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PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY

TOWN OF COLONIE

\*\*\*\*\*  
ALFA ROMEO/MASERATI  
1101 CENTRAL AVENUE  
APPLICATION FOR SKETCH PLAN REVIEW  
\*\*\*\*\*

THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above entitled matter by NANCY L. STRANG, a Shorthand Reporter, commencing on July 12, 2016 at 8:52 p.m. at The Public Operations Center, 347 Old Niskayuna Road, Latham, New York.

BOARD MEMBERS:  
PETER STUTO, CHAIRMAN  
LOU MION  
TIMOTHY LANE  
SUSAN MILSTEIN  
CRAIG SHAMLIAN  
BRIAN AUSTIN

ALSO PRESENT:

Kathleen Marinelli, Esq. Counsel to the Planning Board  
Joseph LaCivita, Planning and Economic Development Department  
Joseph Grasso, PE, CHA  
Philip Koziol, PE, LaBerge Group  
Dennis Rigosu, Rigosu Syvestsan Architects

1                   CHAIRMAN STUTO: Next and final project is Alfa  
2                   Romeo Maserati, 1101 Central Avenue, application for  
3                   sketch plan review, raze existing building, erect new  
4                   17,500 square foot building with accessory showroom,  
5                   office, sales, vehicle prep, service space and car  
6                   wash.

7                   Joe LaCivita, do you have any comments?

8                   MR. LACIVITA: Not at this time, Peter. We'll  
9                   just jump right into the presentation.

10                  MR. KOZIOL: I'm Phil Koziol and I'm a  
11                  professional engineer with LaBerge Group representing  
12                  the applicant.

13                  Just to get your orientated, this is Central  
14                  Avenue (Indicating) and this is the former Albany RV.  
15                  This is the site location here (Indicating).

16                  CHAIRMAN STUTO: I guess Maseratis are selling  
17                  well enough to invest the money in this; right? Do  
18                  you know? They have a temporary spot there now,  
19                  right?

20                  MR. KOZIOL: They're exceeding their sales that  
21                  they are projecting. It's amazing when you know what  
22                  a Maserati looks like. If you're out driving around,  
23                  you'll see a lot of them.

24                  CHAIRMAN STUTO: Are they getting rid of their  
25                  used car lot that's there? Where are they going to

1 sell their used cars?

2 MR. RIGOSU: There are things that are in  
3 discussion, but we can't talk about it right now.

4 Alfa Romeo will not let them sell used cars  
5 with these price points.

6 MR. LACIVITA: Dennis, you talked about a  
7 number of projections being sold out of there. Do you  
8 know what they anticipate?

9 MR. RIGOSU: On the Maserati side, they're  
10 looking to sell about 60 a year.

11 Alfa Romeo, when they bring out all their  
12 lines, they're looking to sell about 450 a year. On  
13 an average, they're going to be selling about 500 cars  
14 a year out of this.

15 Just to give you guys a projection, what  
16 DePaula sells right now of new and used - between the  
17 used car lot that's here now and their dealer on  
18 Central Avenue - they sell about 400 new and used a  
19 month. The volume here is going to be very low. The  
20 price points for Alfa Romeo is going to be \$60,000.00  
21 and up. Maserati's are \$80,000.00 and up. If you go  
22 to the lot, you won't find a Maserati for \$80,000.00.  
23 That's base and there is nothing in it. They are  
24 selling for about \$100,000.00 plus. So, the traffic  
25 flow going in and out of that site is going to be very

1 limited.

2 MR. KOZIOL: I'll continue.

3 The parcel consists of two parcels right now.  
4 One is 2.99 acres and another of .16 acres. Those  
5 will be defined at closing and we'll seek commercial  
6 lot lines.

7 What you can see here is that the green  
8 represents the existing pervious area, grass, some  
9 scrub brush and there is an existing building down  
10 here (Indicating) offset from the property about eight  
11 feet.

12 CHAIRMAN STUTO: The building on the left is  
13 part of the used car lot now. What happens to that?

14 MR. KOZIOL: That is a separate building and  
15 it's not part of this project.

16 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Are they keeping it or are  
17 they selling it?

18 MR. RIGOSU: They're keeping it. Right now it's  
19 for used cars but that will probably move. It will  
20 just be part storage.

21 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Is there going to be a fence  
22 between that property and this one? Is it part of  
23 that lot or no?

24 MR. KOZIOL: There is an existing fence right  
25 now that gates off this parcel from that one.

1                   CHAIRMAN STUTO: Why isn't it part of this  
2 project? It's on the same lot; isn't it?

3                   MR. GRASSO: No, it's a separate parcel.

4                   CHAIRMAN STUTO: I happen to be there,  
5 coincidentally before I did this project and it seemed  
6 to be part of the used car lot.

7                   MR. RIGOSU: For what it's being used for, yes.  
8 It's a reconditioning center. They'll go to auction  
9 and they'll buy cars and they come here to get  
10 reconditioned and then they go out to the used car lot  
11 to be sold. Eventually, when the used car lot moves,  
12 this most likely will move with it because Alfa  
13 Romeo/Maserati actually has strict standards about  
14 parts stores and stuff like that. Right now we do not  
15 meet their requirements. This would probably turn  
16 into part storage. There are lifts in there now.  
17 They might keep the lifts in there. It would be a  
18 service shop.

19                   CHAIRMAN STUTO: It sounds like you're saying  
20 that you're going to use it in conjunction with each  
21 lot - in conjunction with the Maserati/Alfa Romeo.  
22 You say that you're going to use it for parts for  
23 them.

24                   MR. RIGOSU: Yes.

25                   CHAIRMAN STUTO: I want to look at it as a

1 whole. Maybe I'm not thinking about it right. It  
2 looks like it's part of it now, and you're saying that  
3 you're still going to continue to use it.

4 MR. RIGOSU: They do have a Maserati office in  
5 there that deals -- they do have a lot of used  
6 Maseratis that they bring up from Florida which are,  
7 again, reconditioned and then we sell that.

8 MR. SHAMLIAN: The question that I'm hearing  
9 is: Is this building going to be used for parts for  
10 the new building?

11 MR. RIGOSU: Eventually, yes but not until this  
12 is fully operational. Right now, Alfa Romeo only has  
13 one car available in the United States. The second  
14 one rolls out in October. Supposedly they are going  
15 to roll out a car a year over the next six years.

16 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I'll hold that question but  
17 something is not sitting right with me on that.

18 MR. KOZIOL: When we get to the eventual plan  
19 and layout of the building, there is part storage in  
20 there.

21 The proposed layout -- there is an existing  
22 access point onto Central and we'll maintain that  
23 point of access and widen it a little bit for truck  
24 access. Our building is set back eight feet from the  
25 side yard. We have maintained all the setbacks from

1 the adjacent residential areas.

2 The green, again, represents the pervious area.  
3 The gray represents the ground. This plan actually  
4 represents an increase in impervious or existing  
5 conditions. Taking out a lot of pavement and putting  
6 in grass.

7 MR. MION: You're going to make it flat at one  
8 level?

9 MR. KOZIOL: The existing site is terraced. If  
10 you know the site, it has an upper level and a lower  
11 level. In order to meet the grades to do the building  
12 work, we're basically going to have a continuous slope  
13 from this western side down to the eastern side.  
14 We'll have a small sloped area here and a gradual  
15 slope throughout this whole area right through here  
16 (Indicating).

17 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Do you have to bring in  
18 material?

19 MR. KOZIOL: No.

20 MR. MION: But you're going to get it so that  
21 you can drive a vehicle down there.

22 MR. KOZIOL: I will show you some turning  
23 movements in a second.

24 We will maintain this existing access point  
25 right now for emergency vehicles, down into the site.

1                   CHAIRMAN STUTO: That access point goes through  
2 that other lot; am I right or wrong?

3                   MR. KOZIOL: It does, but it's not a primary  
4 access.

5                   CHAIRMAN STUTO: I understand, but it goes back  
6 to my other point.

7                   MR. KOZIOL: Here is the existing proposed site  
8 again showing the turning movements for a car carrier.  
9 A car carrier comes in and loops around and comes back  
10 out through the site (Indicating). This is one reason  
11 why we initially proposed not having landscaped  
12 islands in that area because we weren't too sure about  
13 the turning movements for the vehicle. We will be  
14 looking at adding more greenspace in the parking areas  
15 as the DCC comments had recommended.

16                   Speaking to that, the DCC comments -- we're  
17 pretty much in agreement with all of those. The next  
18 submission, we will present all of this stuff that is  
19 addressed tonight.

20                   MR. MION: Just one of the concerns that I have  
21 is that you're opening up that curb cut that I'm  
22 looking at on the left. That's an existing curb cut,  
23 but it's been closed off for many years. You've got a  
24 gas station that has two curb cuts right there and  
25 you've got a street there. It's all bang, bang, bang;

1 right there. Isn't there a way that you can -- I  
2 understand why you're doing it but I don't think  
3 that's safe. I think that you might want to think  
4 about -- when you come out of the car wash and bring  
5 it around and bring it out the main entrance. You've  
6 got one right after the other there.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: It is close. That's a gas  
8 station right next door, right?

9 MR. KOZIOL: Yes.

10 MR. SHAMLIAN: Who is the car wash for?

11 MR. KOZIOL: The car wash is for people who  
12 have free car washes, basically.

13 MR. RIGOSU: That goes back to Maserati/Alfa  
14 Romeo agree that they can't intermingle other cars on  
15 its site.

16 MR. SHAMLIAN: I guess that would be piggy  
17 backing on the rest of the comments. Given the number  
18 of cars that are going to be sold and therefore the  
19 number of people who would be using the car wash,  
20 there really is no reason why we couldn't move back to  
21 the main entrance.

22 MR. KOZIOL: The turning movements in here are  
23 people who come in, park into the service area or  
24 service drive and they are going through the car wash  
25 and they go this way (Indicating), and then they'll

1           come out and exit this way.

2                   MR. SHAMLIAN:  What's the purpose of that curb  
3           cut in the first place?

4                   MR. KOZIOL:  It is to facilitate the turn  
5           westbound.

6                   CHAIRMAN STUTO:  You're not convincing us.

7                   MR. KOZIOL:  I hear your comment and we will  
8           take another look at it.  That's why we are here.

9                   This plan is addressing some of the DCC  
10          comments.  We had shown preliminarily connections to  
11          utilities and got the feedback from DCC and now we're  
12          showing proposed waterlines coming off of Central  
13          Avenue and into the site.  We have provided an easement  
14          here.  We will take our sewer and oil/water separator  
15          out the back to a pump and then pump it to a location  
16          that the existing building pumps to.

17                   Stormwater - we haven't really gotten into that  
18          yet.  We just got our geotechnical report back in.  
19          So, we'll be looking at that, also, in the next  
20          presentation.

21                   MR. SHAMLIAN:  Is the site going to be fenced?

22                   MR. RIGOSU:  The back portion will be.  There  
23          is a fence there now.

24                   MR. MION:  So, you're going to take the fence  
25          down and fence it in the front?

1 MR. RIGOSU: There is a grade change -

2 MR. MION: You have a fence up front and that's  
3 what blocks off the curb cut.

4 MR. SHAMLIAN: This is a view of Central Avenue  
5 right here (Indicating). I think that there is a  
6 chain link fence near the parking lot.

7 MR. RIGOSU: There was on the left hand side,  
8 but that was just a remnant of the Albany RV though.

9 MR. MION: Maybe you might want to consider  
10 putting some kind of fence up there, going across the  
11 front.

12 MR. KOZIOL: I think that was a DCC comment.

13 MR. GRASSO: There was a comment from Planning.  
14 The standard comment was decorative wall or fencing  
15 incorporating landscaping should be added to provide  
16 the minimum frontage build-out of 80%.

17 MR. KOZIOL: Out next submission will  
18 definitely show those.

19 This actually shows the Albany RV building  
20 which would be maintained somewhat during  
21 construction. In the interim, the applicant wants to  
22 place a vehicle display - a pedestal in front of that  
23 building. That's something else that we'll be asking  
24 for an approval for. The hope is that we can get that  
25 in that location as a permanent location, also.

1                   MR. RIGOSU: Maserati/Alfa Romeo run  
2                   independent of each other. We have worked with  
3                   Maserati of Italy on their standard finishes that they  
4                   use. We end up with the service to the left hand  
5                   side. We have a car dealership and showroom up front  
6                   and service in the back. In this case, we have the  
7                   showroom here (Indicating), service drive and service  
8                   area. So, we are not just looking at the back of the  
9                   building. We're going to up with building a canopy in  
10                  front of the service drive and have to display cars  
11                  underneath there to dress that up. You'll end up with  
12                  anywhere from three to four cars underneath this area  
13                  for display.

14                 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Could you walk that by the  
15                 Board, if you don't mind?

16                 MR. LANE: So, you have the service directly in  
17                 the back.

18                 MR. RIGOSU: Correct. We'll have a 10 or 12  
19                 foot canopy for cars and they will be displayed  
20                 underneath that. This will be the Maseratis  
21                 underneath this side and then the Alfa Romeos under  
22                 this side (Indicating).

23                 The building that is there now reconditions  
24                 used cars. It will continue to recondition used cars.  
25                 There are options that Mr. DePaula has about

1           relocating it, depending on what transpires there.  
2           When this gets built, if the used car lot that he's  
3           looking at doesn't have a reconditioning center, they  
4           will still be reconditioned here. When and if the uses  
5           get changed here, we'll be back in front of the Board  
6           to discuss those. The use that's in there now, even if  
7           it does change, it will probably still stay the same  
8           uses but it will service Maserati instead of used  
9           cars.

10                   CHAIRMAN STUTO: Will it look separate or will  
11           it look like part of the whole?

12                   MR. RIGOSU: We didn't discuss how that would  
13           be finished at the end of the day.

14                   CHAIRMAN STUTO: Meaning, will it look like  
15           something -

16                   MR. RIGOSU: There are so many moving parts  
17           right now with this building, we haven't discussed  
18           what is going to happen there. Even if the  
19           reconditioning center got moved somewhere else, this  
20           needs to really increase a lot for him to jump into  
21           that building. We have six lifts in there and selling  
22           500 cars a year.

23                   CHAIRMAN STUTO: Joe Grasso, do you have any  
24           comments?

25                   MR. GRASSO: Just a few. I think that the

1 Board has touched on a lot of them.

2 One of the things that we look at when we look  
3 at car dealerships on the site plans is to make sure  
4 that you designate between inventory spaces, employee  
5 spaces and customer spaces. The Board will look at  
6 the locations of those and make comments regarding  
7 each specific type of parking.

8 In terms of the landscaping, the Planning  
9 Department raised the issue about a waiver being  
10 required for the lack of interior parking space.  
11 There was talk about their intent to incorporate some  
12 landscaped islands. I assume that a waiver may still  
13 be required. That is something that the Board  
14 typically grants for a car dealership. Obviously, the  
15 parking area is visible from the public corridors.  
16 That is the one that you should focus on trying to  
17 incorporate those landscaped islands.

18 We agree with the comment regarding elimination  
19 of the one way out being unnecessary. I would say  
20 that when you come in that full-access curb cut and  
21 you start to take that left, you may take that line  
22 straight across just to clean up some circulation  
23 there. It may come down on your greenspace but I  
24 think that it will make it an overall better  
25 circulation through the site.

1           The Planning Department did raise the issue  
2           about the decorative wall or fencing across the  
3           frontage which the Board has commented on indicating  
4           that would be a desirable feature to build into the  
5           plan.

6           I appreciate the applicant already coming in  
7           with a delivery vehicle route which the Planning Board  
8           has asked for.

9           In terms of the waivers, the building exceeds  
10          the 20 foot maximum front yard setback and that is  
11          something that we think is appropriate for the site  
12          plan, as proposed. In addition, a waiver will be  
13          required for parking in the front yard, given this  
14          use. We do support that. We do appreciate the fact  
15          that they have pushed parking back from the Central  
16          Avenue corridor.

17          Most of the other comments from the other  
18          departments are minor and will be addressed as the  
19          plan advances.

20          Just in terms of SEQR, it's an unlisted action.  
21          The applicant has provided us with a short EAF for our  
22          review.

23          When we look at access across multiple sites,  
24          very often we will look for cross access easements.  
25          Because of the uses of the two lots and the fact that

1 this is what we consider like a rear yard cross access  
2 and each lot could operate independently with our  
3 without that cross access connection being made, this  
4 is not the kind of situation where we would recommend  
5 the Board require a cross access easement - across one  
6 or both lots. That's just clarity as to why we are  
7 not recommending that in our comments.

8 That's all we've got.

9 CHAIRMAN STUTO: If they sell that back -

10 MR. GRASSO: Right, and then that access  
11 connection would probably go away. Again, we look at  
12 how those lots operate and whether or not that cross  
13 access connection really provides a benefit. That  
14 other lot does have a developed access and only if the  
15 Board felt like - for example, if you wanted vehicles  
16 from that adjacent lot to be able to access Central  
17 Avenue and route them through the site, then you would  
18 look for a cross access.

19 CHAIRMAN STUTO: You don't want this lot to  
20 lose access through the second lot.

21 MR. GRASSO: Then you would look for a cross  
22 access arrangement across the -

23 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I don't want them to lose  
24 their right --

25 MR. GRASSO: So, you want to guarantee the

1 access to Fairfield Avenue from this.

2 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I think so. Don't you agree?

3 MR. GRASSO: I think that we should throw it  
4 out there and hear from the applicant. Obviously,  
5 they have some plans and see how that factors in.  
6 This site obviously has good access onto Central  
7 Avenue. There is a signal at Fairfield, so that is a  
8 benefit for left turning vehicles.

9 MR. RIGOSU: No, it doesn't. Don't you have to  
10 go around to Osborne?

11 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Maybe your right.

12 MR. RIGOSU: I'm talking out loud here but if  
13 Mr. DePaula ever did sell this, I doubt he wants cross  
14 traffic in his lot with the amount of money that he's  
15 going to have sitting there.

16 CHAIRMAN STUTO: No, but you want to make sure  
17 that they can leave the lot that way.

18 MR. GRASSO: Just to go through the adjacent  
19 lot - to go through this lot. It would be a one-way  
20 easement.

21 MR. RIGOSU: It's just a concern that I would  
22 have if I had an inventory like he's going to have  
23 here.

24 MR. SHAMLIAN: It kind of has that problem now,  
25 whether he owns it or not. Somebody could conceivably

1 do that, right?

2 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Where is the display area  
3 going on that? That one elevated thing that you were  
4 talking about?

5 MR. RIGOSU: That's right here (Indicating).  
6 The owner asked us to do it temporarily and then after  
7 we showed them the rendering, that's when he said, why  
8 don't we make it permanent? There just wasn't enough  
9 time to update all of it.

10 MR. GRASSO: Just to add a comment to that: Is  
11 there a reason why it's on that side of the access  
12 drive? Only because the distance from the sidewalk to  
13 your parking lot is a lot shorter there than it is on  
14 the western side.

15 MR. KOZIOL: The west side is encumbered by  
16 transformers in that area. You can't see it, Joe, but  
17 in that area there are some telephone poles with three  
18 or four transformers. You have a cluster of poles  
19 that support transformers. That's not going to move.

20 MR. GRASSO: In terms of the setback, I think  
21 right now your parking is about 20 feet back from the  
22 property line. You could recall that the Audi  
23 dealership along Route 9 where you asked them to push  
24 it back. I can't remember what distance they pushed  
25 it back. I think that it was 25 or 30 feet. It's just

1 one display space, but it would probably be within  
2 five feet from the property line. Right now, I think  
3 that their setback is 18 or 20 feet.

4 MR. KOZIOL: We'd like to put the display up  
5 before construction or during construction but we  
6 would be pretty much right on the property line with  
7 the retaining wall and the pedestal.

8 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I don't know. We'll revisit  
9 it the next time.

10 MR. MION: The stormwater -- you can bring in  
11 the existing system now and I'm assuming that you're  
12 going to include what's there. Where you are located  
13 -- it get horrendous when it rains and it floods out  
14 on Central Avenue.

15 MR. KOZIOL: We are aware that there are issues  
16 down there. There is an existing 36 inch that goes  
17 through the site right now. It picks up a creek that  
18 intermittently flows and it brings it out to Central  
19 Avenue. We're not going to touch that with this  
20 project. Our stormwater will be handled independently  
21 and discharged to that drainage system at a  
22 predevelopment rate. There should be no impact from  
23 the project.

24 MR. MION: Would it improve the conditions down  
25 there at all?

1 MR. KOZIOL: We can look at it.

2 MR. RIGOSU: I don't think that we're going to  
3 solve that problem ourselves.

4 MR. SHAMLIAN: Obviously lighting with the  
5 neighbors in the back - that's something that we'll be  
6 looking at.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: It looks like a great  
8 redevelopment project. Hopefully, you've heard our  
9 comments.

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12 (Whereas the above entitled proceeding was  
13 concluded at 9:41 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 L. STRANG

Dated \_\_\_\_\_

