

1 PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY

2 TOWN OF COLONIE

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SAM'S CLUB FUELING STATION
579 TROY SCHENECTADY ROAD
SKETCH PLAN

5 *****

6 THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above entitled matter
7 by NANCY L. STRANG, a Shorthand Reporter commencing on
February 2, 2020 at 8:07 p.m. at Memorial Town Hall,
Loudon Road, Newtonville, New York

8 BOARD MEMBERS:
9 PETER STUTO, CHAIRMAN
10 CRAIG SHAMLIAN
11 STEVEN HEIDER
12 SUSAN MILSTEIN
13 CHIP ASHWORTH
14 LOU MION

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13 ALSO PRESENT:

14 Kathleen Marinelli, Esq., Counsel to the Planning
Board
15 Michael Tengeler, PEDD
16 Steve Kindle, Sam's Club
Joseph Grasso, RLA, CHA

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1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I'll call up this item. Sam's
2 Club, Fueling Station, 579 Troy Schenectady Road, sketch
3 plan. This is a new 192 square foot fueling station with
4 a canopy at 4,787 square feet.

5 Can you identify yourself?

6 MR. KINDLE: My name is Steve Kindle. I'm with
7 Dino Carlson, PE of Memphis, Tennessee. We are Sam's
8 Club. We are the site designers for this project.

9 In a nutshell, what Sam's is doing across the
10 nation is adding fuel stations - about eight stack
11 fuel stations. Where they have existing, they are
12 increasing the size. So, this is a nationwide kind of
13 effort.

14 What you see here is - they are adding eight
15 pumps as you can see (Indicating).

16 CHAIRMAN STUTO: The pumps are under the
17 canopy, right?

18 MR. KINDLE: Yes. As a 5,000 square foot
19 canopy; eight pumps, three tanks. We have situated them
20 down in the corner of the lot. Water flows from right to
21 left. So, were doing a little reconfiguring of the water
22 system. We feel like this is the best place for the
23 pumps (Indicating); as far as drainage goes and as far
24 circulation goes. Sam's wants that out on the entry part
25 of their lot. So, that's the configuration.

1 I think we are losing some parking, but we
2 are so over parked here that we are well within our
3 comfort zone, as well as what they need. The
4 circulation, I feel like, is going to work.

5 CHAIRMAN STUTO: As drawn?

6 MR. KINDLE: As drawn.

7 I guess it has a kiosk. We are adding a kiosk
8 for the employees. It's got a bathroom in it. It's not
9 for public use, but the utilities will run. If you can
10 see the long dashed area right there (Indicating)
11 that's connecting up to the main building sewer and
12 water. So, we have sewer and water running up there.
13 That's for the kiosk.

14 In a nutshell, that's basically it.

15 CHAIRMAN STUTO: As with the other projects,
16 this is being reviewed by our Town Designated Engineer,
17 CHA.

18 Joe Grasso, can you give us your comments so
19 far?

20 MR. GRASSO: We don't have too many comments,
21 but there are a couple.

22 This project had a DCC meeting with the
23 various Town departments. One of the concerns that was
24 brought up was the way traffic flows when patrons
25 enter into the parking lot.

1 When they first come through that first curb
2 cut there is a common thing with the cars that just
3 scatter across the parking aisles. This project is in
4 a scatter zone. There should be an opportunity here to
5 address the poor operations of traffic circulation as
6 part of this project.

7 What we would recommend is that some
8 consideration be given to some kind of --when you look
9 at the massive parking field to break out some kind of
10 cross aisle so that if cars are looking to go to the
11 fueling facility, they get down further into the
12 parking lot and then come across where they are not so
13 inclined to come across diagonally across the parking
14 rows which creates this haphazard arrangement of
15 circulation to the parking lot.

16 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Do you mind getting up and
17 showing us? You referred to a dispersion area before.

18 MR. SHAMLIAN: Joe, as you're measured doing
19 that -I had the same thought and I wanted to ask you
20 about - - if we cut access along - - lower on the map.
21 The people couldn't go down along the side of the
22 fueling area and that just forces them to stay in the
23 main travel lane, which is what was intended to in the
24 first place.

25 MR. GRASSO: Yes, that's one thing.

1 A lot of cars come up to this intersection
2 here (Indicating). Because this is an island here,
3 they cut into this curb cut. Then, they just scatter.
4 So, this is your dispersion so that's where you're
5 seeing cars cut across the parking lot. We would like
6 to see coming right out to this access road, some
7 mid-block drive aisle that cuts across the islands so
8 that you come in and normally the cars are parked up
9 in this area (Indicating). They come down to this area
10 and then they're making 90 degree turns in whenever
11 aisle they're looking for. We don't think that by
12 citing this here is going to solve this problem. Cars
13 can come down here and then they're going to scatter.
14 We would rather see something incorporated into this
15 plan that addresses that concern.

16 MR. ASHWORTH: You want to make it more
17 self-contained?

18 MR. GRASSO: Exactly. Whether or not it's here
19 or further north - - it's based upon how the site is
20 used, how much parking is there that'll help inform us
21 as to where that cross aisle should be. We think it's
22 something that we should address now because this
23 project has not helped us to address that.

24 CHAIRMAN STUTO: On that point, can I ask a
25 question? I'm only asking - your way better at this than

1 I am. I think Craig said - push the whole site out a
2 little and have a pass-through lane when you first get
3 in there on the left.

4 My alternative is: What if you moved it to
5 the other corner?

6 MR. GRASSO: Getting into the other comments -
7 this site is visible from the Northway corridor and I
8 think that's something we have to consider how it looks
9 from the corridor. You're talking about a fueling
10 canopy. There could be excessively high lighting levels.
11 That's something that we have to get into the details
12 of. What we have to decide is as we start to shift it
13 towards the west side of the site - it's obviously going
14 to become more prominent from off-site areas and I don't
15 know if that's something that we should be steering
16 towards. Understood that right now without a
17 mid-crossing aisle there, this fueling is not in the
18 best spot unless obviously you're going for the fuel
19 because all the traffic going into the site is going to
20 go right around it. That may be their objective, but I
21 think it's something that the Planning Board should
22 consider. That's why I think if we have a much bigger
23 crossing much further to the north, if you're going to
24 the fueling you're going to use the first curb cut. If
25 you're not, you're going to go down to another curb cut

1 and you won't be so inclined to cut across the parking
2 aisles. You're going to lose some parking. They provide
3 some calculation regarding the ratio. You want to check
4 that with the Code against the number of spaces that the
5 Code would require and obviously when we cut that
6 roadway or that cross-drive aisle it will reduce the
7 parking even further. Based on our knowledge of the site
8 and the excessive amount of parking that's out there, we
9 think it's a wise trade-off.

10 MR. KINDLE: We did discuss that very issue
11 from the first meeting with the designer. The designer
12 kept saying well, we do have the opportunity if we just
13 extended this across (Indicating). We would lose fewer
14 parking spots if you just use this as the cross aisle.
15 It's not as far north. He was really reluctant to do
16 anything. I can pick his brain because he didn't tell me
17 why.

18 As far as the scattering and cutting across,
19 he felt like with it here - with people queuing up in
20 this direction, it would almost kill that desire to
21 just shoot up and disperse this way. If we push it all
22 the way over, it might even make it harder for them to
23 do that. Like you said, force them to go this way
24 (Indicating). This is a queuing area and sometimes
25 during busy, busy times they tend to fan out. I don't

1 know if that needed to be a wider lane. Those are
2 things that I know the designers are thinking about
3 and contemplating.

4 MR. SHAMLIAN: When I first looked at this, my
5 initial thought was that the entire fueling area could
6 be shifted north not a lot - maybe about 10 or 15 feet
7 to give that east/west aisle plenty of access so that
8 there is no queuing problems. Then, cutting off access
9 maybe between the fueling area - - and maybe closing off
10 the bottom curb cut right here (Indicating) so that you
11 can't come down this aisle. This could all be green
12 space. That forces them past the station and then down
13 one of the aisles. Then, they would really have no
14 reason to scatter. Once they can't do that scatter, I
15 think most people are going to drive all the way north
16 and make the left the way it was almost intended to be
17 in the first place. They can circle around and park in
18 front of the building.

19 MR. GRASSO: We want to discourage them from
20 having to drive down to the entrance of the building. We
21 don't want cars going all the way down to the end of the
22 drive aisle, taking a left and then coming back into the
23 parking lot. So, we want to discourage that movement. We
24 don't want to conflict between the vehicles in the
25 pedestrians.

1 MR. SHAMLIAN: But that other entrances away
2 over to the left.

3 MR. GRASSO: Understood, but as you look at the
4 pedestrians walking down the parking aisles, we want to
5 avoid those conflicts. So, I think we want to maintain
6 that the cars approach the building from the south, park
7 and they will be able to leave and then we have walkers
8 going toward the front of the building.

9 I think there are some other concepts, Craig,
10 that I have to agree that we kind of have to try to
11 work those into the plan, shifting it more towards the
12 north 10 or 20 feet. Then, that lends that cross aisle
13 you were talking about. Maybe that's far enough.

14 If you add more islands - I think you've got
15 like four of them; three new ones into existing ones.
16 If you were to do the other rows, we are solving that
17 problem. I don't want the overflow the concern, but I
18 just wanted to get it out there that it's something
19 that we should address.

20 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Let me ask you this: Who is
21 going to park in the rows on the southbound - who's
22 going to park there?

23 MR. HEIDER: There are a bunch of rows that
24 nobody parks on except for tractor-trailers.

25 MR. SHAMLIAN: Tractor-trailers park along the

1 very south end part.

2 MR. KINDLE: And we will have to designate snow
3 areas.

4 MR. GRASSO: So, the site was designed based on
5 the parking ratio per Town Code, understanding that it
6 is conventional retail. Obviously, Sam's Club is a
7 unique use of square footage and not a high occupancy
8 level. So, it is over parked.

9 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Why even show parking spots
10 there? Why show parking spots on the side?

11 MR. GRASSO: Only because I think they are
12 existing.

13 MR. KINDLE: They are existing.

14 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I'm good against the nobody's
15 going to park on that southside.

16 MR. GRASSO: So, it becomes a snow storage
17 area.

18 MR. HEIDER: But then we're going to run into
19 the problem that we had with Starbucks. When you take
20 that parking out then you change the spots and is that
21 going to make them in violation of their parking code?

22 MR. KINDLE: Normally, you don't have too much
23 parking. You're trying to find space anywhere you can
24 put a parking spot. In this case, we are way over. I'm
25 not exactly sure where that line is where we can start

1 making aisles and start taking out more. I don't know
2 how close we get. I know the numbers for this are
3 particular piece of this whole acreage - the 17 acres
4 here (Indicating) is geared toward the 100 to 200 square
5 feet. I know that Sam's is comfortable - nationwide,
6 they do their numbers periodically with their studies.
7 They really desire a 100 to 250 is what works. Whatever
8 the difference is. The Code says 100 to 200, I think, in
9 this case.

10 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Are we more than 100 to 200
11 now?

12 MR. GRASSO: No, I think - - the proposed is

13 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Existing, I guess I'm asking.

14 MR. GRASSO: Yes, existing is for this site is
15 6.1. That's one per 80.

16 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I think this is a little
17 microcosm that should be looked at separately.

18 MR. KINDLE: We are requesting that we do look
19 at it separately.

20 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We can waive things, if it's
21 logical.

22 MR. GRASSO: We have a lot more flexibility
23 with the way the Code is now than when this site was
24 originally developed. I think we should. I think we
25 should take the opportunity.

1 MR. HEIDER: You could put green space there.
2 They almost never park down there.

3 MR. GRASSO: You bring up a good point because
4 he was talking about how they're going to address
5 stormwater management. That's one way to mitigate
6 against stormwater impacts is by creating green space.

7 MR. HEIDER: All the way to the south of the
8 property, I think there is a berm on the main Latham
9 Farms Road. Can you identify what landscaping is there?

10 MR. KINDLE: I can't. I haven't seen the site,
11 actually. I haven't physically been on the site.

12 MR. HEIDER: I think you should somewhat shield
13 from the main access road of Latham Farms.

14 MR. GRASSO: It may be helpful when you come
15 back for formal concept to have this relayed on an air
16 photo and bring copies of an air photo that may help
17 inform them.

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can you show us a couple of
19 more alternatives next time you come, since you have
20 heard what we have said?

21 MR. KINDLE: Sure.

22 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Anybody else?

23 (There was no response.)

24 Thank you very much.

25 (Whereas the above entitled proceeding was

1 concluded at 8:20 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATION

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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