

1 PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY

2 TOWN OF COLONIE

3 *****

STEWART'S SHOP
19 FULLER ROAD
SKETCH PLAN REVIEW

5 *****

6 THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above entitled
7 matter by NANCY STRANG, a Shorthand Reporter,
8 commencing on January 26, 2016 at 8:47 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 BRIAN AUSTIN
13 TIMOTHY LANE
14 LOU MION
15 SUSAN MILSTEIN

16 ALSO PRESENT:

17 Kathleen Marinelli, Esq. Counsel to the Planning Board

18 Michael Tengeler, Planning and Economic Development

19 Joseph LaCivita, Director, Planning and Economic
20 Development

21 Christopher Potter, Stewarts

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1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Next items are two Stewarts
2 items on the agenda and we'll start with the first
3 one.

4 Stewart's Shop, 19 Fuller Road, this is a
5 sketch plan review. Raze existing structures and
6 replace with a 3,975 square foot convenience store and
7 eight pump fuel canopy, and we'll turn it right over
8 to the applicant.

9 MR. POTTER: Good evening. I'm Chris Potter
10 from Stewarts. Like you said, we have a property
11 owner contract to build a Stewarts Shop at 1 and 3
12 Catherine, 19, 27 and 29 Fuller Road and 2 Pinehurst
13 Road. Three Catherine will remain a single family
14 residential property. We will not use that for our
15 development. The structures on 1 Catherine, 27 and 29
16 Fuller will be demolished to allow us to construct our
17 project.

18 We are proposing to construct a 3,975 square
19 foot convenience store with a 62 by 67 gas canopy
20 which will have four dispensers. As far as
21 architecture, we will not have any renderings provided
22 but we are looking to propose -

23 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, which way is Central and
24 which way is Nanotech on that?

25 MR. GRASSO: Central Avenue is to the right.

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Thank you.

2 MR. POTTER: So, the architecture is going to
3 be similar to what we have proposed in the past. We
4 will have a side porch here (Indicating) facing Fuller
5 that will have a patio and some outdoor seating. We
6 will be installing underground fuel storage tanks; a
7 15,000 tank and a 10,000 gallon tank. As far as
8 access to the site, there is currently a total of five
9 curb cuts. There are three on Fuller Road, two on
10 Catherine. We will also be required to go to the ZBA
11 for some required variances for the front yard setback
12 and the building and gas canopy as well as the
13 dumpster. They do not meet the setback in the single
14 family residential zone. So, we're on February 18th
15 ZBA agenda for that.

16 We did go through a number of different designs
17 throughout the site to kind of come up with this.
18 This is our best layout for the site and getting
19 everything away from that single family residential
20 zone.

21 Other options that we had were with the
22 buildings in the back and the gas in the front, the
23 building towards the front and the gas as the side is
24 probably desirable over the other ones.

25 As far as signage, the sign on the corner. All

1 the sight lighting will be LED lights down-lit and
2 recessed lights.

3 That's pretty much it.

4 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I'd like to ask the TDE to
5 make comments.

6 I know that this is only sketch but Joe Grasso,
7 do you have anything to add?

8 MR. GRASSO: I will make a couple of comments.

9 Chris, do you have an air photo that shows the
10 site? It's a significant redevelopment project and
11 the site is excessively developed. Do you have any
12 air photos?

13 MR. POTTER: I don't.

14 MR. GRASSO: Then in your packet, the Planning
15 Department provided some air photos.

16 So, basically, it involves a complete
17 redevelopment of the project site and for that reason
18 we commend the applicant for bringing on a
19 redevelopment project because they do come with their
20 challenges as opposed to greenfield sites. It would
21 involve the demolition of - there are four buildings
22 that would come down and all of the existing parking
23 areas would be removed and redeveloped. There is a
24 parking area that extends behind the house that you
25 own on Catherine, so that would be getting removed

1 which is also a very desirable feature of the project
2 site. In general, we are supportive of the layout as
3 proposed.

4 As Chris had mentioned, this plan has evolved
5 over the past year and a half or so. The comments in
6 your packet are from the DCC meeting and from the
7 Planning Department and are based on earlier
8 renditions of the layout and most of those comments
9 have been addressed with the current plan that we are
10 reviewing tonight.

11 In terms of access, as you know when we review
12 Stewarts we take a very careful look at logical access
13 points, understanding that Stewarts generally needs to
14 have two access points to serve their site, both for
15 their patrons but also truck deliveries. When we look
16 at available access points onto either Pinehurst Road,
17 Catherine Road or Fuller Road, we frowned on any
18 access being developed on Pinehurst Road only because
19 of the narrowness of that road and it's obviously of
20 residential character and we support the access
21 configuration with an access onto Catherine Road and
22 full access onto Fuller Road. Fuller Road has
23 afforded a two-way left-turn lane down the center
24 which is where we would expect most of the traffic
25 accessing and leaving the site would use. So, there

1 are no dedicated turn lanes. So, fortunately the
2 traffic that is looking to access the site will
3 benefit from that two-way left turn lane.

4 There was an earlier rendition of the project
5 proposal that included a separate rental building and
6 that was going to be located off along Fuller Road -
7 that has come off the plan so there is actually more
8 greenspace on the current layout than we had thought
9 would have been afforded.

10 One of the things regarding the orientation of
11 the building - the gas pumps are off to the side and
12 not in front which was a desirable feature. The front
13 of the store is facing the gas pump so it's facing
14 toward Catherine Street as opposed to Fuller Road and
15 that's something that having reviewed many Stewarts
16 plans in the past, we are familiar with the fact that
17 they need a direct line of sight out the front of the
18 store to the fueling canopies. In turn, that puts
19 what we would commonly see as the rear of the store
20 facing north down Fuller Road. So, as traffic
21 approaches the site from Central Avenue and down
22 Fuller Road, cars are going to have a view toward the
23 back of the site. So, that's something that we think
24 needs to be carefully considered. We're okay with the
25 orientation of the building, but we think that the

1 architectural design of the building needs to be
2 considered such that it doesn't look like you're
3 driving up to the back of the Stewarts. Fortunately,
4 although that's the back of the store where very often
5 we see the loading and deliveries and storage
6 containers behind a Stewarts, those facilities are
7 actually located on the side of the store away from
8 Fuller Road, which is good. It will help the lack of
9 visibility of those features from Fuller Road, but it
10 also means that we need to carefully consider that
11 because as Chris mentioned, we are in close proximity
12 to residences and the residential zone boundary. So,
13 some significant buffering and screening will be
14 required along the western side of the project site
15 between the parking area and the loading area and
16 those adjoining residences.

17 In terms of the waivers that were touched on, I
18 know that there were a number of waivers identified in
19 the earlier comments provided by the Planning
20 Department. In reviewing the current plan, I'm not
21 sure if any waivers would be required but that's
22 something that we'll get into when we receive an
23 updated concept submission and distributed for detail
24 site plan review.

25 There are comments from Albany County Highway

1 Department. They obviously own and control access
2 onto Fuller Road. Their comments, again, are related
3 to an earlier site plan proposal and reviewing their
4 comments to the current plan. It looks like most of
5 their comments are addressed. So, we think that at
6 this time we think that they will be in favor of the
7 proposed access arrangement with a new full access
8 being developed onto Fuller Road. That's pretty much
9 where we are at so far.

10 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I have a couple of questions,
11 but I'll turn it over to the Board.

12 I think that Joe's comments are excellent.
13 I'll ask the question. With respect to the front not
14 facing the main road which is Fuller and the back
15 facing the traffic, coming from the rear direction -
16 do we consider angling the whole thing? Can you turn
17 it 90 degrees or turning it a little bit
18 counterclockwise so that it half-faced Fuller and
19 half-faced Catherine? I know that Stewarts does a lot
20 of renditions for us when we ask them to -- or when
21 they did them through DCC.

22 MR. POTTER: We were just mainly trying to stay
23 as far as the single family residential as possible
24 and keep a 25-foot pavement setback to that line also.
25 That's where we are at now; we're at 25 feet with all

1 of our blacktop. To keep this and turn it -

2 MR. LANE: Are you going to be adding some
3 buffering in there too? You're not showing anything
4 now.

5 MR. POTTER: There is existing fencing that is
6 here. I don't know what kind of shape it's in.

7 MR. LANE: I'm talking about trees or bushes
8 and so on and especially around the dumpster area.

9 MR. POTTER: Sure.

10 MR. GRASSO: Just to follow up on Pete's
11 comments, there really could be two comments and I'll
12 just speak to if these were considered. One would be
13 if the canopy stayed where it was and the building was
14 rotated 90 degrees, so the front of the store was
15 facing Fuller Road - was that considered or is that
16 not possible?

17 MR. POTTER: Not for our operation, would it be
18 possible. For visibility to our gas pumps -

19 MR. GRASSO: And there is no way to accommodate
20 that off of the side of the building?

21 MR. POTTER: No. What we have done with the
22 porch on the side is essentially make this look like a
23 front. It would have windows and it could also
24 possibly -- we've done this where we have had a second
25 door so that it actually can function -- I don't know

1 how many people actually walk in but there are
2 sidewalks and we do show a connection to where that
3 could be used as an entry.

4 MR. LACIVITA: Peter, Chris has been working
5 with both the Planning Department and the Building
6 Department. He has been shifting the building around
7 and he has gotten the building as close to the front
8 as possible because there are utility concerns there
9 as well. I think that we have a setback issue of 45
10 feet or something like that. I think that you're off
11 by five feet from the back setback. I think that you
12 have a 12 or 15 foot in the front. Those are the two
13 setback issues that you have to go back to the Zoning
14 Board about?

15 MR. POTTER: Right.

16 MR. LACIVITA: So, we have been working hand in
17 hand, trying to get this site to be the most
18 functional as we possibly can. The layout here was a
19 suggestion of CHA at the DCC level, so I think that we
20 are really trying to make it a functional site and
21 from your overlay that you saw that Joe mentioned, a
22 lot of the pavement that you saw had been done back in
23 the day without approval so the site is coming more
24 and more into compliance based on the design that you
25 currently see.

1 MR. GRASSO: I think that the greenspace might
2 have been wrong on the plan, but we had run it through
3 some additional calculations. What is the change in
4 the greenspace?

5 MR. POTTER: The plan submitted - what it has
6 on here shows a 29% greenspace and we're actually at
7 41% with the plan that you see here. Today, there is
8 only 30% on the site.

9 CHAIRMAN STUTO: To continue with that line of
10 questioning, if the orientation stays the same, how
11 are we going to mitigate the negative view coming from
12 the Central Avenue direction? In other words, to
13 prevent you from looking at the back of the building.
14 You may have addressed it.

15 MR. GRASSO: We haven't. My recommendation
16 would be to do a fencing and column extension off that
17 building line all the way down to Pinehurst, like we
18 often see with the decorative fencing and the stone
19 columns so that front facade -

20 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can the applicant trace what
21 you are describing?

22 MR. GRASSO: That would be extending parallel
23 to Fuller Road - extending from that building corner
24 all the way down so that it basically looks like that
25 front elevation - that street line facade extends all

1 the way down to Pinehurst.

2 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Are trees a bad idea somewhere
3 in there?

4 MR. POTTER: I would definitely propose trees.

5 MR. GRASSO: I would recommend fencing and the
6 columns, some low shrubs in front and then larger
7 trees in the back.

8 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can we see a street view of
9 that and a couple of ideas?

10 MR. GRASSO: Sure.

11 CHAIRMAN STUTO: The house that is on the
12 residential street - do you own that house?

13 MR. POTTER: That is part of the deal; yes.

14 CHAIRMAN STUTO: So, what is going to happen to
15 that house? You may have said it.

16 MR. POTTER: We would either sell it or we
17 could keep it or rent it.

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: So, you're not going to knock
19 it down.

20 MR. POTTER: No.

21 CHAIRMAN STUTO: How are we going to screen
22 between the pavement and the house?

23 MR. POTTER: There would be landscape and/or a
24 fence.

25 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I think that all of those

1 things are important - how we screen from the adjacent
2 residences. That's my comment.

3 MR. AUSTIN: So, coming from Central, can they
4 put signage up in the back of the buildings, so that
5 they know it's a Stewarts? We all know it's a
6 Stewarts.

7 MR. GRASSO: Some of the other things that
8 should be considered are a possible gabled roof facing
9 that direction.

10 MR. AUSTIN: And a couple.

11 CHAIRMAN STUTO: That's a standard?

12 MR. GRASSO: Thanks to the Colonie Planning
13 Board.

14 CHAIRMAN STUTO: It should be the standard
15 everywhere.

16 MR. POTTER: We save that just for you guys.

17 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Any other comments or
18 questions?

19 (There was no response.)

20 Thank you.

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22 (Whereas the above proceeding was concluded at
23 9:01 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATION

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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 STRANG

Dated _____

