



VILLAGE OF COLONIE

VILLAGE HALL

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PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

TUESDAY, JULY 7TH, 2026

6:30 P.M.

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Village of Colonie Planning Commission was held at Village Hall, 2 Thunder Road, Albany, NY 12205, on Tuesday, July 7th, 2026.

ROLL CALL:	Chairman:	Chris Dennis	Present
	Commissioners:	John Martin	Present
		Brittany Kendall	Present
		Kenny Hart	Present
		Jim Splonskowski	Present
		Alison Curran	Present
		John Lemperle	Present
	Alternate:	Carl Kuentzel	Absent
	Village Attorney:	Victor Caponera	Absent
	Village Engineer:	R.J. Laberge	Present
	Village Liaison:	Frank Prevratil	Present

Chairman Dennis opened the meeting at 6:30 P.M. Commissioner Hart led the Pledge of Allegiance and requested that all electronic devices be turned off or muted. The Commission reviewed the regular meeting minutes from June 16th, 2026. Commissioner Martin made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Commissioner Hart seconded the motion.

VOTE: Unanimous to approve.

EDP/McGovern Auto Group 345-347-373 New Karner Rd Site Plan Review

Nick Zeglin was present from Environmental Design Partnership on behalf of the applicant, McGovern Auto Group. He presented the site plan for the proposed project at 345-347 New Karner Road, which includes demolishing the three existing buildings to rebuild two new buildings for the Land Rover and Genesis dealerships. The majority of the project is in the Town of Colonie's jurisdiction, but there is a small portion of the project consisting of .12 acres that is known as 373 New Karner Road, which does fall in the Village of Colonie. Mr. Zeglin explained that the land was originally purchased to add green space to the site, but the Town of Colonie Planning Board has requested

another point of access to be added to the parcel. McGovern currently has an agreement with Kohl's to use approximately 140 parking spaces, and by having a point of access, cars wouldn't have to go onto New Karner Road in order to be moved into Kohl's lot. Mr. Zeglin advised that if this agreement with Kohl's were to expire, the applicant would remove the asphalt and add grass, closing the cut through.

Commissioner Martin stated that it looks like cars can go back and forth from the other sites without having to cross New Karner Road, and Mr. Zeglin explained that the applicant is looking to have access from the 373 New Karner Road parcel to the overflow parking at Kohl's. Chairman Dennis asked why there would be an agreement to return to green space if they own the parcel, and Engineer Laberge explained that it would be if the lease of parking with Kohl's was to cease, and the access to their lot wouldn't be necessary. Chairman Dennis explained that he believed it would just be access, and not parking, and asked if a new site plan should be filed for Kohl's Plaza. Mr. Zeglin explained that Kohl's property is not changing, and the property in question was previously owned by Walfred Associates and is now owned by the McGovern Group. Commissioner Hart asked if this parcel would remain in the Village of Colonie, to which Mr. Zeglin said yes.

Commissioner Martin stated that in creating the new parking spaces, the applicant is proposing to remove a mature tree and noted that he doesn't see any intention to replace said tree. Mr. Zeglin offered that more landscaping could be added. Chairman Dennis stated that he would like to not see parking spaces on the site. Brian Osterhout, EDP, explained that the project required a parking waiver from the Town because they are consolidating from three buildings to two. Understanding that they are deficient in parking, they have acquired the former Broadview (341 New Karner Rd) and the former Casale (340 New Karner Rd). These sites will be used for overflow parking, and for additional space during demolition and construction. Mr. Osterhout explained that the applicant is also leasing 27,000 sq. ft. of space in Colonie Plaza (1892 Central Ave), which will provide additional parking and more space. He added that there will be a site plan review coming in front of the Planning Commission in the near future, as the applicant would like to have a driveway between the current McGovern Volvo (350 New Karner Rd) and the leased space in Colonie Plaza. Commissioner Martin asked how many cars the two dealerships will have at their maximum peak. Mr. Osterhout explained that a parking narrative was provided to the Town, and the applicant is proposing to have nearly 1,000 parking spaces between the project sites and leases. Commissioner Martin expressed concern with that number of vehicles in the vicinity of New Karner Road and the Village. Commissioner Curran and Lemperle stated that they will all be parked cars. Mr. Osterhout stated that the Town has approved this concept plan, but it could be recommended that the new parcel is just access with no additional parking. Engineer Laberge advised that SEQR has not been completed yet, so no action could be taken, and the review is simply a presentation. Commissioner Curran asked what type of parking it would be, to which Mr. Osterhout said either new car parking or customer parking. Employees would have designated parking closer to the site. She stated that she does not have a problem with parking but suggested that some more landscaping is added to the back of the site. She added that if the cut through is removed in the future, the parcel

could still be used as a small parking lot instead of having to plant grass along the entire parcel.

Chairman Dennis observed that there is pavement all the way up to the property line, and the Commission typically requests that there is some space between. Mr. Osterhout explained that this comment was made with the Town of Colonie and stated that there is a large right-of-way on New Karner Road that provides a substantial green space area. Commissioner Lemperle asked if there are future plans to widen New Karner Road, and if so, wondered how it would affect this site. Mr. Osterhout stated that he believes sidewalks will be added but doesn't think the roads will be widened. Further, he offered that it would have to be widened significantly to adversely affect the site. A conversation has been had with Albany County Department of Public Works.

Chairman Dennis asked the Commission how they felt about the proposed parking on the parcel. Commissioners Kendall, Lemperle and Curran stated that they did not have a problem with parking. Commissioners Martin and Hart stated that they would like to see it without parking.

The Village will advise the Town of Colonie Planning Department that they do not have any issues with the proposed site at 373 New Karner Road but would recommend that some more landscaping is added to the site.

**ABD Engineering/Cole's Collision
1517-1529 Central Avenue
Site Plan Review**

Dave Kimmer, ABD Engineering, was present on behalf of the applicant, Cole's Collision, to seek site plan approval for the proposed annex at 1517 and 1529 Central Avenue. Mr. Kimmer explained that the applicant is still looking to demolish the existing multi-tenant building at 1529 Central Avenue, merge parcels, and rebuild another building that will be an extension of Cole's Collision business. The applicant was granted an area variance from the Zoning Board of Appeals on May 7th for the 5' buffer that abuts residential property. He stated that the layout hasn't changed much since the Commission last reviewed the site plan, and building elevations and floor plans have been provided. He offered that it will be in line with the current facility, as well as looking very similar to it. Mr. Kimmer explained that full detailed drawings have also been provided, and that the applicant is in receipt of Engineer Laberge's comment letter.

Mr. Kimmer stated that one of Engineer Laberge's concerns is that the building plan calls for 12,000 sq. ft. while the site plan shows 10,000 sq. ft. He explained that the additional square footage includes a mezzanine on the second floor of the new building for storage. A discussion was held regarding how this would affect the parking calculation, and Engineer Laberge requested that this is clarified in the next submission. Engineer Laberge also requested that one site plan with the entire proposal will need to be submitted to the Planning Commission once the details are finalized, since both parcels are being merged. One new site plan for both sites will be filed. Engineer Laberge

explained that with site being against the Northway, the green space in that vicinity is considered a side yard, not a front yard. He then advised that the proposal is deficient in green space in the front of the site, and it would require an area variance from the ZBA to have less than 50% of the green space in the front. Mr. Kimmer asked if this waiver could be granted from the building department, since the proposal has already gone in front of the ZBA and the layout hasn't changed much since the first variance was granted. Engineer Laberge said no, it would have to go back to the ZBA, and a discussion was previously had with the Planning Commission that the need for another variance could arise during the site plan approval process. Commissioner Martin suggested that green space could be added by removing the parking in front of the new building. Mr. Kimmer stated that parking is needed to meet the parking requirement, and the applicant prefers to keep the parking there as well. He asked if the Planning Commission would be willing to grant a waiver for fewer parking spaces if they were replaced with additional green space. He added that while this would increase the green space, it still probably wouldn't eliminate the need for a variance.

Commissioner Splonskowski asked Mr. Cole, representative of Cole's Collision, what Honest Johnny's is, as he read in the Albany Business Review that the business would be coming to Clifton Park and potentially Colonie. Mr. Cole explained that the business consists of calibrations and related mechanical work. A discussion was held regarding the use, and whether the proposed use is the same as it was indicated in earlier submissions. Mr. Cole explained that more mechanical work may be done in the new building, but it would be similar to the work occurring at the current Cole's site. Engineer Laberge suggested that the narrative is updated to reflect the proposed use. Commissioner Splonskowski expressed concerns with potential noise, among other issues, if work such as rebuilding engines is being done.

Engineer Laberge continued to go through his technical comments, stating that some stormwater improvements may also be necessary if damaged cars are going to be stored somewhere different from what was originally approved. Engineer Laberge also stated that there are power lines 10' from the building and advised that the applicant reach out to National Grid before work begins. He suggested relocating the handicapped parking to the front of the building if parking there remains. Engineer Laberge recommended that the fire department or building department review the plan in regard to the double stacking against the building and added that Code Enforcement Officer Mesurvey will review the plan. Furthermore, Engineer Laberge stated that the current site differs slightly from the approved site plan from 2014 in that some of the driveway and signs are within the DOT right-of-way. Mr. Kimmer offered that the applicant has a DOT permit and will review this. In regard to the proposed retaining wall on the West side of the site, Engineer Laberge asked if the foundation of the building could be used. Mr. Kimmer stated that this was reviewed, but there's a door that needs to be in that location for emergency access, and it would also affect the interior layout. Engineer Laberge also mentioned that a brief stormwater analysis will be needed, and a more detailed landscaping plan.

Commissioner Martin noted that the application mentions there may be future expansions, and he asked the applicant if the new building is considered to be the future

expansion. It was discussed that while the adjacent properties aren't currently for sale, there may be the opportunity to purchase them in the future to expand the operations. Commissioner Martin also asked that color elevations are provided, to which Mr. Kimmer stated they can provide, advising that the building will look similar to the current Cole's building. Commissioner Martin expressed concern with the proposed arbor vitae along the rear buffer, stating that the area may be too small for the number of plantings and they may not survive. Mr. Kimmer stated that they can look for alternatives. Chairman Dennis stated that he did not note any landscaping continuing across the back of the site. Mr. Kimmer stated that there are three large coniferous or pine trees on the roadside of the fence that will stay.

Commissioner Hart asked for confirmation that there is a gate to the back of the current Cole's facility in that if someone drops off a car, they can't access the back lot. Mr. Kimmer said yes, this area is completely gated off, and it's going to remain gated off.

Commissioner Kendall asked if the parking in front of the space is eliminated, if there would be any need for customers to still drive to the new building, or if they could park at the current facility and just walk over. Mr. Kimmer stated that in that instance, they could just walk over to the new building. Commissioner Curran stated that if a customer inadvertently parks in front of the new building, and their car has to be moved to the current facility, they will have to make a left onto Central Avenue and immediately take another left into 1517 Central Avenue, which doesn't seem safe. She recommended closing off the curb cut to 1529 Central Avenue and creating an entrance from 1517 to 1529, resulting in only one entrance to the entire site. Therefore, if a car needs to be moved, there's direct access to do so. Mr. Kimmer stated that this is a good idea, and they will look into it. Chairman Dennis agreed, offering that this would allow for better interior circulation being that it will be one site. Commissioner Kendall offered that she would like to see green space in front of the building, as she feels the site wouldn't gain much from having the parking. Mr. Kimmer stated that he does feel that parking in front of the site would be valuable for the customers that just need to go to the new building. He further explained that the majority of the parking at 1517 Central Avenue is gated off, and there is only a small parking area for customers in front of the site. Mr. Kimmer added that both options can be presented to the Planning Commission in the next submission.

Deputy Mayor Prevratil asked if auto repair is done in the new building, if cars are test driven after the work is done, to which Mr. Cole said yes. He also asked if side streets are used, or if the majority of driving is done on Central Avenue. Mr. Cole stated that he believes some of it is done on the highway, but they may exit the site to utilize the light at Nicholas Drive. Deputy Mayor Prevratil mentioned that there have been complaints about other auto shops test driving through surrounding neighborhoods, noting that the applicant may want to consider this.

Chairman Dennis stated that he wonders if the building location can be shifted to assist with internal circulation. Mr. Kimmer offered that they are trying to keep the buildings in

line with each other to keep driveways lined up, and there is a unique property line due to the DOT right-of-way, but they will investigate this.

The applicant will return to the Planning Commission for further site plan review.

Mr. Mike Capitula, Nicholas Drive, asked how many access points the site will have to Nash Place. Chairman Dennis stated that the existing access points will remain unchanged. Both 1517 and 1529 Central Avenue have gates. Engineer Laberge noted that, because parking is proposed in front of one gate, it appears there is no intent to use that gate regularly; however, the access easement must still be maintained. Mr. Capitula noted that a “no trucks allowed” sign was added at 1517 Central Avenue and has helped dramatically. He hopes similar signage can be added at 1529 Central Avenue.

A motion was made by Commissioner Martin to adjourn the meeting.
The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hart.

VOTE: Unanimous to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Hannah Curran
Deputy Village Clerk/Treasurer
Planning Coordinator
Village of Colonie