



Planning Board

Regular Meeting

~ Minutes ~

347 Old Niskayuna Road
Latham, NY 12110

<https://www.colonie.org/>

Steven Heider

Tuesday, October 21, 2025

6:00 PM

Public Operations Center

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Steven Heider at 6:00pm. The roll was called.

Also present were Director Andris Blumbergs (PEDD), Planner Lauren Dryburgh (PEDD), TDE John Frazer (B&L) and TDE Joe Grasso (CHA).

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Steven Heider	Chairman	Present	
Henry J. Rosenzweig	Board Member	Present	
Paul A. Leo	Board Member	Present	
Michael J Malone	Board Member	Present	
Kevin M. Bronner	Board Member	Present	
Ricahrd Barlette	Board Member	Present	
Joanne Maloy	Board Member	Present	
Matthew Millea	Counsel	Present	

2. Public Hearing

3. Report of the Planning Department

2772 & 2792 Curry Road - Lisha Solar and Lisha 2 Solar: Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) public comment update from the Department.

Russell Ziemba, of 1813 Highland Ave. in Troy, a volunteer with Save the Pine Bush, reiterated his comments from previous meetings; he emphasized he does not support the project at this location. Mr. Ziemba stated that Save the Pine Bush has submitted additional comments via email from Dr. Cynthia Lang, and proceeded to ask the Board to review this letter. Mr. Ziemba then read an excerpt from the letter discussing the impact of development on the Pine Bush and the adjacent parcels proposed for the Lisha Solar project.

Andy Arthur of 15A Elm Ave. in Delmar, a volunteer with Save the Pine Bush, also referenced the letter from Dr. Cynthia Lang. Mr. Arthur noted, in the letter Dr. Lang stated very little research has been done on how solar farms affect biodiversity.

Chairman Steven Heider asked the department to include in the comment record a newspaper article on a moratorium for battery storage projects in Rotterdam.

4. Regular Business

a. *Central Avenue West Corridor Study*

Central Avenue West Corridor Study: Presentation of the Final Report prepared by Stantec in collaboration with the Capital Region Transportation Council, NYSDOT, and the Town of Colonie Planning and Economic Development Department.

Andrew Tracy, Director of Operations for the Capital Region Transportation Council (CRTC), introduced the project. The Town of Colonie applied for the study as part of the CRTC's planning program in 2023. This program provides municipalities the opportunity to apply for projects. Mr. Tracy indicated the Town asked for concepts to reduce lengths between marked pedestrian crossings as well as potential solutions to some of the issues with speeding on the Central Avenue corridor.

Project Manager Phil Schaeffing of Stantec discussed the study further, providing further insight on the project scope, purpose, and need. Mr. Schaeffing highlighted the multimodal safety and mobility improvements of the study, and discussed ways to increase mixed-use development on the Central Ave. corridor.

Matthew Roe of Stantec discussed the transportation recommendations that came out of the study. One recommendation was the implementation of a shared use path and median from New Karner Rd. to Lisha Kill Rd. where traffic volumes are higher. From Lisha Kill Rd. to Niskayuna, where traffic volume is lower, the study suggests reducing the road to one lane in each direction to allow for bike lanes on each side as well as a median. Mr. Roe stated this would make the street easier and safer for pedestrians to cross. Mr. Roe also discussed Town-led pedestrian improvements along the off-road trail corridor along the utility trail that currently exists from Albany St. to Vly Rd. with future potential to connect to Sand Creek Rd. and the Crossings Park. Further recommendations also included expanding CDTA's Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) program, and to make changes to address vehicular flow including reducing the speed limit to 35 MPH.

Phil Schaeffing returned to the podium to speak on land use recommendations for the corridor. Mr. Schaeffing discussed the zoning district that created the boundary of the study - the Commercial Office Residential (COR) zoning district around Central Ave. The report recommends creating an overlay district for the area around Central Ave. which would increase the max base residential density to allow more housing by-right in the corridor.

Chairman Steven Heider spoke to the history of the corridor and asked if NYSDOT had provided any information on the estimated cost of the recommendations in the study. Matthew Roe noted that the cost will depend on which sections of the corridor are focused on, estimating the cost to be approximately \$10 million for the project.

Board member Paul Leo asked if there were concerns with vehicle stacking as there are currently traffic issues on Central Ave. Mr. Leo cited State St. in Schenectady as an example where a four lane road is reduced into a two lane. Mr. Roe discussed differences between that portion of State St. and the corridor study area on Central Ave.

Chair Heider asked about how turning movements would be made in the areas with medians. Mr. Roe explained how the areas that require left hand turns will be signalized, and that medians will not be in areas where large trucks will need to make turns.

Board member Michael Malone Jr. highlighted areas of the Town that have had difficulty with retail due to a median, citing Route 7 as one such example. Mr. Roe noted this recommendation will not be implemented in areas with retail to avoid this issue.

Board member Richard Barlette asked for clarification on where this will be implemented. Mr. Roe stated that it will be between Lisha Kill Road and the Niskayuna Town Line, and that it would be one lane in each direction with two lanes at intersections. Mr. Barlette went on to ask how the Bus Rapid Transport program will be affected if the speed limit is reduced. Mr. Roe noted the trade off effects this may have on the BRT, highlighting the positives and negatives. Chairman Heider raised concern over buses stopping in sections of road which are only one lane, and noted this will lead to the trailing cars being forced to stop. Mr. Roe noted they would recommend bus pullouts in the one lane section at bus stop locations. Chairman Hider went on to note that in many cases CDTA is not able or not willing to add more pullouts. Mr. Roe stated they intend to use preexisting pullouts as opposed to creating new ones, and that when possible bus stops could be placed in sections of road that are two lanes.

Chairman Heider and Richard Barlette discussed fatalities along Central Ave, both board members emphasized that many accidents involved drugs/alcohol, speeding and that many pedestrians who were hit were crossing at areas without signals.

Board member Henry Rosenzweig expressed support for the sidewalks at Waterman Ave. noting that it would be helpful for students to safely make their way to and from school.

Board member Joanne Maloy asked about proposed signals in the corridor. Mr. Roe stated that currently only one signal is proposed at Lansing Rd. He went on to discuss how it is difficult to obtain signal warrants, but if there is demonstrated pedestrian need then more signals could be warranted. Mr. Roe also stated than one benefit of reducing to a two lane road is that in cross sections you can have Rapid Flashing Beacons as an alternative to traditional crosswalks.

Board member Kevin Bronner Jr. asked about whether or not the pedestrian/bike lanes would be used. Mr. Roe discussed that the sidewalks are currently being used.

b. 261 Troy Schenectady Road - Valente Group Minor Subdivision and ODA

261 Troy Schenectady Road - Valente Group Minor Subdivision and ODA. Applicant: Valente Building Group, LLC. Represented by Advance Engineering & Surveying PLLC. ODA review for the proposed three residential lots. The site is zoned Commercial Office Residential (COR). No TDE assigned. (PL-24-00338).

Planning Director Andris Blumbergs explained what an ODA is. An ODA is necessary when a parcel does not have frontage on a road and therefore does not have access. The parcel in question has access from Troy Schenectady, but due to safety concerns, access is proposed off Penfield Dr. through the adjacent parcel instead.

Nia Cholakis, counsel for Valente Building Group, presented on behalf of the applicant.

Chairman Heider noted that the apartments built on the site should have architecture similar to the houses up the road along Penfield Dr. Chairman Heider also noted that the site should have further amenities for any families with children who may reside at the site. Lastly, Chairman Heider requested that the applicant resolve any potential address concerns in regards to Emergency services.

A motion was made.

i. Motion To: Reccommend ODA to Town Board

COMMENTS - Current Meeting:

WHEREAS, Valente Building Group, LLC (hereinafter referred to as the "Applicant") made application to the Colonie Town Board for creation of an Open Development Area for 257, 259, and 261 Troy Schenectady Road for the duplex at 257 Troy Schenectady that will be provided access via an ingress/egress easement utilizing a private driveway from 259 and 261 Troy Schenectady; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Colonie Planning and Economic Development Department and Building Department have determined that access to the subject property by means other than use of the property's public road frontage requires approval of an Open Development Area; and

WHEREAS, the Applicant made a request for an Open Development Area to the Town, and the Town Board, pursuant to Town Law § 280-a(4), passed Resolution No. 207 for 2024 to refer the matter to the Planning Board; and

WHEREAS, the Town Board is authorized by Town Law § 280-a to establish an Open Development Area within the Town, for which permits may be issued for the erection of structures to which access may be given by right of way or easement, upon such conditions and subject to such limitations as may be prescribed by special rule of the Planning Board.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Planning Board has determined that it is in the best interest of the public's health, safety, and general welfare to permit access to the properties located at 257, 259, and 261 Troy Schenectady Road across an ingress/egress easement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the Planning Board recommends approval of the Open Development Area for 257,259, and 261 Troy Schenectady Road.

This resolution shall take effect immediately and shall be submitted to the Colonie Town Board for due consideration.

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Kevin M. Bronner, Board Member
SECONDER:	Joanne Maloy, Board Member
AYES:	Heider, Rosenzweig, Leo, Malone, Bronner, Barlette, Maloy

c. 189 Sand Creek Road. 11-Lot Conservation Subdivision

189 Sand Creek Road. 11-Lot Conservation Subdivision. Applicant: Cillis Home Builders. Represented by Advance Engineering & Surveying PLLC. Concept plan review for a proposed conservation subdivision consisting of 10 single-family home lots over 8.0 acres with one conservation lot. The site is zoned Single Family Residential (SFR). TDE: B&L. (PL-22-00004).

Director Blumbergs provided additional information on the project. The applicant owns a small portion of land to the south of the proposed Baxter Dr. As opposed to dedicating this land to the Town, the applicant came up with the idea to give the land to the adjoining homeowners on Norbrick Dr. to create a buffer from the road at the rear of those properties. Mr. Blumbergs stated that the applicant has reduced the proposed number of lots. Mr. Costa noted that nine out of the twelve property owners on neighboring Norbrick Dr. have responded positively to this, and that they are awaiting a response from the other three. Mr. Costa also confirmed that the proposed number of lots has been reduced from fourteen to ten. Mr. Blumbergs also recommended that the stormwater area be shifted to plan North to provide a more robust buffer area, and to improve the overall functionality of the site.

Nick Costa of Advance Engineering and Surveying presented on behalf of the applicant. He stated the revised plan shows ten lots that are all 12,000 sq. ft or more with 80 ft. of frontage with 1,200 to 1500 sq. ft of buffer area behind the houses on Norbrick Dr. proposed. Mr. Costa also noted that they reached out to twelve neighbors to offer them the additional buffer area and have heard from nine neighbors. Mr. Costa then spoke to the relocation of stormwater, and that they are talking to three or four homeowners around stormwater area to offer them additional buffer area.

Board member Kevin Bronner inquired about the letter to the neighbors on Norbrick Dr, provided to the Board that indicated the neighbors had accepted the offer for additional buffer area. Mr. Costa clarified that no offer had been accepted by any neighbors, they had just been notified about the proposal.

TDE John Frazer provided his review. Mr. Blumbergs recommended that a tree survey be conducted in order to have a better understanding of the trees present and where to fill in to provide a landscape buffer for residential neighbors.

The Board discussed the project.

Board Member Richard Barlette commented on the distance to the nearest fire hydrant. Mr. Costa indicated the utilities will be adjusted to ensure the hydrants are an appropriate distance from all of the residences.

Board Member Kevin Bronner stated that he is in favor of the architectural elements of the proposed residences. Mr. Bronner also stated he would like to hear the input of the neighbors.

Board Member Michael Malone inquired as to what would happen if neighbors do not take the offer for the additional buffer area. Mr. Costa responded that it was his understanding that the neighboring parcel on Norbrick Dr. would take the buffer area instead. Mr. Malone inquired about the possibility of an HOA, to which Mr. Costa stated that an HOA is not recommended for this small of a neighborhood. Director Blumbergs provided additional context regarding the buffer area for the neighbors.

Board Member Paul Leo expressed he is glad to see that the density has been reduced. Despite that, Mr. Leo expressed his desire to hear from the neighbors about additional concerns they may have.

Board Member Henry Rozensweig asked for further clarification on the letters provided to the Board, asking for more information on what the neighbors would like to see.

Board Counsel Matthew Millea provided clarification that the letter is an invitation to come and discuss the proposal further, not a letter of acceptance from the neighbors.

Christopher Myhre of 14 Norbrick Dr. discussed four major concerns including 1) the traffic at the intersection of Osborne and Sand Creek, 2) water management in the area, 3) if an in-depth environmental study has been conducted 4) clarification on rear property boundary and whether or not the land donation would be necessary to meet Zoning and Code requirements. Director Blumbergs provided clarification on the proposal. The buffer space was proposed to keep roadway from being directly on property line. Mr. Myhre questioned that if land compromise is not accepted, could the road be built on property line. Director Blumberges stated that yes, they would be within their right to do so.

Joshua Ezekiel of 18 Norbrick Dr. asked if the stormwater retention pond would increase mosquito populations in the warmer months. Mr. Ezekiel also questioned if it could overflow, and if this would impact the surrounding DEC protected lands. Director Blumbergs and Mr. Costa discussed the proposal for stormwater management on the site. Director Blumbergs noted that the stormwater pond is required to be designed to handle stormwater runoff in a way that will have no impact on the surrounding area. Mr. Costa stated the stormwater pond is not in a DEC wetland area but rather a Town designated protected watercourse. Chairmen Heider discussed that the vast majority of newly constructed neighborhoods have retention ponds to manage stormwater. Mr. Costa added that mosquitoes are common in stagnant water that is less than three feet deep. The proposed retention basin is a dry basin, that will generally be dry with the exception of periods after of heavy rainfall. Chairman Heider confirmed that the stormwater area would be deeded to the Town and that it will be fenced to keep children out.

John Panetta of 8 Norbrick Dr. asked how long construction of the project would take. Mr. Costa indicated that the road will take approximately 6-9 months, and the buildings approximately 18-24 months.

Robert Jobin of 20 Norbrick Dr. spoke about the letter of interest provided to the homeowners. Mr. Jobin discussed the likelihood that development will occur in that parcel eventually, and discussed his belief that working with the applicant would be most beneficial to the adjacent neighbors. Mr. Jobin expressed his opinion that the proposed berm should be removed due to drainage issues, and that a fence should be added in the buffer area to provide additional screening from the proposed development. Lastly, Mr. Jobin expressed his concern over safety with traffic entering and exiting the development and suggested that traffic should come out to the light. Director Blumbergs suggested a swale be installed instead of a berm to provide better drainage away from the residential homes.

David Myhre of 14 Norbrick Dr. expressed drainage concerns with the development as he already experiences drainage issues in his yard. Mr. Myhre asked for assurance that there would not be further drainage issues on his property. Mr. Myhre proceeded to discuss concerns over the way the offer letter he received was presented and asked for continued communication with the neighbors.

Mr. Costa once again spoke to stormwater concerns in regard to this project. Mr. Costa stated that any stormwater generated from the proposed new development will be intercepted by a closed drainage system. Mr. Costa agreed that a swale could be designed to bring the water away from the preexisting residential neighborhood.

Chairman Heider asked that this project come back after the Town's Completeness and Compliance review process before seeking final approval from the Planning Board.

A motion was made.

i. Motion To: Accept Concept Plan

RESULT:	ADOPTED [5 TO 2]
MOVER:	Joanne Maloy, Board Member
SECONDER:	Ricahrd Barlette, Board Member
AYES:	Heider, Leo, Malone, Barlette, Maloy
NAYS:	Henry J. Rosenzweig, Kevin M. Bronner

d. 981-997 Loudon Road - Century House Mixed-Use Redevelopment

981-997 Loudon Road - Century House Mixed-Use Redevelopment. Applicant: Latham Century Partners, LLC. Represented by Lansing Engineering. Concept plan review for the proposed:

- i. Renovation of the Century house building including a 2,250 addition.
- ii. Renovation and parking reconfiguration.
- iii. Construction of multi-family dwellings including: a 3-story dwelling (9,510 SF footprint), a 2.5-story dwelling (5,310 SF footprint), a 2-story dwelling (10,520 SF footprint), and a 3,600 SF indoor amenities space.
- iv. Construction of a 2-story (7,000 SF footprint) extended stay structure with a 1,400 SF entrance addition between the new structure and the existing hotel.

Several outdoor amenities are also proposed. The site is zoned Commercial Office Residential (COR). TDE: CHA (PL-25-00010).

Scott Lansing of Lansing Engineering presented on behalf of the applicant.

TDE Joe Grasso provided his review.

The Board discussed the project.

Board Member Joanne Maloy asked for clarification on Mr. Grasso's recommendation to create a connection to the adjacent Lexus dealership. Mr. Grasso indicated that the Century House site would lose parking if this connection was created, but they are already over the parking requirement anyway. Ms. Maloy expressed that she was content with the improved visual aesthetics of the building.

Richard Barlette expressed concern over where the ADA parking spaces are located on the proposed plan. He requested they be implemented in closer proximity to building entrances as to provide better accessibility.

A motion was made.

i. **Motion To:** Accept Concept Plan

RESULT:	ADOPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Kevin M. Bronner, Board Member
SECONDER:	Paul A. Leo, Board Member
AYES:	Heider, Rosenzweig, Leo, Malone, Bronner, Barlette, Maloy

5. Adjournment

With no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45pm.