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PLANNING BOARD COUNTY OF ALBANY

TOWN OF COLONIE

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CASALE SELF-STORAGE  
140 NEW KARNER ROAD

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THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above entitled matter  
by NANCY L. STRANG, a Shorthand Reporter commencing on  
April 7, 2020 at 6:35 p.m. held via Zoom Video  
Conference

BOARD MEMBERS:  
PETER STUTO, CHAIRMAN  
CRAIG SHAMLIAN  
STEVEN HEIDER  
SUSAN MILSTEIN  
CHIP ASHWORTH  
LOU MION  
PAUL ROSANO

ALSO PRESENT:

Sean M. Maguire, AICP CEcD, Director, Planning and  
Economic Development  
Kathleen Marinelli, Esq., Counsel to the Planning  
Board  
Joseph Grasso, RLA, CHA  
Zachery Harrison, PEDD  
Luigi Palleshi, PE, ABD Engineers

1                   CHAIRMAN STUTO: Next item on the agenda is 140  
2                   New Karner Road, Casale Self Storage. Subdivide into two  
3                   lots and construct a three-story, 92,676 square foot  
4                   storage building.

5                   We do have a TDE appointed on this which is  
6                   CHA.

7                   Sean, do you have anything to start this with  
8                   before we turn it over to the applicant?

9                   MR. MAGUIRE: No, I will just note that we did  
10                  receive yesterday - and I emailed out to the Board -  
11                  elevations for this project. We have brought this  
12                  through for DCC to take a first look at it. We are here  
13                  today and we're going to take a look at it for sketch.

14                  CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, who speaking on behalf  
15                  of the applicant?

16                  MR. PALLESHI: Can everyone hear me okay?

17                  CHAIRMAN STUTO: Is that Luigi?

18                  MR. PALLESHI: Yes, this is Luigi with ABD. Can  
19                  you hear me Mr. Chair?

20                  CHAIRMAN STUTO: Yes.

21                  MR. PALLESHI: Perfect. Luigi Palleshi with ABD  
22                  Engineers representing Tony Casale for this project.  
23                  It's known as 340 New Karner Road. It was before this  
24                  Board to develop the existing facility that's been  
25                  constructed for the Casale Rental facility that's on the

1 southwesterly portion of the sites.

2 The total acreage of the parcel is 3.87  
3 acres. It is zoned industrial. It is surrounded by  
4 Mabee Self-Storage. Across the street is the Volvo and  
5 I was just made aware that to the east of our project  
6 is a new project that's coming before the Planning  
7 Board for a Volvo.

8 CHAIRMAN STUTO: You got a little garbled. What  
9 was the project to the east - the new project to the  
10 east?

11 MR. PALLESHI: It's my understanding that there  
12 is a proposed development going in on the northeast of  
13 this site where it's noted as asphalt driveway. I  
14 believe it's a new Volvo site plan. We are not involved  
15 in it, but there is something going to the northeast.  
16 Currently, it's vacant. Beyond that, is the Carmax  
17 Dealership. So, that gives you the the bearings of where  
18 the property is.

19 The project that we are discussing tonight is  
20 the self-storage facility. It is three-stories, as  
21 Sean had shown you - the conceptual building  
22 elevations. It's all climate controlled. They are  
23 interior units for the facility. It's got 92,676 plus  
24 or minus square feet of gross floor area. We are  
25 proposing to subdivide the existing parcel.

1                   Lot 1 would keep the existing Casale Rental  
2                   facility. That will sit on approximately 1.96 acres  
3                   and Lot 2, being the proposed self storage facility  
4                   will sit on the remaining 1.91 acres.

5                   Access to the sites - we will utilize the  
6                   existing curb-cut entrances that you see on the  
7                   current site plan. In addition to adding a third  
8                   entrance on New Karner Road further to the northeast.  
9                   We would utilize the one way in and out and really we  
10                  would need the one way into the site and we are open  
11                  for the Northeast entrance to be either an entrance or  
12                  an exit. That is something that we can further discuss  
13                  in detail - what type of entrance we would make that.  
14                  Being that this is a self storage facility, I think it  
15                  fits the site pretty well. It will keep the traffic to  
16                  a minimum, being that it is a self-storage facility.  
17                  So, I don't think traffic is a major concern.

18                  This is an Albany County Highway and we will  
19                  certainly work with Albany County DPW for this new  
20                  curb-cut entrance as well as the existing curb-cut  
21                  entrances to the facility.

22                  We are proposing 14 parking spaces. You can  
23                  see where the doors are located on the proposed  
24                  self-storage facility. There is plenty of parking for  
25                  the use here.

1                   We did go before DCC. We have their comments.  
2                   There was nothing major from DCC. We discussed  
3                   everything with all the departments.

4                   There are existing sewer facilities  
5                   available. It is a force main to the south west of the  
6                   site. The existing Casale Rental facility has their  
7                   own grinder pump. This proposed self-storage facility  
8                   will have its own grinder pump in and private force  
9                   main connected to the public main that is located at  
10                  the southwest portion of the site. Water is available  
11                  at the front of the site.

12                  A couple comments from Latham Water regarding  
13                  the hydrant locations and things like that, which we  
14                  are all agreeable to. I am making those modifications  
15                  for better positioning as discussed with Latham Water.

16                  Stormwater will be similar to what was  
17                  approved for the existing facility. It is infiltration  
18                  practice where the water will just infiltrate back  
19                  into the ground. There is no direct discharge or  
20                  natural feature to send the water, so we will retain  
21                  it all on site, similar to what they're doing at the  
22                  existing facility. This will have its own separate  
23                  practice on its own lot and it will obviously comply  
24                  with the New York State DEC stormwater regulations and  
25                  the Town Stormwater Department standards.

1                   Green space for both of these lots after  
2                   subdividing will be above the 35% minimum. Landscaping  
3                   can be worked out. We are proposing to keep the  
4                   landscaping that was already installed on the existing  
5                   Casale facility, but we can certainly add additional  
6                   trees and landscaping as we further advance the site  
7                   plan. It is a three-story building.

8                   We do have access to three sides of the  
9                   building. We did discuss this at the DCC meeting and  
10                  the building will be fire sprinklered. Therefore,  
11                  having access to three sides meets the fire  
12                  accessibility requirement.

13                  One of the comments from the Fire Department  
14                  at the DCC was that we provide a flat area along the  
15                  rear of the building. So, that should be covered.

16                  I think that's all I have. I will turn it  
17                  back over to the Board, if there's any questions.

18                  CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, thank you. Joe Grasso,  
19                  you're reviewing this. I know you haven't done a formal  
20                  review yet. Can you give us your preliminary thoughts?

21                  MR. GRASSO: Yes. First off, regarding the  
22                  access: When the adjacent rental facility came up for  
23                  review, they had made us aware that the long-term plan  
24                  was to redevelop or develop the rest of the property.  
25                  One of the concerns that we had brought up was multiple

1 curb-cuts along this section of 155. We were concerned  
2 about the rental facility getting two curb-cuts and then  
3 another one being requested when the rest of the  
4 property came up for development. So, that was a concern  
5 that we raised. The Planning Board had supported that  
6 concern early on. It doesn't seem like it has been taken  
7 into consideration with the plan. I understand from the  
8 proposed use that the desire is to have drive-through  
9 with all large tractor-trailers and Luigi said one of  
10 these could be one-way either in or out.

11 Even though it's a low intensity traffic  
12 generator, the fact that we are putting in multiple  
13 curb-cuts - three curb-cuts for two properties should  
14 be a concern. I would say that Jim Merkel from Albany  
15 County DPW has not shared the same concern. I think  
16 it's something that the Planning Board may want to  
17 consider. Maybe it's just a concern of CHA. It was  
18 good for Luigi to bring up the fact that the adjacent  
19 property may be developed because if it is to be  
20 developed into a car dealership, they normally look  
21 for multiple curb-cuts accessing their site. So, maybe  
22 there's an opportunity to share a curb-cut between the  
23 two adjoining uses. That is something that should be  
24 considered - obviously along this corridor - and I  
25 know it has been done across the street.

1                   The other thing I wanted to bring up is it's  
2                   a three-story building in an area that's dominated by  
3                   one-story buildings. The aesthetics of the building  
4                   and how the building fits into the character of the  
5                   area is something that the Planning Board should take  
6                   a close look at. Often times when we're looking at  
7                   both the subdivision and a commercial site plan, we  
8                   don't focus that much on the subdivision. This one is  
9                   a little bit unique because it's got a flag that  
10                  extends beyond the proposed self storage building. I  
11                  think the purpose of that is to meet the green space  
12                  on Lot 1 which is the rental facility. I'm not sure if  
13                  there is an opportunity to shift the building toward  
14                  the northeast so that Lot 1 had enough green space  
15                  where it could avoid the flag. It is something that  
16                  the Planning Board should consider.

17                  Fire Services did want a flat area behind the  
18                  building to stage apparatus. Obviously if a piece of  
19                  equipment was going to get back there, it would likely  
20                  have to encroach on the adjacent property which is  
21                  obviously not a very desirable feature.

22                  The other thing regarding the way this lot is  
23                  - it was a completely wooded property. Obviously, when  
24                  the initial lot was built with the rental facility,  
25                  quite a bit of fill was brought in and the trees were

1 removed. Some of the tree removal extended well into  
2 the site. This site is already about half cleared out.  
3 There is extensive fill that has to take place. The  
4 natural site sits about 10 feet below 155. There is  
5 obviously some special grading and compaction  
6 considerations so that we don't get long-term  
7 settlement.

8 Based on that amount of filling, all the  
9 trees are expected to be removed from the site. What  
10 we see out there or what we should predict is that  
11 it's going to be a wide open view between the road and  
12 these facilities. It looks like there's enough room to  
13 establish significant sized street trees along the  
14 project frontage or someplace - - obviously, it is a  
15 wide right-of-way, but there should be room to plant  
16 trees out there. That was one thing I noticed today  
17 when I was out at the site.

18 Then, just in terms of the way the lot is  
19 laid out regarding the drive right up against the  
20 front of the building - you are basically eliminating  
21 the ability to have any kind of foundation plantings  
22 that could also help spruce up the view. It's going to  
23 be a tall looking building along the corridor.

24 Those are some initial thoughts that we have  
25 so far.

1                   CHAIRMAN STUTO: I think they were excellent  
2                   comments.

3                   Who from the Board would like to speak?

4                   MR. HEIDER: Peter, I can start.

5                   CHAIRMAN STUTO: Chief Heider, okay.

6                   MR. HEIDER: To Joe's comments about a  
7                   three-story building - I realize it is an industrial  
8                   area. However, if you look across the street you have  
9                   the credit union, you have the funeral home, you've got  
10                  a car dealership that keeps its place pretty neat and  
11                  clean.

12                  When I look at the east elevation, there  
13                  isn't a whole lot there. I just think it needs to be  
14                  dressed up. I don't think with it being three stories,  
15                  as Joe said, it's quite an elevation. I think  
16                  something needs to be done on the façade to take away  
17                  from the height - at least the opticals of it.

18                  The other thing with additional landscaping  
19                  which Luigi already talked about - this borders that  
20                  site to the north which is actually the Village. I  
21                  would recommend that the PEDD get a hold of the  
22                  Village and see what's actually being proposed for  
23                  that so that we're staying somewhat in line and  
24                  hopefully trying to make the street have some type of  
25                  uniformed look, rather than just a hodgepodge of

1 things going down the street - - just to coordinate  
2 with the Village to see what they're actually  
3 proposing for the north part of the site.

4 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Is that it?

5 MR. HEIDER: Yes, I think that's it. I'm not  
6 crazy about the third entrance in off of 155. I don't  
7 think these two buildings need it. Although the way it's  
8 laid out, they probably do. It probably should've just  
9 been one for the lower one and one for this one and  
10 connect the two. It is what it is, depending upon what  
11 they propose.

12 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Excellent comments.

13 Who else would like to speak?

14 MR. SHAMLIAN: I will jump in, Pete.

15 I have a question to Joe on the building  
16 height.

17 Since there is so much fill that needs to be  
18 brought in and it's a self-storage so I assume they're  
19 going to have an elevator inside anyway to move things  
20 up and down - is there any reason why they couldn't  
21 put most or all of that first floor below grade and  
22 essentially lower the height of the building?

23 MR. GRASSO: There's nothing, Craig, that I am  
24 aware of. That's a good question for Luigi.

25 MR. PALLESHI: There are wetlands nearby. I

1 would be concerned with groundwater. It's something that  
2 can be looked at. If there are groundwater concerns,  
3 then obviously nobody would want to store their things.

4 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Luigi, if I could jump in? You  
5 have already heard three people raise concerns about  
6 height and I'm going to be the fourth. If you want to  
7 get three stories - - the underground solution, if it  
8 works, or could make it work. I would give it some  
9 serious consideration, otherwise you can get resistance  
10 on the third story.

11 MR. SHAMLIAN: And I think it was the Chief  
12 that mentioned that it was industrial, but this corridor  
13 really does not look industrial in the typical sense of  
14 what industrial looks like. Even the front building  
15 elevation - and I know it's just a sketch - but I'm not  
16 100% sure.

17 Shawn could you go back to the elevations?

18 Are those meant to be some kind of overhead  
19 doors that we are seeing, Luigi?

20 MR. PALLESHI: So, all of the units are  
21 interior. So, what you're looking at there is a glass  
22 front. Those are just representing what you are looking  
23 at inside the building. So, you would have no access  
24 outside. You would walk in the front entrance, which is  
25 in the center of the building and those - - it's more of

1 a display of what the inside would look like.

2 MR. HEIDER: I think that's the south  
3 elevation, though. Your showing garage doors.

4 MR. SHAMLIAN: That's correct. That is the  
5 south elevation. Is that the south elevation, or is that  
6 the elevation we are going to see a new corner?

7 MR. HEIDER: Yes, that's to the south.

8 MR. ASHWORTH: It looks like it should be the  
9 east.

10 CHAIRMAN STUTO: This building is sort of like  
11 halfway in between. Your east is my north. I think of  
12 New Karner Road as running north/south, which means the  
13 south elevation would be towards the existing  
14 self-storage.

15 MR. GRASSO: I think the intent is the south  
16 elevation is facing the street.

17 MR. SHAMLIAN: Okay. I'm just trying to  
18 understand this look. So, the very first floor where  
19 those doors are visible is glass, is that correct?

20 MR. PALLESHI: That's correct. That's your main  
21 entrance. You walk into the vestibule there.

22 MR. SHAMLIAN: What are those -

23 CHAIRMAN STUTO: The garage door looking  
24 things?

25 MR. SHAMLIAN: The colored areas above those

1 garage doors for the second and third floor - what is  
2 that intended to be? Is that glass as well? Is that  
3 see-through or what is it?

4 MR. PALLESHI: So, that would actually be the  
5 building surface - some type of metal paneling system.  
6 You wouldn't see inside the second or third floor. It  
7 would be the building structure itself.

8 MR. SHAMLIAN: I note today that there is a lot  
9 of really very beautiful things that could be done with  
10 a metal surface building. This is not a very busy street  
11 in a very high profile street. If it looks like a metal  
12 building, I'm not going to be all that much in favor of  
13 that look. Again, it's my own opinion but this building  
14 needs to look attractive.

15 MR. PALLEHSI: I will relay that to the  
16 architect.

17 MR. SHAMLIAN: Okay.

18 I agree with the comments on the curb-cut. I  
19 don't know how you get around it at this point.

20 Lastly, I meant to go back and look at the  
21 minutes from when the applicant was in before. My  
22 recollection was they had made some comments that in  
23 the meantime what they were using this area for where  
24 the storage building is going to be located. Am I  
25 remembering things incorrectly? Does anybody on the

1 Board remember anything?

2 MR. GRASSO: Craig, I think it was an equipment  
3 lay-down area.

4 MR. SHAMLIAN: Okay. Do they have enough room  
5 on what will now be their only area to do what they need  
6 to do?

7 MR. GRASSO: When I was out there today, I  
8 didn't see that area used at all by any equipment.

9 MR. SHAMLIAN: Okay, that's all I've got.

10 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, who else? Board Members?

11 MR. ASHWORTH: Yes, I have a question. What are  
12 the size of the storage rooms?

13 MR. PALLESHI: I don't know. Say that again?

14 MR. ASHWORTH: What are the size of each of the  
15 storage rooms?

16 MR. PALLESHI: They're all going to be a mixed  
17 variation - 10 by 10, 10 by 15, 10 by 20.

18 MR. ASHWORTH: It's like a drive-up?

19 MR. PALLESHI: That's something that we can  
20 provide at the concept level.

21 MR. ASHWORTH: I'm just wondering how many  
22 units you're going to have and how many elevators you're  
23 going to put in.

24 MR. PALLESHI: I'll have to get with the  
25 architect for details on the interior layout of these.

1 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Susan?

2 MS. MILSTEIN: Can you point out the green  
3 space? Is the green space 35% over both lots or is a 35  
4 on each.

5 MR. PALLESHI: There is 35% or greater on each.  
6 So, Lot 1 right now you have 36.3% in the proposed  
7 self-storage facility Lot 2 has 44.6%.

8 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Is that it, Susan?

9 MS. MILSTEIN: The building needs some serious  
10 design work.

11 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Lou?

12 MR. MION: I don't have anything. It's all been  
13 said.

14 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Paul?

15 MR. ROSANO: No, I'm good right now, Peter.

16 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I will just be quick. I agree  
17 with the comments that have been made so far. This is a  
18 pretty big building and I guess it conforms with the  
19 Code, but the square footage of the building is, I  
20 think, equal to the square footage of the lot. Am I  
21 correct about that? It's over 90.

22 MR. HEIDER: It's probably over.

23 CHAIRMAN STUTO: And it doesn't comport to what  
24 surrounds it.

25 Also, the egress and ingress. I don't have to

1 keep repeating what everyone else said. Those are the  
2 big issues. Were going to wanted to look like a good  
3 building when were done.

4 Joe Grasso, do you have any wrap-up comments?

5 MR. GRASSO: No, there wasn't any feedback on  
6 the subdivision and Susan had asked at the end about the  
7 green space.

8 Susan, we had looked at that and because Lot  
9 2 has so much more than the minimum of 35% is why we  
10 thought of possibly shifting the building over to the  
11 north that would allow that flag to be eliminated.

12 Luigi, is that something you can look at or  
13 is that not feasible for other reasons?

14 MR. PALLESHI: I don't know how we would shift  
15 the building to the northeast because of the  
16 T-turnaround that I need for a fire truck. We are  
17 looking at a small portion at the rear of the site.  
18 You're not going to see it from New Karner Road. I don't  
19 see a big issue. I don't really want to go in for any  
20 variances or waivers, so this is one way I came up with  
21 a subdivision that conforms to the Town standard.

22 MS. MILSTEIN: Can you explain what you mean by  
23 a flag?

24 MR. GRASSO: There's a thin strip that's 30  
25 feet wide that would be owned by Lot 1 which is the

1 Casale Rental facility that would extend all the way  
2 behind the rental building lot. You can see it. It is a  
3 thin flag. That Lot 1, if you took away all the  
4 buildings, would be in the shape of a flag.

5 Sean, can you just highlight that 30 foot  
6 strip?

7 The purpose of that is to strictly give  
8 enough green space to Lot 1.

9 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I don't think we understood  
10 your comment until now, Joe.

11 MR. GRASSO: Sorry, I didn't do a good job  
12 explaining it. It's to meet the green space requirement  
13 of Lot 1 and without that, that lot would probably be  
14 down around 20% green space. That's why I was saying  
15 that property line between the two lots would maybe  
16 shift to the northeast in order to give more green space  
17 to Lot 1, so it actually had 35%.

18 MR. PALLESHI: We're only talking about  
19 one-tenth of a percent that area is accomplishing here.  
20 The reason I did it was to gain more green space for  
21 that lot because we accomplished it with Lot 2.

22 MR. GRASSO: Can you eliminate it, then, Luigi?

23 MR. PALLESHI: It's something I can look at.

24 MR. GRASSO: It's like 15,000 square feet. I  
25 think it's a lot more -

1 MR. PALLESHI: Yes, maybe it is. It's almost  
2 9,300 square feet. I'll take a look at it, but I have a  
3 feeling that I'm still going to need to go into that  
4 area some more. I can make it less than 30 feet, but  
5 it's going to be sort of the shape that you see now. I  
6 don't understand why it's a big issue. Again, I don't  
7 apply for any variances. It's one way that we can  
8 conform to the Town Zoning and meeting all the  
9 requirements for green space and frontage area.

10 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, anything else?

11 MR. ROSANO: Peter, once Luigi is off, can we  
12 stay on for a couple minutes? I have a couple of  
13 comments that I want to make. It's not about this  
14 project, but just in general.

15 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Counsel?

16 MS. MARINIELLI: The meeting is open to the  
17 public. I don't know what the nature of Paul's comments  
18 are, but it's a public meeting. I don't think we can  
19 exclude -

20 CHAIRMAN STUTO: It would have to fit into an  
21 Executive Session exception in order to do that.

22 MR. ROSANO: I don't want to throw a curveball  
23 at anybody. We will talk at some other time. I just want  
24 make a statement that I'm a little concerned when people  
25 go to the ZBA before they come to the Planning Board.

1 This has bothered me for 10 years. It sometimes puts  
2 handcuffs on the Planning Board. You know my point.

3 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay.

4 MR. ROSANO: That's it for now.

5 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, anything else?

6 (There was no response.)

7 Well, thank you. We are meeting weekly now so  
8 we will see you next week - next Tuesday at 6:00.

9 Thank you everybody. Have a good night. Stay  
10 safe.

11 (Whereas the above entitled proceeding was  
12 concluded at 6:55 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  
LEGAL TRANSCRIPTION  
2420 TROY SCHENECTADY RD.  
NISKAYUNA, NY 12309

