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PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY

TOWN OF COLONIE

ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX
941 ALBANY SHAKER ROAD
APPLICATION FOR SKETCH PLAN REVIEW

THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above entitled matter
by NANCY L. STRANG, a Shorthand Reporter commencing
on May 8, 2018 at 7:02 p.m. at The Public Operations
Center, 347 Old Niskayuna Road, Latham, New York

BOARD MEMBERS:
PETER STUTO, CHAIRMAN
LOU MION
CRAIG SHAMLIAN
SUSAN MILSTEIN
KATHLEEN DALTON
STEVEN HEIDER

ALSO PRESENT:

Michael C. Magguilli, Esq., Town Attorney
Michael Tengeler, Planning and Economic Development
Department
Daniel Hershberg, PE, Hershberg and Hershberg
Charles Voss, PE, and Barton and Loguidice
Keith Ferraro

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Good evening everyone. Welcome
2 to the Town of Colonie Planning Board meeting. We have
3 four items on the agenda. We are going to get started.

4 Joe, do you have any business you like to
5 tell us about before we call up the agenda?

6 MR. LACIVITA: Nothing at this time, Peter.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: The first item on the agenda
8 is Entertainment Complex, 941 Albany Shaker Road,
9 application for sketch plan review, one story 25,000
10 square foot indoor entertainment facility.

11 MR. LACIVITA: The project is here for sketch
12 tonight. It was at our DCC, Development Coordination
13 Committee in 2018. It is in the airport business area
14 district. It's in the airport area GIS. Overall, it is a
15 redevelopment of four existing lots.

16 With us is Mr. Hershberg.

17 MR. HERSHBERG: Thank you, Joe.

18 My name is Daniel Hershberg with the firm of
19 Hershberg and Hershberg. I am here tonight
20 representing Keith Ferraro who is the applicant and
21 sitting right there (Indicating). He can answer any
22 operational questions about an entertainment center.
23 I don't know how to operate one.

24 In yellow we are showing what we call first
25 the phase of the building. The second phase will only

1 get built if the business warrants it. I understand
2 that may very well may be a slightly different use.

3 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can you tell us where Albany
4 Shaker Road is, just so I can orient myself?

5 MR. HERSHBERG: Yes, this is Albany Shaker Road
6 (Indicating). This is Wade Road. It adjoins other
7 commercial uses at this location here. There are
8 currently five buildings along the road here. There is
9 an out-building. There is a commercial use at this point
10 here. There are a couple residential uses, which the
11 applicant would like to demolish now. We would like to
12 leave these two buildings up and continue to rent them,
13 providing that there is no need for that additional
14 parking.

15 Regarding parking for an entertainment
16 center, it talks about one per 50 square feet of
17 entertainment area. Although the building is over
18 20,000 square feet, if you take a look at the
19 building floor plan an awful lot of circulation is
20 based on bathrooms, kitchens, meeting rooms and stuff
21 like that. So, we determined that the entertainment
22 space and there is approximately 10,000 square feet.
23 So, we propose to provide a minimum of 200 parking
24 spots, which we do.

25 What we are showing here in the light gray is

1 216 parking spots. We also show a roadway
2 circumnavigating the building for fire protection. It
3 also provides a space for some bus drop-offs.

4 Keith tells us that there are many times when
5 people like to come in large groups and come by bus
6 rather than drive cars. Groups of students that come
7 in as a class trip would primarily ride by bus. The
8 buses could park back here (Indicating) and when they
9 leave, they can load up and go out in that direction.

10 We show a one-way circulation on that, but it
11 will be okay for fire protection and is only used for
12 accessibility for other buses were emergency
13 vehicles.

14 We have a rather large crosswalk where
15 everybody can walk into the front entrance which is
16 right here. We gave you a building elevation and
17 there is another version of it. The only thing that
18 we changed over the one that we submitted to you, was
19 the logo. He has advanced his logo with new detail,
20 but the building elevation remains the same other
21 than that.

22 We are in the process of doing infiltration
23 tests but based upon the wet soil survey, we think
24 that we primarily find that we have Colonie Sands.
25 So, consequently for storm water management, we

1 intend to use porous pavement for storm water
2 management. So, I think that you know what my
3 original intention is. I use it every place that I
4 can. It works very well for here. We may very well
5 have to add some subsurface recharge basins for the
6 roof area since we don't want to encumber the area
7 with any open basins. We don't think it is suitable.
8 There are an awful lot of children that will be on
9 site. I am not a fan of large open basins.

10 We do have a SWPPP basin down here. This may
11 very well be a shallow SWPPP basin like a dry swale,
12 or it might be underground.

13 There are wetlands on the site. That is this
14 area right here (Indicating). There is a stream
15 course on the site, so we also have that 100-foot
16 buffer area from the stream course which means
17 essentially this portion cannot be used. The wetlands
18 are over 73,000 square feet. So, almost two acres of
19 the site is either wetlands or buffered area.

20 Like I said, we banked 29 parking spots. We
21 will only put them in if they are really needed. We
22 won't really know until we get an operation. Mr.
23 Ferraro currently owns a facility up in Glens Falls
24 but to base it on that would be difficult for us to
25 figure the parking demand here. It is a different

1 market and a slightly different modality of items he
2 intends to put in the entertainment center.

3 There is an existing sewer lateral which
4 served one of the homes previously. We intend to try
5 to reuse it for the building. Water service will go
6 straight out to Albany Shaker Road. There is an
7 existing water main at Albany Shaker Road and we will
8 bring it in there and there (Indicating).

9 There are two curb cuts that we intend to
10 close. We intend to reuse one curb cut. That's the
11 existing curb cut that goes to the existing building.
12 We will have to modify it to have the proper radius
13 that DOT requires. Either that, or get a variance
14 from it. The radius is shorter than what DEC requires
15 for a commercial building. We don't anticipate that
16 there will be many trucks arriving - large trucks
17 arriving except when equipment is delivered, but we
18 will have to accommodate for the buses that we intend
19 to run into the site. The key turning radius will be
20 for the buses. We have run a bus template to go
21 entirely around the site. We ran it based upon a
22 larger bus and not just the school bus.

23 I think I cover the basic issues and we are
24 prepared to answer the questions the Board may have.

25 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, I'm going to ask some

1 basic questions. I just want to make sure that I
2 understand the project.

3 There is a comment in here about variances if
4 you don't knock down all the residential buildings.
5 Did you say you were knocking them all down?

6 MR. HERSHBERG: No, we are knocking down to
7 residential buildings and one commercial building.

8 CHAIRMAN STUTO: How many residences are left?
9 Maybe I am not reading this right. The comment from the
10 Town Department says if the residences stay, you need a
11 variance to keep the residences.

12 MR. LACIVITA: That was because of the
13 subdivision that was being proposed in the beginning and
14 the Building Department couldn't have it on this parcel.

15 Right now, we are not doing the subdivision,
16 Dan?

17 MR. HERSHBERG: We would leave it on a
18 commercial parcel and understand they can stay and that
19 would be assessed as commercial. If the use can't be
20 there, they will have to address that by asking for
21 variance or knock them down, too.

22 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I was confused about the
23 parking. You said one per 50 square feet.

24 MR. HERSHBERG: Of entertainment area.

25 CHAIRMAN STUTO: It's just the amount of

1 reduction they have - I am all for not over parking the
2 place. It was so radical. You went from 20,000 feet to
3 10,000, or 25,000 to 10,000. Can you explain that?

4 MR. HERSHBERG: I don't know whether I showed
5 you the floor plan.

6 CHAIRMAN STUTO: So, you went from 25,000 to
7 10,000. The building is 25,000, but you only want us to
8 count 10,000. That is a lot.

9 MR. HERSHBERG: I think that essentially if you
10 look at the floor plan, you will understand why there are
11 areas for various uses. The uses - these are party rooms
12 (Indicating). This is a kitchen. These are bathrooms.
13 This is a hallway. This is café seating in the lodge. A
14 lot of this area -- and this is management's storage
15 area. You can see that a large part of the building is
16 not being used for what we call the entertainment. This
17 is laser tag, ninja, spider zone and arcade. Those are
18 the entertainment areas. If you figure that those areas
19 - we figured that to be 10,000 square feet.

20 CHAIRMAN STUTO: But you have to attribute some
21 parking to the other uses, as well.

22 MR. HERSHBERG: No, the Code says that an
23 entertainment center is based upon so much per 50 gross
24 square feet of entertainment. I think that we would
25 assume that there would be other auxiliary uses, or they

1 would have just pasted upon gross square footage.

2 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Chuck, do you have any
3 interpretation?

4 MR. VOSS: I think that we would want to look
5 at it, Peter. I think we would want to take a closer
6 look.

7 MR. SHAMLIAN: I'm not sure party would
8 generate -

9 MR. VOSS: I don't know the parking standard
10 is.

11 MS. DALTON: People don't just go there to have
12 a party room. They go there intending to use the other
13 spaces. The party room is just a place to park your
14 present and have pizza. It is unlikely that you would
15 have different groups in each space.

16 MS. MILSTEIN: But they would rotate in and
17 out.

18 MR. HERSHBERG: If you need more, we can build
19 more parking. We would prefer not to build more parking.

20 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We just want to get to the
21 right number.

22 MR. HERSHBERG: I did a quick analysis and I
23 took those areas that I highlighted there in those total
24 10,000 square feet. It didn't include the party rooms
25 and it didn't include some of the auxiliary spaces.

1 MR. SHAMLIAN: The other question about
2 parking, Dan, as if the additional 10,000 square feet is
3 ever built, how are you possibly going to accommodate
4 the parking for that?

5 MR. HERSHBERG: Well, first the thought is that
6 it will be a different type of use.

7 MR. FERRARO: My name is Keith Ferraro and I am
8 presently from Queensbury. Basically, the additional
9 area - approximately 20,000 square feet would be slated
10 for an indoor electric go kart track which would cover
11 probably 17,000 of those square feet which is only
12 utilized by 10 or so people at a time. So, it does take
13 up a lot of space but it doesn't require a lot more
14 people.

15 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Chuck, would you have the
16 ability to break all this down and come up with some
17 kind of analysis?

18 MR. VOSS: Yes.

19 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I would suggest that the
20 applicant tell us what their vision of the places and
21 then we will turn it over to the TDE to give his
22 comments and then we will open it back up again to the
23 Board.

24 MR. FERRARO: Basically, we envision it to be
25 an entertainment center. The target market is from young

1 adults all the way down to kids. There are a lot of
2 attractions in there. They will be a mixed use. Some
3 will apply to different age brackets, depending upon how
4 high they are - how high, being tall. Basically, it is
5 something where groups, especially families could go and
6 find something for kids of various ages for all to be
7 happy doing. That's kind of the vision. We will have a
8 beer and wine license so we can do corporate events and
9 stuff like that. It is a versatile facility and we
10 should be able to cater to most any type of clientele.

11 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Are you in this business or
12 have you been in it before?

13 MR. FERRARO: yes. We presently own the Fun
14 Spot and Queensbury. My business card actually has a
15 picture of our facility on it. This is just to give you
16 a feel for what we have done. This does have outdoor
17 attractions on it and we don't intend to have outdoor
18 attractions here. It would give you kind of a sense of
19 what we are trying to create here, as well.

20 CHAIRMAN STUTO: What kind of activities do you
21 have up and Queensbury?

22 MR. FERRARO: And Queensbury we have a
23 miniature golf course, a go kart track which is
24 outdoors. We haven't an inside ninja warrior course,
25 roller skating, a kids playground and a multilevel laser

1 tag.

2 MS. MILSTEIN: So, the when you are proposing
3 now is very different from the what you have and
4 Queensbury?

5 MR. FERRARO: Some aspects are similar. We are
6 anticipating a slightly larger laser tag facility, a
7 larger ninja warrior course. There will be another kids
8 playground similar but different. Those aspects are the
9 same. This will be expanded and it will be all indoor
10 activities rather than being dependent on the weather.
11 It works well up and Queensbury. It's more of a
12 tourist-based area. This is more of an indigenous
13 population and more appropriate. It will be nice to have
14 a facility where you can ride go carts in the wintertime
15 because we get a lot of people who want that.

16 MS. MILSTEIN: What is the square footage of
17 that building?

18 MR. FERRARO: The building that we have now -
19 actually, that also includes a New York State license
20 daycare facility as well which is attached but separate.
21 That building is 22,500 square feet.

22 MS. DALTON: Essentially, what I was going to
23 ask was are you planning on doing after school here?

24 MR. FERRARO: We are not. Basically, that all
25 evolved because there wasn't very much business Monday

1 through Friday from Labor Day through Memorial Day. We
2 were looking for a revenue source and it's really a
3 perfect fit. Who wouldn't want to go to an afterschool
4 place and have all this fun stuff to do?

5 MS. DALTON: And summer camp.

6 MR. FERRARO: We also have a school bus and we
7 take them on field trips to. They start out having a
8 great time and go elsewhere, as well.

9 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Chuck, I know you have not
10 reviewed this formally. Could you give us your
11 impressions at this point?

12 MR. VOSS: Sure, Peter. We just have some
13 thoughts.

14 We attended the DCC meeting back in February.
15 The site is semi-developed now with existing homes
16 and a smaller commercial business. It backs right up
17 to the Marriott Hotel site further off to the east,
18 which has been fully developed. I think really for
19 us, the issues are really going to be more internal.
20 We're going to be, I think, more concerned about the
21 storm water management and especially with the
22 wetlands there. We're going to look at how you're
23 going to manage that.

24 Certainly, Peter, I think that I agree with
25 the Board's sediments that you may want to try to

1 bank as much parking as possible. At the same time
2 you don't want to honor develop the site for
3 potential users who might frequent the site, as well.
4 I think we'll have to look at that and look at the
5 parking issue.

6 I know that the lines of sight along Albany
7 Shaker Road are actually pretty good there. Albany
8 Shaker Road, as you remember, was expanded not too
9 long ago the lanes were widened. There is a new
10 turning lane. There is a pullout right in front of
11 the site for bus access which works very well in
12 terms of being able to see up and down Albany Shaker
13 Road. I don't think will have any real traffic issues
14 or concerns there.

15 Utilities are all on the site, as Dan
16 mentioned. Sewer is there and water is there.

17 Really, from the basic standpoint it appears
18 to be probably a compatible use, given the commercial
19 nature of the general area. There's really not too
20 many private homes except for the ones on this parcel
21 that for the most part will probably go away
22 eventually. Other than that, I think were okay.

23 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Are there any variances or
24 waivers that you are looking for? Do you know yet?

25 MR. HERSHBERG: We mentioned a waiver because

1 we are more than 25 feet back from the roadway. We do
2 have some parking in front of the building. That needs a
3 waiver, too.

4 The third waiver -- the way the parking is
5 laid out now is slightly below 20 square feet per
6 parking spot. So, currently we would need a third
7 waiver. The question is: can we make that one go away
8 by increasing some of the island size a little bit. I
9 think the two waivers - we really need. First, we
10 don't want it 25 feet off Albany Shaker Road. So,
11 consequently that waiver, we need.

12 A waiver for some parking in front - we have
13 tried to limit it and put the bank parking up there
14 so very little of the parking is really in front of
15 the building. Nothing is obviously in front of the 25
16 foot setback.

17 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Any final comments from the
18 Board?

19 MR. MION: I have a question as far as the
20 department goes. I know it's based on square footage. Do
21 you really need all of that?

22 MR. HERSHBERG: It is a balancing act. I think
23 a couple things that we ought to look into is first, we
24 will look for Chuck's analysis and what he thinks, based
25 upon the floor plan and we provided everything else.

1 The other thing that we will look at is the
2 existing facility. It is not identical, but it does
3 share some of the same uses. We look at the existing
4 facility and the amount of parking that is used there
5 now and on say, a busy weekend day. We can find
6 different sources. Obviously, Keith does not want to
7 run out of parking. By the same token we are trying
8 to balance it. That's why we use the 10,000 square
9 feet is a figure. We think it is a legitimate figure,
10 but we didn't want to propose any additional parking.
11 Obviously, we would come back to you and say 200
12 would be required and we are asking to go 25% more
13 and I don't think we essentially want to go that
14 direction. We prefer to have less parking on the
15 site.

16 MS. DALTON: The nature of the use and the
17 addition of you not wanting to go there, it's a place to
18 go with friends for fun. So, people will not necessarily
19 come in individual cars. They are probably going to have
20 - carloads of kids or busloads of kids and young adults
21 or whatever, But they will come together. I see folks
22 coming together.

23 MR. HERSHBERG: I think that is one element
24 with the entertainment center. I think people do tend to
25 come together for entertainment. Even movies, you tend

1 to have couples coming together rather than singles. So
2 essentially, our goal is to provide adequate parking but
3 not too much parking space. It's an analysis yet to be
4 completed, but we think 200 is a good target right now.

5 MR. MION: You have 29 already banked. You can
6 always pull it out of the bank, if you need it.

7 MR. HERSHBERG: And if the determination is
8 that we want to cut down and build 180 to start and bank
9 20, it's something that we can certainly talk about. We
10 are not hung up on providing the parking -- Keith has a
11 pretty good handle on what he hopes this facility will
12 drop. We won't know until it opens.

13 MR. MAGGUILLI: Dan, is there any other similar
14 type facility in the Town of Colonie?

15 MR. HERSHBERG: There are some facilities that
16 provide entertainment, but I don't think they are this
17 sort of indoor entertainment facility.

18 MR. HEIDER: There is laser tag on Central
19 Avenue.

20 MR. MAGGUILLI: There's the trampoline place in
21 Menands.

22 MR. HERSHBERG: Yes, there is a trampoline
23 place in Menands in that huge warehouse and that
24 obviously has plenty of parking. Again, I think that if
25 you want us to take a look at other facilities and see

1 what sort of parking they have - I don't think there is
2 anything as a comprehensive entertainment facility that
3 is for the entire family.

4 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Right around the corner on
5 Route 7 you have the ice cream stand with all those
6 various activities there. I don't know if it is a direct
7 competitor, I think they have batting cages and go carts
8 and ice cream.

9 MR. LACIVITA: Keith, when you did your market
10 study you did it in other regions, didn't you?

11 MR. FERRARO: I did study the other facilities.
12 We actually are working with consultants who works
13 internationally set up facilities, not unlike this, and
14 different markets. They are always designed and shaped
15 by the owner who has a vision. Our consultant has never
16 done another one with these types of internal
17 components. Normally, they are for younger kids. I
18 wanted to go for an older demographic. We have visited
19 other facilities. The closest one to here that is
20 similar to this is in Lancaster. That is, like I said,
21 more geared toward younger kids. The one that we most
22 are liken to is in Minneapolis. We actually have been to
23 those facilities on the weekend and I actually went
24 around and counted cars in the parking lot and I think
25 200 is a good number, based on what we are trying to do

1 here. I have 110 spaces at my facility up in Queensbury,
2 but that is a smaller building than this with different
3 types of attractions. It does get full at times, I
4 admit. That's not necessarily a bad thing, but we are
5 going to have more staff at these facilities so we are
6 going to need parking for staff members.

7 As Kathleen referenced, there will be people
8 coming to birthday parties and stuff like that. Also,
9 sometimes when you get the younger kids, the parents
10 will like to stay. That will require a little bit
11 more park for that as well. So, that's why I like the
12 200 and I think it is a good number. If we have a few
13 more banked that we could tap into if we need to,
14 that's a perfect fit in my mind.

15 CHAIRMAN STUTO: For me, I have one final
16 thing. The Town Departments had a memo. Did you get
17 that?

18 MR. HERSHBERG: Yes.

19 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Do you have any significant
20 objections to any of the comments?

21 MR. HERSHBERG: Again, some of them were
22 already implemented and followed. They needed a whole
23 bunch of information regarding existing sewer and water,
24 which we have since gotten. It impacts more the
25 technical review than it does the sketch plan or DCC

1 meeting.

2 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Any other questions?

3 (There was no response.)

4 We will work with you and thank you. It will
5 look close at these issues as we move forward.

6 MR. HERSHBERG: Thank you, very much.

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8 (Whereas the above entitled proceeding was
9 concluded at 7:20 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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