

1 PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY

2 TOWN OF COLONIE

3 *****

4 MINI MART
1157 CENTRAL AVENUE
5 SKETCH PLAN REVIEW

6 *****

7 THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above
entitled matter by NANCY L. STRANG, a Shorthand
8 Reporter, commencing on October 6, 2015 at 7:25 p.m.
at The Public Operations Center, 347 Old Niskayuna
9 Road, Latham, New York

10

11 BOARD MEMBERS:
PETER STUTO, CHAIRMAN
12 LOU MION
KATHY DALTON
13 TIMOTHY LANE
BRIAN AUSTIN
14 CRAIG SHAMLIAN

15

16 ALSO PRESENT:

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18 Joe LaCivita, Director, Planning and Economic Development
19 Michael Tengeler, Planning and Economic Development
20 Nick Costa, PE, Advanced Engineering
21 Joe Grasso, PE, CHA

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1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: The next project up is Mini
2 Mart, 1157 Central Avenue. This is a sketch plan
3 review. Raze existing structure and construct a 5,000
4 square foot mini mart with an eight-pump fuel canopy.

5 Mike Tengeler, do you have any opening
6 remarks before we turn it over to the applicant?

7 MR. TENGELER: No, Nick Costa from Advanced
8 Engineering is here. We'll turn it right over to him.

9 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, great.

10 MR. COSTA: Good evening. My name is Nick
11 Costa and I'm with Advanced Engineering. We have
12 prepared the plan in front of you proposing the
13 development of a mini mart with eight-pump fueling
14 stations.

15 The existing site is located at 1157 Central
16 Avenue at the corner of Reynolds and Central.
17 Currently it's a proposed redevelopment and houses
18 the Ace Hardware Store. I think that most people
19 are familiar with that.

20 The site is again fully developed. It's in
21 the NCOR zone and currently the site statistics on
22 it are that there are about 28% pavement, 47%
23 greenspace and 25% building. Our proposal would
24 change that to 30% pavement, almost 60% green and
25 10% building. There is a substantial change and

1 there is an increase in the greenspace and reduction
2 in the building area percentages.

3 The site also currently has several - there
4 is one access point here (Indicating) and then there
5 is a large driveway here. We're proposing to
6 eliminate that driveway that is in conflict with the
7 intersection of Reynolds Street.

8 There are some of the other salient points
9 of the development that we need to have. We have 50
10 parking spaces and we also show a drive-thru. The
11 current tenant or original owner of the facility may
12 eliminate the drive-thru. The likelihood is pretty
13 high that the drive-thru will be eliminated.

14 CHAIRMAN STUTO: You don't see that much in
15 mini marts around here. Is that why?

16 MR. COSTA: That's exactly what it is. The
17 entity that is most interested right now looks like
18 they don't use a drive-thru. Again, because it's a
19 fully developed site. There are existing utility
20 connections that we are going to be utilizing once we
21 develop this.

22 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Is this a commitment for the
23 greenspace to stay greenspace?

24 MR. COSTA: Yes, it is. The large buffer area
25 right here - this is a large wooded area. We are not

1 touching any of that.

2 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Could you develop it in the
3 future? I guess I'm asking everybody that.

4 MR. COSTA: In the future, somebody could
5 develop that, yes. It's developable. It's not a
6 wetland.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: So, it's not forever green.

8 MR. COSTA: No, it's not, but it's been this
9 way for a very long time. It's going to remain that
10 way. It is a nice buffer from the residential homes
11 along here (Indicating).

12 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Does the side street connect
13 to other streets?

14 MR. COSTA: Corthell Street.

15 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Which goes to where? Does
16 that go to Osborne or Sandcreek?

17 MR. COSTA: No.

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: But it connects the whole
19 network.

20 MR. COSTA: They all interconnect back there.

21 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Are you asking for any
22 waivers?

23 MR. COSTA: Yes we are. We are asking for
24 three waivers.

25 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Front yard pavement,

1 setback -

2 MR. COSTA: Yes, the typical ones. The
3 building exceeds the 20 feet. The setback line is
4 here (Indicating) and we are doing parking in the
5 front.

6 The layout doesn't meet the NCOR design
7 standards.

8 CHAIRMAN STUTO: This wasn't my thought, but
9 someone had suggested right-in and right-out on the
10 side street. I don't know if you want to comment on
11 that.

12 MR. COSTA: The elimination of this driveway
13 almost makes this a need so that people can get to
14 this intersection by utilizing the existing driveway.
15 There are 50 spaces required by the Code and we have
16 50 spaces.

17 MR. MION: Wouldn't it be smart to do a
18 right-in and right-out on Central Avenue?

19 MR. COSTA: That is something that we will be
20 discussing with DOT. There is a turn light all along
21 Central Avenue - a median.

22 MR. MION: That would allow a left hand turn
23 in.

24 MR. COSTA: That's right.

25 MR. MION: If you want to get out especially

1 5:00 at night, it's hard.

2 Is there a bus cut off right in front?

3 MR. COSTA: There is; yes.

4 MR. MION: That's going to remain?

5 MR. COSTA: Yes, that's going to remain.

6 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We have a philosophical
7 discussion that you're better off having the busses
8 pull off so that traffic can get around or stay in the
9 lane and slow down traffic and allow them to pull out
10 quicker. You want to chime in on that philosophical
11 discussion?

12 MR. COSTA: I could make enemies with CDTA.

13 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We have our Town Designated
14 Engineer, CHA, Joe Grasso here.

15 Joe, I know that you haven't done a formal
16 review yet, but you usually look at these plans
17 before the meeting.

18 MR. GRASSO: We did and we attended the DCC
19 meeting and there is nothing worth sharing that came
20 out of the DCC meeting that we think would adversely
21 affect the project. The schematic design - a couple
22 of things. We may want to consider a potential future
23 cross-access connection to the commercial property to
24 the west on Central Avenue. It's nothing that would
25 need to get built at this time, but at least the

1 provisions for an easement -

2 CHAIRMAN STUTO: What about the property on
3 the side street? What is that zoned there?

4 MR. COSTA: The NCOR goes all the way to the
5 centerline of Corthell.

6 CHAIRMAN STUTO: What about a connection to
7 that one? Is it something to think about? Is that
8 NCOR there?

9 MR. COSTA: It is to the center line of
10 Corthell.

11 CHAIRMAN STUTO: How about all the way around?

12 MR. GRASSO: You mean in terms of limiting
13 access on Reynolds and the number of curb cuts on
14 Reynolds?

15 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I guess, yes.

16 MR. GRASSO: I would say that based on the low
17 volume and based on how much frontage this property
18 has already taken up on Reynolds, it's not something
19 that we would automatically jump to, but it's
20 something that we can take a closer look at. That is
21 something to be considered. It would affect some
22 parking spaces, but to pick up on Kathy's comment, the
23 Code requires one space per 100 square feet. It's a
24 rather large convenient store at 5,000 square feet so
25 that's where they're backing into the 50 parking

1 space -

2 MR. LANE: They don't count the area in Albany
3 County with what's under the canopy?

4 MR. COSTA: We are.

5 MR. LANE: Also, there are two spaces that are
6 in front of the dumpsters.

7 MR. GRASSO: Here is the thing. Here is what
8 I think that they are trying to do. It shows that
9 they are meeting the intent of the Code, but my
10 feeling is that even if you take out all of those
11 spaces, the site could still be over-parked. We would
12 like some analysis to justify that you need all of the
13 spaces that you're showing there. I think that we
14 would consider a waiver if you feel like the parking
15 requirements are excessive.

16 MR. LANE: I think that we should definitely
17 do that today.

18 MR. GRASSO: If you come back to us with some
19 empirical data saying that you feel that 35 spaces can
20 accommodate -- you're at the 90th percentile and we'll
21 consider it. It's just something to keep in mind.

22 We talked about cross-access. We talked
23 about the consideration of parking reduction. In
24 terms of access, at this time we support the two
25 full access intersections as proposed as did DOT in

1 their initial review. It is something that we will
2 have to take a closer look at as we get more
3 familiar with the site and the traffic operations
4 out there.

5 DOT did make some specific comments about
6 trying to understand how that two-way left turn lane
7 operates out there. That is something that we would
8 like at concept. I'm not saying that there needs to
9 be a traffic study, but there does need to be some
10 analysis of curb cuts so that we can understand if
11 that full access curb cut to the west is the best
12 location and best access provision.

13 In terms of the waivers that are required, I
14 think that Nick touched on them. I think that there
15 are actually four of them that were picked up by
16 Planning. They all relate to the building being set
17 back which I think is supported by the use. The
18 parking in the front yard also supported.

19 The interior landscaped island is something
20 that I think that this plan with some minor
21 modifications may be able to do, absent more
22 interior landscape island at least in terms of the
23 front of the building. That may be able to be
24 incorporated as it goes through the design process.

25 The one thing in terms of the residential

1 neighbor, the [SIC] Birdsall property on Reynolds
2 Street - even if we lose the drive-thru from the
3 plan I think that it's important that a good method
4 of screening is provided to separate the commercial
5 use from the residential use. Right now there is a
6 storage garage that serves the hardware store use.
7 Between that and the hardware store building, it
8 provides a strong buffer between the residential
9 properties on Reynolds Street and the Central Avenue
10 corridor. So, when we lose that building, these
11 homes will now have a clear view of the Central
12 Avenue corridor and I think that you will have to
13 address that through sensitive site design and
14 screening there.

15 MR. COSTA: Joe, if we do get rid of the
16 drive-thru, it will give us some area to do some
17 berming and some planting there.

18 MR. LANE: What is that green stuff in the
19 rear -

20 MR. COSTA: That's the edge of the woods.

21 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Why is the shape green? I
22 guess that's the question.

23 MR. COSTA: It's probably a brush and lawn
24 area. Instead of being treed, it's more shrub.

25 MR. LANE: And everything else is trees.

1 MR. GRASSO: It's a graphic representation.

2 MR. LANE: So, that's been included in your
3 greenspace calculations.

4 MR. GRASSO: Based on this plan - I'm not
5 looking for a finite answer, but if you were only
6 going to provide 35% greenspace, how far back into
7 that back wooded lot would the property line need to
8 go? Do you know what my question is?

9 MR. COSTA: Yes.

10 MR. GRASSO: Someplace in there - so really
11 all that is really surplus property based on this
12 plan.

13 MR. COSTA: Yes.

14 MR. GRASSO: In terms of the process, it's a
15 pretty straight forward site plan review. There is a
16 special use permit that is required and you're making
17 application for that.

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: For which use?

19 MR. GRASSO: The mini mart use -- a special
20 use permit, right?

21 MR. COSTA: Yes, sir; in the NCOR.

22 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Not the gas pumps?

23 MR. COSTA: By definition, mini mart has the
24 gas pumps. That's the difference between a convenient
25 store and a mini mart.

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: If it was a convenient store,
2 you wouldn't need a special use permit?

3 MR. COSTA: No, because there is no gasoline
4 associated with it.

5 MR. GRASSO: It triggers that. You're
6 accurate with your analysis.

7 In terms of SEQRA, it's an unlisted action.
8 Each agency will do their own SEQRA review. The
9 Planning Board will be its own lead agent for the
10 site plan. We have requested a short EAF be
11 provided as part of the concept site plan
12 application and we can get a review of it following
13 the action on the special use permit.

14 MR. COSTA: Right; our next step is the
15 special use permit.

16 MR. GRASSO: It's a good redevelopment
17 project. We don't have concerns about how stormwater
18 will be addressed. Obviously, it's considered a hot
19 spot because of the fuel. There are going to be some
20 design considerations, but nothing that the applicant
21 hasn't been through before.

22 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Anything else?

23 (There was no response.)

24 Anything else from the applicant?

25 MR. COSTA: No.

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Thank you for the look/see.

2 We appreciate it.

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4 (Whereas the proceeding was concluded at

5 7:37 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATION

I, NANCY L. STRANG, 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 L. STRANG

Dated _____

