

1 PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY

2 TOWN OF COLONIE

3 *****

4 DOLLAR GENERAL
1935 CENTRAL AVENUE
APPLICATION FOR CONCEPT ACCEPTANCE
5 *****

6 THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above entitled
7 matter by NANCY STRANG-VANDEBOGART, a Shorthand
8 Reporter, commencing on December 15, 2015 at 8:30 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 CRAIG SHAMLIAN
13 TIMOTHY LANE
14 LOU MION
15 SUSAN MILSTEIN
16 KATHY DALTON

17 ALSO PRESENT:

18

19 Kathleen Marinelli, Esq. Counsel to the Planning Board

20 Joseph LaCivita, Director, Planning and Economic
21 Development

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23 Chris Boyea, PE, Bohler Engineering

24 Caryn Mlodzianowski, Bohler Engineering

25 Chuck Voss, PE, Barton and Loguidice

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1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Next and final item on the
2 formal agenda is Dollar General, 1935 Central Avenue.
3 This is an application for concept acceptance. This
4 is a 7,500 square foot retail store.

5 Joe LaCivita, anything on this?

6 MR. LACIVITA: No, Peter, we're here tonight
7 for a concept acceptance. We'll let the applicants
8 get ready and move right on.

9 MR. BOYEA: For the record, my name is Chris
10 Boyea with Bohler Engineering. Here with me tonight
11 is Caryn Mlodzianowski with Bohler. This is the same
12 team that was here back in September to talk about the
13 sketch plan for the proposed Dollar General on a
14 growing and redeveloping section of Central Avenue, as
15 you're heading out towards Schenectady.

16 What I should start out with first - because I
17 believe that this is a public hearing and it's been
18 noticed and advertised, is just a plan to help
19 orientate everybody.

20 This is just an aerial (Indicating) showing our
21 site and where it's located. The heavy dark outline
22 is our site. It's about 1.7 acres. It backs up to a
23 residential neighborhood here. It is currently a
24 vacant lot. It's undeveloped. You can see Taft
25 furniture. It's that big store with a parking lot

1 just to kind of orientate you, as far as where that
2 is.

3 There has been some great redevelopment as it's
4 coming down Central Avenue, including a proposed
5 Aldi's store that is down here (Indicating). There is
6 a Sushi X that is going to be redeveloped. There is a
7 motel that we just tore down. There is one more motel
8 that is getting torn down here and, so our vacant lot
9 sits up here (Indicating).

10 The proposed development - Central Avenue is
11 over here to the left side of the sheet. The
12 residential subdivision is in the back here
13 (Indicating). We are proposing and we have worked
14 with the Town of Colonie Planning staff to put a
15 fairly small development on here (Indicating). We're
16 keeping it almost 60% green. So, it's pretty
17 impressive as far as the amount of greenspace. We're
18 not really developing too much of it.

19 We're keeping all of our building, parking,
20 pedestrians - everything towards the front of Central
21 Avenue. We've pulled the building up close to avoid
22 any waiver and reduce what we are asking for here.
23 We've kept the building - the back wall of the
24 building is 270 feet from the rear property line. So,
25 again, just to give you an idea that we're keeping

1 that up front.

2 Parking - this is a single tenant user, so it's
3 just Dollar General that's here. There are no other
4 ancillary uses. It's not a strip mall. It's not
5 multiple rental units or things of that nature. There
6 is no food prep here. There is no cooking, per se.
7 Our sewage and water usage is very low. We're about
8 60 gallons a day usage on average for stores across
9 the northeast here. There wouldn't be any odors or
10 those types of things.

11 We have 32 parking spaces that are shown around
12 the perimeter and up front next to the facility. We
13 have obtained a zoning verification approval from the
14 Building Department. We attended the DCC and
15 addressed a lot of those comments on this plan
16 submission that you have.

17 Caren and I attended the September 29th
18 Planning Board which was just a sketch at that time to
19 make sure that we were on the right track. At that
20 meeting they liked the site layout as we were pushing
21 everything up toward Central Avenue. We did pull the
22 building even closer between now and then to Central
23 Avenue - another five feet. We have avoided an
24 additional waiver, so that's off the table now. We do
25 not need a waiver for setback.

1 This Board did ask for a lighter building.
2 We've gone through three iterations of building
3 elevations. The first was laughed out of Town. It
4 didn't make it past DCC.

5 We came to this Board and you liked the where
6 the building was going, but thought that the colors
7 were dark. So, what we did is we submitted a new
8 building elevation that is much more than the standard
9 Dollar General that you might see out there. This is
10 the new proposed elevation. There are lighter colors,
11 lighter brick, lighter siding. This was an older one
12 that had the darker colors on it (Indicating). So,
13 they're much lighter.

14 The other thing that we have done that was
15 asked by this Board was to invest in the other side of
16 the building. So, this is the side of the building
17 that does not face Central Avenue but as you can see,
18 we've added in some more glazing on the side to break
19 up the building and give it some change. It was the
20 same that was proposed along the Central Avenue side
21 to tie it together.

22 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Are they real windows?

23 MR. BOYEA: They are real glass, but they are
24 opaque, but it is real glazing.

25 The Board commented that they liked the

1 distance that we proposed for the residential. So,
2 with the waivers -- we're only down to one waiver now
3 that we're asking for and that's property building
4 front out. So, I believe that the Code is asking for
5 80%. We've gotten close to 63% or 65% and we've
6 proposed some decorative fence and those types of
7 things to really tie in that frontage. We obviously
8 need the driveway on the sides, so we can't build that
9 out. We put all the parking to the side into the rear
10 of the building per the Code.

11 We're here tonight to just continue the
12 process. We're not looking for an approval tonight.
13 We're hoping to come back for final approval, but we
14 are looking for a concept acceptance here tonight.
15 I'm not sure if with the SEQRA process if it would be
16 appropriate, again to do lead agency. I don't think
17 that there are many involved parties here, but
18 regardless if we should start that process, we'd be
19 happy to do that and if there are any questions or
20 comments or concerns and we look forward to moving
21 forward.

22 With that, I'll turn it back to you.

23 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Does everyone want to hear
24 from Chuck on this project?

25 MS. DALTON: Sure.

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Our Town Designated Engineer,
2 Barton and Loguidice is Chuck Voss.

3 MR. VOSS: Joseph is going to hand out a copy
4 of letter, if the Board didn't get it.

5 We did a concept review on this application at
6 this point. I just wanted to run through our concept
7 review letter with the Board quickly.

8 As Chris mentioned, there were originally two
9 waivers associated with the project. One was for the
10 maximum setback which has now gone away since the
11 applicant has redesigned and pulled the building
12 forward.

13 The second one is the waiver from the maximum
14 frontage requirement of 80%. You're given the narrow
15 nature of the lot and the size of the driveway and
16 they can't achieve that, no matter what they do in
17 term of the 80% front building. So, we think that
18 it's entirely reasonable with what they have been
19 proposing so far which is the alternative to put some
20 decorative fencing along the front, which is what we
21 have seen in other applications along this area os
22 Central Avenue. They're also providing some enhanced
23 landscaping that we'll certainly see in more detail as
24 we move forward.

25 In terms of the overall use - the site is

1 certainly consistent and the use is consistent with
2 what we have seen along this portion of Central
3 Avenue. Certainly, this is reminiscent of the Aldi's
4 site, a little bit further to the east and how that
5 parcel was developed and the Board's considerations
6 with that. They had slightly different considerations
7 in terms of parking need. They were certainly
8 combining uses with the restaurant that's there. From
9 a land use standpoint this is certainly a reasonable
10 approach.

11 I think that if you remember from the last time
12 the Board's really kind of primary concerns were
13 access onto the site. They certainly have provided an
14 adequate driveway.

15 The site does not currently have a curb cut,
16 does it Chris?

17 MR. BOYEA: It's not a formal one. This was
18 two lots. We are merging them together. There might
19 have been a small driveway lot at one time.

20 MR. VOSS: So, obviously DOT is going to want
21 to take a look at the driveway certainly as we move
22 forward. We don't see any issues or concerns with
23 that at this point. Certainly within this stretch, if
24 the Board remembers, we had a conversation about that
25 at sketch review. We can certainly take a look at

1 that in association with Kevin Novak and DOT, once the
2 applicant gets to that point. My sense is that we
3 probably won't have any traffic issues. There is full
4 access in and out of this site as proposed with one
5 cut.

6 The only other things that we really kind of
7 saw at this point that the Board might be concerned
8 with a little bit is just stormwater. We always want
9 to take a hard look at the stormwater issues out here.
10 They're close to the Lishakill Aquifer and we want to
11 take a look at that. We think that we certainly have
12 adequate separation. Their initial stormwater
13 feasibility report seems very sound.

14 In terms of the practices that they are
15 proposing in the site, as we mentioned, the site is
16 serviced by sewer and serviced by water. The sewer
17 main comes in from the rear of the site. Water is
18 accessed up by Central Avenue.

19 I think that was basically it. It's a pretty
20 basic site and a fairly simple site plan. I think
21 that the concern might just be the building
22 aesthetics. The applicants have certainly taken a
23 look at that in response to the Board's initial
24 concerns. They have some similar design elements now.

25 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Lou Googled one of your sites

1 somewhere else.

2 MR. MION: I had the opportunity to go to
3 Ballston Spa.

4 MR. BOYEA: We did it, and we are familiar with
5 it.

6 MR. MION: I like that layout. Will it fit?

7 MR. BOYEA: Site layout, or the building?

8 MR. MION: The outside of the building.

9 MR. BOYEA: It's a different size. That's a
10 bigger building up there in Ballston. Some of those
11 features could probably be incorporated. Actually,
12 some of them are incorporated into this same building
13 with fold to the side windows and I think that we had
14 some shutters that were closed up. I can see that has
15 lots of potential.

16 MR. MION: There were a couple of different
17 ways that I was looking at and that's putting the door
18 in the middle.

19 MR. BOYEA: I see what you're saying.

20 MR. MION: You can't do that. I think that
21 Chuck addressed that issue because it's not wide
22 enough. The other thing that they did down at Key
23 Bank down in the Price Chopper plaza when they put the
24 false front on the avenue side -- because that's
25 supposed to look that way, then have your entrance on

1 the side of the building.

2 MR. BOYEA: Those are good points and we worked
3 hard on this layout not to come in with a waiver and
4 ask for parking up front. So, when we have all of our
5 parking to the side and then to the rear, we don't
6 want our customers to walk all the way down the side
7 and then all the way around the front and into the
8 building for grocery carts - carts that they're
9 pushing and those types of things. So, what we have
10 done here is we are trying to find that kind of happy
11 medium where we are meeting all the intents of the
12 Code here, but we want to put that as a corner entry
13 so that our customers don't have to walk around a
14 blank front, but we are dressing up the front of the
15 building that's there.

16 MR. AUSTIN: I'm looking at the picture too and
17 I see the awnings over the windows. Also, some
18 molding on the top of the building.

19 MR. BOYEA: We can combined some of those
20 elements potentially. We can go back to General. We're
21 almost there. We lack here (Indicating) and we can
22 look at putting awnings around those and sprucing it
23 up.

24 MR. AUSTIN: The cornis around the top would
25 dress it up nicely.

1 MR. BOYEA: We can look at it.

2 MR. MION: And if you did have the door in the
3 side of the building, lengthwise, you would have your
4 parking there, too. They wouldn't be walking around
5 the building. They would be walking north from the
6 parking lot.

7 My other question is: Are you going to have air
8 conditioning units there? Where are they going to go?

9 MR. BOYEA: That's different from Ballston Spa.
10 Ballston has them in the back on a pad. That was the
11 last year that we were doing them on a pad in the
12 back.

13 Energy efficiency wise, these are going to be
14 rooftop units. So, they won't be out the back. Plus
15 that helps with the abutting residential neighborhood
16 in the rear. So, having a pad behind our site doesn't
17 help. We're going to put them up on the roof, closer
18 to Central.

19 MR. MION: How are you going to block them from
20 view?

21 MR. BOYEA: It can be done with a parapet.

22 MR. MION: Especially across the street with
23 the Fire Department, that's directly across the
24 street. I would appreciate if you take a look at that
25 again.

1 MR. BOYEA: I don't want to speak for Dollar
2 General now, but you're requests are appropriate. I
3 think that we could probably work in more of those
4 components from that Ballston location. Most notably
5 those awnings. I don't think that it would look bad on
6 this building.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Just for the record, is there
8 anybody in the public like to speak on this?

9 (There was no response.)

10 Anything else form the Board Members?

11 (There was no response.)

12 Okay, I think that those were good comments. I
13 agree with them.

14 Anything else, Chuck?

15 MR. VOSS: No, we're good for now. Did you
16 want to establish yourselves as lead agent?

17 MR. LANE: I make a motion we take lead agency.

18 MR. MION: Second.

19 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Any discussion?

20 (There was no response.)

21 All those in favor say aye.

22 (Ayes were recited.)

23 All those opposed say nay.

24 (There were none opposed.)

25 The ayes have it.

1 We're looking for concept acceptance. Do we
2 have a motion for concept acceptance?

3 MR. MION: I'll make that motion.

4 MR. AUSTIN: Second.

5 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Any discussion?

6 (There was no response.)

7 You've heard all the comments and obviously we
8 have final approval coming up, so we'll take a vote on
9 concept.

10 All those in favor say aye.

11 (Ayes were recited.)

12 All those opposed say nay.

13 (There were none opposed.)

14 The ayes have it.

15 Thank you.

16 MR. BOYEA: For the public hearing because we
17 did notice it, does that remain open?

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We're going to take public
19 comment. Why is this a formal public hearing?

20 MR. LACIVITA: It's not. This is a public
21 meeting.

22 MR. BOYEA: We noticed it.

23 CHAIRMAN STUTO: You'll be noticing final too.
24 We'll take public comment then.

25 MR. LACIVITA: It's not something that goes in

1 the paper for a public hearing perspective.

2 MR. BOYEA: We did all that on this one.
3 Whether we did it wrong or not, we did the mailings.

4 MR. LANE: You can do it again.

5 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Subdivisions require a formal
6 public hearing as defined and it requires certain
7 publications. We still allow public comment both on
8 concept acceptance and final acceptance. So, you have
9 to mail out notices within a certain number of feet
10 and placard the property. We advertise it on the web.

11 MR. BOYEA: Okay, so it stays open. That's
12 fine.

13 CHAIRMAN STUTO: It will have to be noticed

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17 (Whereas the above proceeding was concluded at
18 8:45 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATION

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I, NANCY 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 STRANG

Dated _____

