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PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY

TOWN OF COLONIE

LATHAM FARMS RESTAURANT
RETAIL ADDITION
579 TROY SCHENECTADY ROAD
APPLICATION FOR CONCEPT ACCEPTANCE

THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above entitled matter
by NANCY L. STRANG, a Shorthand Reporter commencing
on November 28, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. at The Public
Operations Center, 347 Old Niskayuna Road, Latham,
New York

BOARD MEMBERS:

- PETER STUTO, CHAIRMAN
- KATHLEEN DALTON
- LOU MION
- CRAIG SHAMLIAN
- STEVEN HEIDER
- SUSAN MILSTEIN

ALSO PRESENT:

- Joseph LaCivita, Director, Planning and Economic
Development Department
- Michael Tucker, PE, VHB
- Christopher Ciminello, Kimco Realty
- Sudhir Kulkarni, Conservation Advisory Council
- Wendy Holsburger, PE, VHB

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, the official clock says
2 7:00. Welcome to the Town of Colonie Planning Board.

3 Joe LaCivita, the department head just
4 reminded me that we have a Planning Board meeting next
5 week because of the holidays and so forth. That's just
6 the way it falls because of Thanksgiving.

7 Do you have any announcements to make, Joe,
8 before I call the agenda?

9 MR. LACIVITA: No, nothing at this time, Peter.

10 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, we have four items on
11 the agenda. We will call up the first item.

12 Latham Farms Restaurant, retail addition, 579
13 Troy Schenectady Road, application for concept
14 acceptance, 9,000 square foot multi-tenant addition.

15 For the public, this is next to the Dick's
16 Sporting Goods where Walmart used to be in Latham
17 Farms.

18 We will turn it over to the applicant.

19 MR. TUCKER: Good evening. I am Mike Tucker
20 from VHB. We were here two weeks ago for sketch plan
21 review. The plan is basically the same. We have on our
22 most recent submission responded to the DCC comments, so
23 the Board should have all of that in their packets. We
24 are working through those details. The majority of those
25 comments we're responded to. There were a few

1 engineering details that we will work through as we work
2 toward preliminary final.

3 We received Clough Harbor's letter. We are
4 working on addressing those. The majority of their
5 comments were focused on that intersection and how
6 that operates.

7 Over the last two weeks we have done traffic
8 counts out there on the peak hour in the evening and
9 also on a Saturday. We are working on that analysis
10 right now. While we were doing those counts in
11 observing out there, we didn't see anything -

12 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can you describe the project
13 again?

14 Now, it has been formally noticed and members
15 of the public have been there.

16 If you don't mind, can you stand on the
17 left-hand side and angle that over so more members of
18 the public can see it?

19 MR. TUCKER: So, the project is a 9,000 square
20 foot retail and restaurant expansion next to the Dick's
21 and Field & Stream. It is in the area that the Walmart
22 garden center used to be when Walmart occupied that
23 space.

24 The garden center was about twice as large as
25 that. It was about an 18,000 square foot outdoor

1 garden center. The building footprint is much smaller.

2 We are proposing a new driveway and off of
3 the Dick's parking area and a secondary driveway off
4 of the rear loop road to Latham Farms.

5 There are 44 parking spaces currently shown
6 here. We have done a parking study which has also been
7 submitted to show that there is far in excess of the
8 spaces required to make up the difference for what is
9 required for this 9,000 square feet.

10 The restaurant is a 4,000 square feet Core
11 Life Eatery.

12 Chris Ciminello is here and was here two
13 weeks ago and described that in detail.

14 We are also proposing two other pads; a
15 secondary restaurant of 2,600 square feet and a retail
16 space of 2,400 square feet, whose tenants have not
17 been determined as of yet.

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can we get a brief description
19 of the restaurants? I think the public would enjoy that.

20 MR. CIMINELLO: Good evening, folks. My name is
21 Chris Ciminello from Kimco Realty. Core Life Eatery -
22 just like Mike had alluded to - they are going to about
23 4,000 square feet of this 9,000 square feet expansion.
24 This is a healthy casual restaurant. Think of something
25 similar to a Panera Bread. They started in 2015 in

1 upstate New York and into short years they have grown to
2 23 locations in eight states; one in Illinois, one in
3 Indiana, two in Kentucky, two in Michigan, four in Ohio,
4 three in Pennsylvania and one in Utah and not
5 surprisingly nine in New York. Their New York locations
6 are in Amherst, Clarence, Greece, Henrietta, Ithaca, New
7 Hartford, Syracuse, Vestal and Webster.

8 At this location they will have 12 full-time
9 employees and operate from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
10 Their goal, like I said, is to provide the public and
11 their customers with a healthy alternative in a fast
12 paced environment.

13 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Thank you. I appreciate that.

14 MR. TUCKER: As I mentioned, we have submitted
15 the response to the DCC comments. We have heard the
16 concerns from the last Planning Board meeting about
17 pedestrian crossings of the driveway into the parking
18 area. We will sign it as appropriate and provide
19 crosswalks if we feel that it is needed and we will work
20 with Clough Harbor on that to determine the spots for
21 crossing.

22 CHAIRMAN STUTO: You don't have anything else
23 to tell us on that?

24 The first point was that they have ample
25 parking. We don't doubt that. There is a giant parking

1 lot.

2 With respect to the pedestrian traffic, do
3 you have anything in addition to tell us from the last
4 meeting?

5 MR. TUCKER: We are willing to provide an
6 additional crosswalk to bring people closer to the front
7 of the restaurant or signage or whatever we need to
8 provide some way finding. It is really no different than
9 how it operates out there today.

10 This drive aisle continues past Dick's and
11 Field & Stream. Everyone parks on the opposite side of
12 that. We don't see it as a huge concern, but we will
13 provide any signage and sidewalks or crosswalks, as
14 necessary to get people in there.

15 Also, when the garden center was there, there
16 was also an outdoor entrance with a cashier located
17 there so people could come in at that same spot that
18 they would be coming into the restaurant today and
19 using that. Again, other than signing it and providing
20 crosswalks, we don't feel that there is a lot that is
21 necessarily needed for that.

22 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Is that the end of your
23 presentation?

24 MR. TUCKER: Yes.

25 CHAIRMAN STUTO: This has been reviewed by our

1 Town Designated Engineer, CHA. We have Joe Romano
2 representing them.

3 Joe, can you give us your comments on this
4 project?

5 MR. ROMANO: Sure. We had issued a letter on
6 November 3 which the Planning Board has. Many of the
7 comments that we had were touched on in the presentation
8 and generally the comments that were made from DCC have
9 been addressed.

10 Since we have issued our letter, we did
11 receive and review the parking analysis and there does
12 appear to be ample parking to support the use.

13 I guess the two outstanding or remaining
14 items that we had put into our letter are the
15 pedestrian access creating a stronger crosswalk or
16 signage and then the analysis of Erin Drive in terms
17 of the queuing and traffic circulation.

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can you get specific? Do you
19 have any comment or recommendations?

20 MR. ROMANO: Really, until we see the data on
21 the traffic analysis in terms of - is the additional use
22 going to cause potential queuing or backup of that
23 intersection. Until we see that data -

24 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, this is a voting item
25 tonight. Are there any members of the public looking to

1 speak on this particular project?

2 MR. KULKARNI: My name is Sudir Kulkarni and I
3 am from the CAC. These are our comments.

4 When the landscaping plan is presented, the
5 trees that are replacing the trees removed should be
6 the same size as those removed. Trees and shrubbery
7 should be native and wind tolerant. Those are our
8 comments.

9 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Thank you.

10 Does the applicant have any problem with
11 those comments?

12 MR. TUCKER: No.

13 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We will open it up to the
14 Board.

15 Craig?

16 MR. SHAMLIAN: I am a little concerned about
17 the northern entrance. That area bottlenecks down.
18 Obviously, with this, it is going to get worse. That is
19 a difficult left heading back to the Route 2.

20 CHAIRMAN STUTO: You are saying people who are
21 leaving the mall?

22 MR. SHAMLIAN: Yes.

23 MR. TUCKER: When we were out there doing those
24 traffic counts and observations, over a two-hour period
25 the traffic taking that left turn only backed up to this

1 driveway location (Indicating) about eight times over a
2 two-hour period. So, it's not something that happens all
3 that frequently to be a concern. The fact that there is
4 a second way out -

5 MR. SHAMLIAN: The other one is no better.

6 MR. TUCKER: It is no better, but it is a
7 second way out. It is a parking lot. It is an access
8 aisle into a parking lot. It is not a public roadway.
9 It's no different from the rest of the access aisles in
10 the parking lot.

11 MR. SHAMLIAN: Except that people entering and
12 making a right to go down toward the other stores are
13 coming around that corner and you have a quick turn into
14 what is now this parking lot for Core Life and the rest
15 of the stores.

16 MR. TUCKER: We understand that it is a
17 concern.

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: How do you see that, Joe
19 Romano?

20 MR. ROMANO: The queuing and the backup of that
21 is really what we have commented on.

22 What time did you do the traffic counts?

23 MR. HOLSBERGER: I am Wendy Holsberger from
24 VHB, as well.

25 We did p.m. counts 4:00 to 6:00 and then

1 Saturday counts from 11:00 to 1:00. I think it was
2 like on November 11th or so of that week.

3 I live in Colonie and I am in this plaza all
4 the time. There is a big difference to how that
5 intersection is now compared to what it was when
6 Walmart was there. I definitely see a difference. When
7 Mike was referring to those vehicle cues, it doesn't
8 queue back as far as it may have before as
9 consistently as it has. That is something that we are
10 looking at. Like we said, we have that data and we are
11 running to those numbers.

12 A couple of things to think about is if you
13 are coming in from Route 2 and you're going to come in
14 here (Indicating) you are more likely to come in here
15 and kind of passed through this parking instead of
16 passing and coming in and doing a right and a right.
17 This is unnecessarily going to be the primary move
18 there.

19 MR. SHAMLIAN: Except that 44 spots is not
20 anywhere close to enough parking spaces for the stores
21 that are going in there. Core Life wants more than 44
22 alone.

23 MS. HOLSBERGER: Right. Again, people might
24 come in and go on this side (Indicating). I was one of
25 those who always used to park over here because I didn't

1 want to deal with the main entrance. When it was a
2 Walmart, I have gone through and have been a pedestrian
3 and come in here and parked in this area. That is
4 exactly what we are looking at. Part of it is that the
5 focus is not only vests. There will be people that come
6 in from the Home Depot side and come in from the
7 four-way stop and come into the back of this parking lot
8 and not necessarily be in that one focal area. That is
9 exactly what we are looking at and into more detail.

10 I do know from personal experience that it is
11 a lot different there. It is not backing up and is as
12 congested and busy as it was when it was the Walmart.
13 There definitely was more traffic.

14 MR. SHAMLIAN: Agreed, but you also need to
15 take into account that there are 30,000 or 40,000 square
16 feet of empty space in that plaza right now.

17 MR. HOLSBERGER: We understand that and we have
18 run some preliminary numbers to provide a worst case. We
19 are assuming about 75% of the trips from this site will
20 be here, which I think is pretty conservative
21 considering we are not pulling as many into here
22 (Indicating) because we want to provide a worst case.
23 From the rest of the plaza, we are putting 30% or 40% of
24 that traffic also coming here through and also adding in
25 the Uno. We are definitely accounting for all of that

1 in the analysis.

2 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Thank you.

3 Chief?

4 MR. HEIDER: No.

5 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, any other final comment?

6 (There was no response.)

7 I think that the store - I think it is a good
8 use of the space. I guess we will work out the traffic
9 issues as we go forward - and the access.

10 We are here for an application for concept
11 acceptance. Do we have a motion?

12 MS. DALTON: I'll make a motion.

13 MR. MION: Second.

14 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Any discussion?

15 (There was no response)

16 All those in favor, say aye.

17 (Ayes were recited.)

18 All those opposed say nay.

19 (That were none opposed.)

20 The ayes have it.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. TUCKER: Thank you.

23 (With the above entitled proceeding is concluded at
24 7:16 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.

Dated: _____

NANCY L. STRANG
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