.

24 MR. SIPPERLY: Great point. That's one of the
25 updates that we came back with the Board - the

1 pedestrian movements was a concern.

2 Peter, one of your concerns was layout. Why is
3 the parking up front and the fields in the back? We
4 visited that subject and the applicant felt strongly
5 about the current layout based upon a lot of the --
6 the field trips that he does around the country
7 visiting these facilities and taking notes on what
8 he doesn't like and what does work well and what
9 doesn't work well.

10 To that point, if you notice your updated site
11 plans we dropped the parking spaces, we added them
12 back here (Indicating) at the satellite lot and we
13 did put in cross connections in everywhere. We also
14 added chain link fencing around these two fields
15 because that was a concern whether balls came
16 across. We got kids running in the access drive.
17 The applicant is pretty confident that the 40-inch
18 chain link fence is at the right height and
19 protection level for balls, as well.

20 In terms of accommodations and fencing and how
21 we get everyone around, I just encourage you to take
22 a good look at that because that was a change that
23 we added back in, especially how we are collecting
24 people from the parking trees and bringing them into
25 a central -

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can you give an example of
2 somebody who wanted to get to the central building to
3 buy a soft drink? How would they go?

4 MR. SIPPERLY: Sure. So, I'm spectating or I'm
5 playing on these north fields. I'm going to come down
6 sort of stone path between the two fields. I reach a
7 sidewalk that is going to be running east/west. I have
8 a choice equally distant to jump over to the sidewalk
9 adjacent to the north side of the dome here (Indicating)
10 and then I take the accommodations right into the
11 clubhouse.

12 MR. LANE: They are not going to be going between
13 parked cars or -

14 MR. SIPPERLY: That's right. We actually dropped
15 the parking space and hashed it out so that it's in
16 clear view. That was a concern. We don't want people
17 coming out of no line of sight - absolutely.

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can you go through the other two
19 fields?

20 MR. SIPPERLY: Sure. Same thing. You have a
21 combination surrounding the north end of the fields
22 here. We have gates and right at the corners of two
23 fields. You can either cross-connect going side to
24 side, so if I have Johnny playing on this field and
25 Billy over here (Indicating) and I'm the parent, I can

1 go back and forth safely that way.

2 CHAIRMAN STUTO: You get funneled to the cross-walk
3 though, first.

4 MR. SIPPERLY: That's right. I'm pointing to all
5 these different cross-walk accommodations that we have
6 in here. Again, in addition to that, we thought about
7 the parking and so what we did was we made these center
8 islands kind of collectors for pedestrians (Indicating).
9 That was one of the biggest things that the Board wanted
10 to see was safe pedestrian movements. We have raised
11 crosswalks so we are not opposed to the raised
12 crosswalks, reflective paint and things that can be very
13 visual.

14 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Have you reviewed all this yet,
15 chuck?

16 MR. VOSS: Actually we have. We actually had a
17 conference call with their traffic engineer and our
18 traffic engineer last week to go over the enhancements
19 and our folks concur with their numbers, certainly in
20 their redesign element site. It works very well. I
21 think that we are very comfortable certainly from a
22 traffic engineering standpoint that the site works very
23 efficiently internally. I'm confident that the parking
24 is certainly more than sufficient and that's based on
25 practical experience and anecdotal experience, you know,

1 having kids playing soccer all over the country. We've
2 been to a lot of facilities and seen how a lot of
3 facilities move. That has certainly given me a lot of
4 perspective on how they are laying the site out.
5 Certainly I know that Afrim has extensive experience.
6 They are being very efficient with the site.

7 In terms of the overflow parking, I think that
8 it works. You have in excess of 500 or 600 spaces
9 within a quarter of a mile of the site that could
10 potentially be used under lease agreements or
11 whatever arrangement they are going to make. I
12 think that the site works very well from that
13 standpoint. We are happy.

14 MR. AUSTIN: You were saying that potentially the
15 extra overflow parking - pedestrians could walk to and
16 from the new site. My concern is: is this going to be
17 appropriate crosswalk striping on Albany Shaker so that
18 they can cross over and then go down to the 900
19 Watervliet Shaker?

20 MR. SIPPERLY: That's correct. It is shown on the
21 site plan. Today we have an east/west crossing that is
22 currently crossing Sandcreek on the south side of
23 Watervliet Shaker Road and our proposal is to put in a
24 north/west crossing at this intersection point here
25 (Indicating).

1 MR. AUSTIN: That's Sandcreek, right? I'm sorry,
2 we didn't get plans in our packets.

3 MR. SIPPERLY: I apologize.

4 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Maybe you can bring that closer.

5 MR. SIPPERLY: Sure.

6 I apologize. I thought that we had a mix up.
7 We were going to use the plans that were submitted
8 prior and I was told that they were coming to the
9 Planning Board, so I thought that you had this in
10 front of you.

11 What I am referring to are the raised
12 crosswalks and sidewalks on either side. We talked
13 about the accommodations coming up the Watervliet
14 Shaker and here are the connections going across.
15 There is another speed bump on the north side and
16 then of course on the south side. And you can blame
17 the Shakers. This has not been cleared by Afrim.

18 You talked about emergency and then we also
19 talked about whether that be a secondary. There are
20 two different things. One is: Can I get in on the
21 dirt road? The other one is secondary. Today the
22 site is accessed through a dirt road without an
23 access easement and again, the current resident
24 described it as it was all in the family before. We
25 know that there is development to the east being

1 proposed. I have looked at it and I don't think
2 that they are going to tear down the Shaker
3 structures in a historic district. I don't think
4 that it's going to fly. I think that access to this
5 point is going to be critical for them because I
6 don't think that another curb cut is going to be
7 allowed. We're thinking about that.

8 Earlier we showed a plan that we just kind of
9 stubbed off of here and said, let's think about it
10 later. We thought about it a little more and said,
11 we have an 80 foot gap right here between the
12 property lines (Indicating). We are showing it here
13 with a dashed line - the access - but that could be
14 where we provide that access. Whether it's a Town
15 standard road or whatever it ends up being, I think
16 that 80 feet is plenty wide enough for a right of
17 way to get a private road in. We feel that's how we
18 talk about other access to the site.

19 Now, emergency access - I think that something
20 that we should pursue is something over that
21 existing dirt road today that gets us in and that
22 satisfies fire. I think that would be something
23 that would be easy to solve.

24 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Is that the best spot to connect,
25 Chuck - do you think?

1 MR. VOSS: Right now it looks like the logical
2 connection. As the site is laid out - as Brian said,
3 further to the north and the east of the site
4 surrounding the build out, you can look at different
5 configurations as they interconnect. That's probably a
6 long ways off.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: It could be slid further down. I
8 don't know if it should be in the middle of that or -

9 MR. VOSS: It could be located further down.

10 MR. SIPPERLY: We have a stone wall here that was
11 part of a large Shaker barn that we already know that we
12 are going to be doing a Phase III archeological because
13 we have to come through the road. We are trying to
14 preserve the stone wall and we're trying to work with
15 SHPPO on some signage and some outdoor placarding that we
16 talked about with Starr and SHS. We are really trying
17 to not come through and ruin anything. These are all
18 old historic structures, all being used today for
19 residential uses. I just don't see development to the
20 north of this snaking around these structures. I just
21 don't see this flying. I'm thinking that this is the
22 only logical way. Until we see a logical development
23 plan to the east and how that incorporates Afrim's site,
24 I just want to throw that out there as we have thought
25 about it. We have thought about where a logical spot

1 could be, but there is just a lot of unknown
2 infrastructure.

3 CHAIRMAN STUTO: If somebody wanted to access that
4 undeveloped site and they were taking a right in, they
5 may want to take their second right quicker, to get onto
6 that property, instead of going all the way down and
7 coming backwards.

8 MR. SIPPERLY: This is a really weird subdivided
9 piece. If it comes around, Peter, necks down and then
10 opens back up. This development - they have no way,
11 unless they were to seek access further down, that's the
12 way that they would attempt accessing the rear of their
13 own parcel.

14 The applicant, per the code, we don't need to
15 have handicapped access near the fields. The
16 applicant feels strongly and has experienced it
17 before that he actually wants handicapped spaces
18 very close to the fields. If I came through here on
19 my access, I'm now placing handicapped access
20 further from the access point of the field. If you
21 look at the code for ADA, you're supposed to have it
22 closest to the access. We are morphing into having
23 - why would I want to make the guy go further away
24 to a fenceline? It's not that it can't be moved,
25 but it would be violating Code.

1 MR. LANE: They're not going to choose to cut
2 through and walk over -

3 MR. SIPPERLY: If you choose to cut through an
4 intersection, good luck and run. I don't want to be
5 rude but literally, if people don't follow what we have
6 provided for them for a safe means of access, get a good
7 insurance policy and lawyer up.

8 MR. VOSS: It's really no different than the
9 parking lot layouts that we deal with grocery stores and
10 markets. You provide those corridors for pedestrians,
11 which I think that they are certainly doing here and
12 it's the customer - beware.

13 MR. SIPPERLY: We wrestle with this a lot in our
14 office about when do we stop? Are we trying to design
15 for that last person that you just can't control that
16 will do it? You wind up kind of stepping back away from
17 that position saying, I have to draw the line somewhere.

18 MR. SHAMLIAN: If I understood your rationale
19 correctly, you are talking that you don't want to put
20 the walkway there because you're going to need to move a
21 couple of handicapped spots to build it further away.

22 MR. SIPPERLY: We can.

23 MR. SHAMLIAN: You are talking about kids as
24 opposed to adults. My opinion would be move the
25 handicapped spots a little further away. You're only

1 talking about moving them 10 or 15 feet. When people
2 walk where they want to walk, you can try to herd them,
3 but an 11 year old kid is going to walk where he wants
4 to walk. I guess that I would agree with Tim that the
5 walkway should, in my opinion, be the most logical spot
6 where the person is going to walk and move the
7 handicapped spots a little further away.

8 MR. SIPPERLY: I was only giving you the logical
9 explanation. We are talking about moving some stripes
10 and it's the easiest thing that the Board could ask us
11 to do.

12 MR. LACIVITA: If I understand this right, you're
13 trying to take those two fields and herd them down into
14 one crossing area.

15 MR. SIPPERLY: That's what I heard, yes. I like
16 what we have but I think that it's an easy request to
17 satisfy if that is what is on the table.

18 MR. LACIVITA: You're going to be moving a lot of
19 people into one location where now you're trying to move
20 a lot of people in multiple locations. I see this
21 working and functioning a little bit better than to just
22 have one, but I'll go with what the Board is saying.

23 MR. SHAMLIAN: It doesn't have to be just one, Joe.

24 MR. LACIVITA: I agree. I think that you need
25 multiple -

1 MR. SHAMLIAN: They can have one in between the
2 fields and still keep the other one.

3 MR. LACIVITA: Being on both fields and watching
4 the crowds disburse, they are going in multiple areas
5 and not one location. If we could do multiple, I think
6 that's good.

7 MR. SIPPERLY: I'll be honest with you, I think
8 that this is the stuff in the details that we can easily
9 come to an agreement once we advance the design. We
10 just didn't want to go forward with grading stormwater
11 and then have a concern. I think that striping and
12 where that is should be a really easy thing for us to
13 nail out in the future.

14 MR. AUSTIN: Brian, where are the spectators on the
15 top field?

16 MR. SIPPERLY: Toward Memory Gardens?

17 MR. AUSTIN: Yes.

18 MR. SIPPERLY: Where are the spectators?

19 MR. AUSTIN: Are they in the same spot up on the
20 berm?

21 MR. SIPPERLY: There are two areas spectators can
22 go. Assuming that these two fields are going to be
23 level grade - we have a pedestrian pass splitting them
24 and obviously if there is a fence, people just kind of
25 line the field. We also have accommodated for the stone

1 path up here as well. Really that's just another way
2 around the field. Because of the way that the grade
3 works, this path would be elevated a few feet above the
4 trail. I think that the hope would be if the parents
5 wanted to stand there or pull out a lawn chair, that
6 gives them an area to do that.

7 MR. AUSTIN: The spectators are usually encouraged
8 to stay on the opposite side of their team.

9 MR. SIPPERLY: This is a usability thing about
10 spectators versus where teams are. You want to talk
11 about how you envision where people are going to be?
12 Your comment was more teams on one side and plans on the
13 other.

14 MR. NEZAJ: We're going to have to see where
15 people go. It's one of those where we are going to try
16 to put the fans here because you want the fans to look
17 away from the sun. Ideally, most games tend to be late
18 afternoon so you want the fans on this side. The fans
19 would be here. We can reverse that. There could be
20 times when they go sideways.

21 MR. AUSTIN: I guess my thought is that I see you
22 have the connection all the way to the dome. On the
23 right side field, have that side go all the way and
24 crossover the top, and then come down. Then, you're
25 directing all the traffic.

1 MR. NEZAJ: I know you guys are trying to solve
2 this thing, but I've been watching these. People B-line
3 to their car. You can have whatever you want, but we'll
4 plow it and we do it and people will go straight to
5 their car. I've seen that everywhere. So, we can try
6 to do that but they are just going to go straight to
7 your car. If your car is here, you're just going to go
8 right like this. It doesn't matter.

9 Currently, in Colonie we have a sidewalk. My
10 fear is always for kids because that's what I do. We
11 try to warn people. We send emails saying be
12 careful. The speed bumps, I think, are really good
13 that we do that. I was for the speed bumps and I
14 think that there is going to be enough striping in
15 enough places and you hope that people realize that
16 it's a park and you shouldn't be speeding, but
17 you're going to get people speeding. We're lucky
18 that we have everyone's email and we can
19 continuously talk to them and talk about it. I think
20 that the sidewalk thing - I don't want to build
21 sidewalks and have them go nowhere.

22 MR. LANE: I wasn't asking for sidewalks.

23 MR. NEZAJ: That's okay, but I think that we do
24 have a lot.

25 MR. LANE: Just striping for when they are going

1 off into the buildings.

2 MR. SIPPERLY: We are going to have raised
3 crosswalks, speed bump, stripes, reflective paint. It's
4 very traffic calming and hopefully people are conscious
5 of it.

6 MR. NEZAJ: I see what you mean here and it's a
7 good idea. Moving the handicapped is a no-brainer. All
8 the handicaps are here. I put them here, but we can
9 certainly take one and put it here (Indicating). I agree
10 with you. I think that this is a better sidewalk. We
11 are going to have a lot of things going here. Is that
12 what you meant?

13 MR. SHAMLIAN: Yes.

14 MR. NEZAJ: I agree.

15 MR. SIPPERLY: One thing came up about banked
16 parking. I just wanted to say that we are yet to
17 engineer the site. I presented earlier that we have
18 plenty of parking. I just wanted to throw it out there
19 that when we get done engineering it and we deal with
20 wetland mitigation and stormwater, we could have an area
21 left over for logical parking. If we do, we'll
22 certainly come back and say to the Board, look, we can
23 talk about that here. Here it is, but I can't earmark
24 that yet because I've got stormwater and wetland
25 mitigation to deal with yet. And I think that we have

1 really met the mark for parking. I just wanted to leave
2 the Board with the note that we did think about it. We
3 didn't just put it by the wayside and I think that those
4 are the areas that we have earmarked.

5 MR. LANE: Are you going with turf for maintenance
6 reasons?

7 MR. NEZAJ: For many reasons. I think that the
8 fact that we can't use fields in Albany until May
9 sometimes. It will allow you to use it in mid-February.
10 If the weather is warm, you can use these at any given
11 time. That's really the main reason. That, and you
12 never have to cut grass. Like today, when it was
13 raining, there were a lot of fields that cancelled
14 because of the water. We wouldn't have cancelled. That
15 stuff just goes into the ground.

16 MR. SIPPERLY: So, that was the update that we
17 really wanted to bring to the Board. Like I said, we
18 received concept and we just wanted to make sure that
19 some of these issues are kind of put to bed so that we
20 aren't wrestling with some of them.

21 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I think that it's great that you
22 came back. It's a great presentation and it gives us a
23 lot of comfort that we are getting the best project that
24 we can get.

25 MR. SIPPERLY: Thank you, very much.

1 (Whereas the above referenced proceeding was
2 concluded at 9:34 p.m.)

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

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 July 30, 2015

