

1 STATE OF NEW YORK COUNTY OF ALBANY

2 TOWN OF COLONIE

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4 STANFORD HEIGHTS FIRE STATION

5 2238 CENTRAL AVENUE

6 *****

7 THE STENOGRAPHIC MINUTES of the above entitled
8 matter by NANCY L. STRANG, a Shorthand Reporter
9 commencing on August 11, 2020 at 6:22 p.m. at
10 Memorial Town Hall 534 New Loudon Road, Latham,
11 New York.

12

13 BOARD MEMBERS:

14 PETER STUTO, CHAIRMAN

15 CRAIG SHAMLIAN

16 PAUL ROSANO

17 SUSAN MILSTEIN

18 STEVEN HEIDER, RECUSED

19 LOUIS MION

20 FREDERICK ASHWORTH

21

22 ALSO PRESENT:

23 KATHLEEN MARINELLI, ESQ. COUNSEL TO THE BOARD

24 SEAN MAGUIRE, AICP, CEcD, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT

25 OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1 ZACHERY HARRISON, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

2

3 ROGER KEATING, PE, CHAZEN COMPANIES

4 DENNIS ROUSE, PE

5 KEVIN HULETT, STANFORD HEIGHT FIRE DEPARTMENT

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1 MR. MAGUIRE: Next item on the agenda
2 is 2238 -- Central Avenue, Stanford Heights
3 Fire Department. The applicant is the Stanford
4 Heights Fire District, represented by Chazen.
5 Sketch plan review of a new 17,450 square-foot
6 municipal fire station on 3.06 acre site of
7 five combine parcels between Wilbur and
8 Covington Avenue including 71 new parking
9 spaces and the demolition of the existing fire
10 station on Central Avenue.

11 Sean, do you have any comments before
12 we turn it over to the applicant?

13 MR. MAGUIRE: No, I think we can just turn
14 it over to the applicant.

15 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Do you have boards that
16 you want to show?

17 MR. KEATING: I do have boards, but we can
18 use the screen. That will work, too.

19 CHAIRMAN STUTO: We will try the screen
20 but if you have something different let us
21 know. We will take a look at the appropriate
22 time.

23 MR. KEATING: Roger Keating from the
24 Chazen Companies. I'm here tonight on behalf of
25 the Stanford Heights Fire District to present

1 to the proposed fire station.

2 What they have planned is the existing
3 station is currently located at the corner
4 of Central Avenue and Covington Avenue. What
5 the plan is to merge the five parcels that
6 they have into one lot and ultimately then
7 they would tear down the existing firehouse
8 once the new fire station is built.

9 From a sequencing standpoint we need to
10 keep the existing fire open while the
11 proposed was being built. The project has a
12 little bit of a split-zone going on and you
13 will see that there is the yellow line
14 running up and down the page. To the left
15 side of the site we have SFR single-family
16 residential and the east side of the site we
17 have the NCOR district.

18 Right now, currently the district
19 operates out of the existing station. They
20 have 42 active volunteers along with 43
21 non-active social volunteers at the station.
22 The new station will be around a 17,000
23 square-foot building footprint with a total
24 square footage of 25,000 square foot with
25 the second floor. The project site is a

1 little unique in that we have road frontage
2 on three pieces of the project. We Have
3 Central Avenue, Wilbur Avenue and Covington
4 Avenue. The site has good access for public
5 water and sewer, both along Wilbur and
6 Covington. The plan currently proposes 71
7 parking spaces. Seventeen of these parking
8 spaces are first responder parking. So, off
9 of Covington Avenue you will have those 17
10 spaces on that left-hand bottom portion of
11 the screen. So, when a call happens, the
12 volunteers will park at that particular
13 location, into the building and then exit
14 out with the apparatus onto Wilbur.

15 The dumpster generator for the project
16 - we have located in the upper right hand
17 corner. We have tried to push that as far to
18 the right hand side of the plan as possible.

19 We have some residential properties to
20 the west of us and part of the plan is to
21 keep the dumpster and the generator as far
22 from that side of the site is possible.
23 Also, the building is about 90 feet off of
24 that residential property line to the east.
25 We really tried to push the parking and the

1 building as much toward the Central Avenue
2 side of things as possible when we were
3 laying out the plan. So, with that 90 feet
4 as you can see there's a pretty large green
5 space there. I did bring an aerial with me,
6 so you can get a sense of what's out there
7 today. What's existing out there today -
8 you have the firehouse, but then you also
9 have the other dealership parking lot which
10 encompasses the Wilbur side of the site. I
11 believe the few business that were there -
12 Valley Petroleum -- that was along that
13 Wilbur Avenue.

14 Just to point out, all those buildings
15 and structures would also be removed as part
16 of the project.

17 Again, in summary, this collection of
18 properties that we have just creates a
19 literal uniqueness to the project.

20 There are some potential waivers that
21 we would need to discuss with the Board and
22 at sketch plan tonight we want to make sure
23 we talk to everybody about those.

24 For instance, as mentioned in the
25 report in the letter about the building

1 exceeding the 25-foot setback from the
2 Central Avenue side of things, it's kind of
3 a unique situation in that we have to keep
4 the existing building - the existing
5 firehouse in service while things are going
6 on. Really it's not possible to hit that
7 setback on Central Avenue for the station.

8 Parking in the front yard setback - we
9 have some along Covington that is in the
10 front setback; the first responder parking.
11 The intent there is that we wanted to keep
12 the parking away from the residential as
13 much as possible as well as hitting the
14 parking that we would need for the
15 responders. So, we didn't want to keep
16 pushing it towards the residential area.

17 Also we wanted some of the best soils
18 on the site - we wanted to keep it in that
19 portion.

20 One of the things - there was some
21 parking lot pavement within 15 feet of
22 Covington. We did take a look at that and I
23 think we can get that one space moved so we
24 wouldn't be in that situation and we would
25 not need that waiver.

1 With that brief overview, I will turn
2 that back over to the Board and we're happy
3 to answer any questions the Board may have
4 at this time.

5 When the district catches up with me,
6 there probably will be people here from the
7 District, too.

8 CHAIRMAN STUTO: This is being reviewed by
9 our Town Designated Engineer, Barton and
10 Loguidice.

11 Chuck Voss, I know you haven't done a
12 formal review letter, but can you give us
13 your comments based on what you see?

14 MR. VOSS: Sure, Peter; thank you.

15 We have taken a quick look at the
16 project. We did attend the DCC meeting in
17 July when the project first came before the
18 committee. In essence just a follow-up on
19 some of the comments Roger made, the site is
20 fully accessible by utilities. There's sewer
21 and water on site that currently serves the
22 existing firehouse, as well as existing
23 prior structures that were there.

24 As Roger mentioned, the property is
25 somewhat unique in that it does have the

1 three frontages which is a little unusual.
2 We haven't seen something quite like that.
3 The project itself obviously does not meet
4 the front setback requirement. So, those
5 waivers will need to be something the Board
6 looks at. Again, given the layout of the
7 site, the sensitivity certainly should be
8 exercised when considering the residential
9 parcels, especially on the Covington side.
10 There are really no residential parcels
11 directly opposite on the Wilbur side until
12 you get a little bit further west of the
13 site. The Covington side is where some of
14 those single-family homes are currently
15 located. Granted, they are there now with
16 the existing firehouse.

17 I know at the DCC meeting the
18 applicants were asked to reach out to those
19 neighbors. The Fire District was asked to
20 reach out to the neighbors and at least let
21 that know that the project was coming. I
22 believe they said that they would certainly
23 do that.

24 Another kind of interesting aspect of
25 this is SEQRA will be handled by the Fire

1 Department. They are going to be considered
2 the lead agency for the purposes of the
3 environmental review because of the fact
4 that they are bonding the project. They have
5 their first initial approval authority over
6 the bond issue if the project moves forward.
7 Obviously, if the bond does not pass, the
8 project does not move forward, at least in
9 their eyes. SEQRA will be handled on that
10 level. It's been classified as an unlisted
11 action which again kind of just raises the
12 level of environmental review a little bit.
13 We'll make sure that the SEQRA Resolution
14 with the firehouse - we are aware of that
15 and we will work with them and the Planning
16 Department.

17 Other than that, no public sewer
18 extension is needed because the service is
19 there.

20 We did ask the applicants to just
21 demonstrate how firetrucks would be
22 accessing and entering and leaving the site.
23 Right now it is our understanding that upon
24 returning from a call, firetrucks would come
25 down Covington Avenue in a westerly

1 direction going into the site from the south
2 side essentially, enter the building and
3 then when responding to a call the trucks
4 will leave for the north end of the building
5 out onto Wilbur and catch Central or down
6 through Albany Street. We just want to be
7 able to understand a little bit better as
8 the project evolves.

9 Other than that, the project is pretty
10 much straightforward. Stormwater management
11 seems to handle the site fairly well right
12 now. Obviously, we will need Roger to
13 demonstrate that.

14 Other than that, I think that's all we
15 have at the moment, Peter.

16 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, we will take
17 questions from the Board.

18 Chief?

19 MR. HEIDER: Just a couple. Nobody loves
20 the volunteers more than I do, so I don't want
21 to say anything negative. I have rarely seen a
22 firehouse go this far into a residential zone
23 or residential space. Shaker Road/Loudonville
24 Firehouse on Shaker Road has an entrance and
25 exits off of Maria Drive, but not to the extent

1 where both entrances are off of residential
2 roads. That does concern me.

3 Besides, the building is rather large.
4 Many contemporary firehouses are long and
5 they house a whole lot of apparatus in them.
6 From looking at it from Coventry Court,
7 which you spoke of coming out Central
8 Avenue, it's going to be one big building.

9 The other concern I have a little bit
10 is I noticed the second story they have what
11 they referred to as a meeting room. That
12 meeting room has a full commercial kitchen
13 and coat rooms and things like that. My
14 guess is that's going to be more of a social
15 gathering place and I'm curious what the
16 parking requirement would be for 2,200
17 square feet and if that 71 spaces satisfies
18 that.

19 Other than that, that's all I have.

20 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Thank you, Lou?

21 MR. MION: I have to agree with Chief. Has
22 anybody talked to the neighbors about it?

23 MR. KEATING: We are in the process of
24 getting set up with those folks from the
25 district. As part of any of those processes

1 here with doing these types of fire station
2 projects, they typically have some type of
3 outreach as part of it.

4 Dennis Rouse is here - the architect -
5 for the project and that's the normal course
6 of action for projects that he has been
7 involved in.

8 MR. MION: This has to go out to the
9 district for a vote, right?

10 MR. KEATING: Yes, it does. There will be
11 a public meeting as part of that, as well.
12 Typically that's part of the bond process, as
13 well. They would have double public meeting
14 that goes along with that.

15 MR. MION: I ask that because it is my
16 district.

17 MR. KEATING: Okay.

18 MR. MION: And that's a lot of money.

19 Where is the front door going to be?

20 MR. KEATING: Again with the three road
21 frontages, it's a little unique in that
22 respect. The front, as we have been calling it,
23 is the apparatus-based side which is the north
24 elevation. That would be the north elevation.

25 MR. MION: Central Avenue is North and

1 Albany Street is South

2 MR. KEATING: Central is northeast, so
3 what Dennis I believe is calling the North
4 elevation.

5 MR. ROUSE: So, the north elevation shows
6 the Wilbur Avenue.

7 MR. KEATING: That is correct. You are
8 looking at the bay doors on the side entrance
9 that is right there.

10 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Can you show us some of
11 the other elevations?

12 MR. KEATING: Sure. So, the elevation that
13 you see with the rendering on the left-hand
14 side is facing towards the south parking lot.

15 MR. MION: That's Central Avenue.

16 MR. KEATING: Correct. Then, the lower one
17 is facing towards Covington.

18 CHAIRMAN STUTO: The one on the right?

19 MR. KEATING: That's facing the
20 residential properties towards Albany Street.

21 MR. MION: So, Sean, it's got three sides
22 but we still have to have the front. Will the
23 address change to that street?

24 MR. MAGUIRE: We talked to police
25 communications and I think because it's the

1 existing firehouse, I think their preference is
2 to maintain the same address in the system for
3 911.

4 MR. MION: That's 2238, correct?

5 MR. MAGUIRE: Correct.

6 And to answer the Chief's question
7 about parking requirements: For a public
8 assembly space it's one space per two
9 persons at max occupancy.

10 MR. HEIDER: Do we know what that
11 occupancy would be?

12 MR. MAGUIRE: I don't know. I would have
13 to defer to Dennis.

14 MR. HEIDER: So, 2,200. My only concern is
15 I don't want to see a time -- I want to see a
16 successful firehouse, but I don't want to see a
17 time when cars are lining up onto Wilbur and
18 Covington because there is an event going on at
19 the fire house.

20 MR. MION: I think we need to have a
21 little more justification as to why it is so
22 big. It's probably the biggest one of the whole
23 Town. That's all I have.

24 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Chip?

25 MR. ASHWORTH: Looks like you're short on

1 the green space, so I think you might have to
2 give up some parking spaces to make up for it.

3 It is so out of character with the
4 neighborhood. It's looming. It's dark red
5 brick and I don't think there's any brick
6 houses there that I know of. People are
7 facing west and I think it's going to block
8 out the sun.

9 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Paul?

10 MR. ROSANO: Since the firehouse is going
11 to stay in place until this construction is
12 complete, would this be considered a
13 redevelopment because you -- was it going to be
14 strictly new development? The green space will
15 be in flux there depending upon how you going
16 to look at this.

17 MR. KEATING: It is a redevelopment
18 project especially as you look at it from the
19 stormwater perspective. We have a lot of
20 hardscape out there today. As you can see from
21 the aerial, we have a really large parking lot
22 and everything that is adjacent to us currently
23 today - as well as the existing firehouse - is
24 adjacent old fuel business. There's a lot of
25 pavement out there that sits there today. So,

1 it would be a redevelopment project as it
2 relates to a stormwater management perspective
3 for sure.

4 MR. ROSANO: So, if we're going to
5 consider this redevelopment, than the green
6 space requirement may not come into play. It
7 doesn't hold up for redevelopment. It's only
8 for new development.

9 MR. KEATING: Okay.

10 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Susan?

11 MS. MILSTEIN: Right now how do the
12 emergency vehicles go in and out? Do they go in
13 and out through Central?

14 MR. KEATING: Right now, they have to back
15 into the firehouse on Central Avenue. So, all
16 those are backing in. For the most part, this
17 is a smaller piece of apparatus (Indicating).

18 I see Kevin from the district is here
19 tonight, as well.

20 Correct me if I'm wrong, Kevin, but
21 that is your procedure.

22 MR. HULETT: We have to stop traffic on
23 Central Avenue and we have emergency trucks
24 with the ladder trucks. With the two engines
25 and the apparatus ladder truck, we have to stop

1 traffic.

2 MR. KEATING: That's Kevin Hulett from the
3 Fire District.

4 MS. MILSTEIN: So, that's really going to
5 change if the new firehouse is built strictly
6 on the residential streets in and out.

7 MR. KEATING: The large apparatus would
8 all be pull-through vehicles, meaning they have
9 doors on both sides so they can drive the large
10 apparatus right into the building from
11 Covington.

12 MS. MILSTEIN: So, that's a concern. When
13 you figure the parking, did you figure it on
14 the firehouse or as a social -

15 MR. KEATING: Fire houses are always a
16 tricky one because they serve a lot of
17 different things in the community. So, it's not
18 just a social house, but it's also the Boys and
19 Girls Club recreational leagues and such that
20 use those buildings and different types of
21 clinics and such that are proposed.

22 The way we looked at it is we wanted to
23 try and find a good balance. We didn't want
24 to overpark, but we wanted to be able to
25 provide parking that suits the needs. For

1 instance on the first room - the training
2 room that's on the first floor has a 40-seat
3 occupancy so if there is a training, they
4 have the ability to hold training. I believe
5 they have some training for Code Review for
6 New York State at the districts. For
7 instance, without room for 40 individuals,
8 you would be at about 42 people for that
9 space if they were using it as a training
10 scenario.

11 Then, there's about eight offices up
12 there on the top. That's bringing us around
13 the 50 mark, which is about what the south
14 parking lot consists of. The other parking
15 is received in the front for emergency
16 response. We don't want to have people
17 parking there because we want our volunteers
18 to be able to park in those spaces and get
19 into the building quickly. So, we kind of
20 separated those two from that perspective.
21 So, that was the approach because when you
22 start to add up some of the uses in there,
23 and the different way you could cut it up,
24 you could use the apparatus space even for
25 space. If there were an emergency shelter

1 situation like in the winter time, I believe
2 Dennis you are saying that the building can
3 actually house up to 100 people in the
4 wintertime if it gets really cold - acting
5 as a warming shelter in those instances. Not
6 that they are driving there, but it could be
7 used in that way. These types of buildings
8 don't really have one single use and the
9 Code doesn't have fire buildings in it.

10 MS. MILSTEIN: I have the same concerns.

11 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I think you have the
12 support and appreciation for the firefighters
13 from everyone on the Board. I think people are
14 saying that the encroachment on the residential
15 areas are perhaps the biggest issue and any
16 mitigation has to be done and it would be
17 appreciated. It will be interesting to see what
18 the neighbors would have to say. Eventually we
19 would have to notify them when they come to our
20 meeting. So, whatever mitigation you have
21 available would be helpful.

22 I think Paul has another comment.

23 MR. ROSANO: Roger, can we clarify one
24 thing? On our checklist we have a project
25 location 2238 Central Avenue. For the record,

1 this is at 2240. I know it's not a big deal,
2 but can we clarify?

3 MR. KEATING: We will get that corrected
4 but I believe it is the 38. We will confirm
5 that for you.

6 MR. ROSANO: Thank you.

7 CHAIRMAN STUTO: I guess I have one
8 technical question. Since the rear portion is
9 single-family residential, what else do you
10 need to do procedurally before you go forward?
11 Do you need to rezone or get a variance?

12 MR. KEATING: So, actually the firehouse
13 falls within single-family. It is an approved
14 use in SFR district, so we don't need -- we
15 don't need relief in that respect. There are a
16 couple of design standards as it relates to the
17 things that we were talking about, which may
18 need potential waivers.

19 Sean, was there something from the
20 zoning piece that I was missing on that?

21 MR. MAGUIRE: No. I think some of the
22 changes you made initially had to deal with the
23 waivers that were needed - the dumpster and the
24 generator situation.

25 MR. KEATING: But it still creates unique

1 scenario because we don't want to place another
2 residential piece but because technically we
3 have three frontages, it doesn't allow us a
4 real clean spot to put one. That is versus
5 putting it into the adjacent residential area.
6 That was the piece I just wanted to make sure
7 we were clear on the record. I do believe I do
8 need to get relief from the Zoning Board for
9 that piece.

10 MR. MAGUIRE: Right, and that's what Zach
11 just provided us - some action by the ZBA.

12 MR. KEATING: So, that one piece of it is
13 a little bit of a unique nuance with this
14 particular site.

15 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, any comments or
16 questions?

17 (There was no response.)

18 MR. KEATING: I do have Dennis Rouse from
19 the architect who can get very specifically on
20 the building if you wanted to ask.

21 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Did you want to put the
22 elevations up?

23 MR. MAGUIRE: Sure.

24 MR. KEATING: Dennis, is there anything
25 that you would like to add about the building

1 since you are here tonight?

2 MR. ROUSE: The only thing that I would
3 add is the materials are not chosen yet. We
4 would certainly like to hear from the public.
5 But we do know that we want a masonry building
6 because it lasts long and it's easy to
7 maintain. By no means are those colors, shapes
8 or materials set in stone, if you will. We have
9 plenty of time to talk with the neighbors and
10 answer everybody's questions about what we're
11 doing.

12 MR. MION: Would that be the district or
13 the whole public?

14 MR. ROUSE: Well, that's by anybody in the
15 district because it's their fire station and we
16 get their support so we will talk to the
17 neighbors. But we also want to talk to the
18 entire district.

19 MR. MION: I guess what I'm asking is:
20 Will it be both at the same time, or are you
21 going to do it separately?

22 MR. ROUSE: I think we would probably do
23 it separately, but we will reach out to the
24 immediate neighbors first since they are most
25 effective. I would think we would want to reach

1 out to everybody at least a couple of times.

2 CHAIRMAN STUTO: Okay, any other comments
3 or questions?

4 (There was no response.)

5 Thank you. We look forward to seeing
6 you next time.

7 (Whereas the above entitled proceeding
8 was concluded at 6:47 PM)

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CERTIFICATION

I, NANCY L. STRANG, Shorthand Reporter
and Notary Public in and for the State of
New York, hereby CERTIFIES 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.

Date: _____

Nancy L. Strang
Legal Transcription
2420 Troy Schenectady Road
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