
M I N U T E S

BOARD: HISTORIC CONSERVATION COMMISSION, CITY OF BETHLEHEM
MEMBERS PRESENT: CRAIG EVANS (VICE CHAIR), MICHAEL SIMONSON, DESIREE STRASSER
MEMBERS ABSENT: TODD CHAMBERS
STAFF PRESENT: CRAIG PEIFFER (PLANNING DEPUTY DIRECTOR), JEFFREY LONG (HISTORIC OFFICER)
PRESS PRESENT: NONE
VISITORS PRESENT: GARY LADER, BRIAN ZIEGLER
MEETING DATE: APRIL 21, 2025

The regular meeting of the Historic Conservation Commission (HCC) was held on April 21, 2025, at the City of Bethlehem Town Hall Rotunda, 10 East Church Street, Bethlehem, PA. HCC Vice Chair Craig Evans called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Agenda Item #1

Property Location: 905 West Market Street

Property Owner: Brian Ziegler

Applicant: Gary Lader, 4/4 Architecture

Building Description, Period, Style, and Defining Features: This structure is a detached, 2 ½-story, wood frame, single-family dwelling situated on an elevated corner lot bordered by West Market Street and Eighth Avenue. The gambrel roof retains its original slate sheathing and includes a cross-gable dormer at the front (north) façade facing West Market Street. The dormer is sheathed in painted shakes and includes two pairs of double-hung windows. The main façades are sheathed in painted lap siding and include 1-over-1 double-hung windows, with painted wooden louvers (shutters) at the upper floor level. The side (west) façade includes a bay window at the entry level while the front (north) and side (east) façades include double-story bow windows. A wraparound front porch includes doric columns supporting a pent roof sheathed in slate. This structure was constructed ca. 1905 and is Victorian in style.

Proposed Alterations: The Applicant proposes to construct a new concrete patio enclosed by a stone veneer wall.

Guideline Citations:

- **Secretary of the Interior's Standards (SIS) 9.** -- New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
- **Secretary of the Interior's Standards (SIS) 10.** -- New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.
- **Bethlehem Ordinance 1714.03 Purposes of Historic Conservation District** -- It is the purpose and intent of the City of Bethlehem to promote, protect, enhance, and preserve historic resources and traditional community character for the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation, protection and regulation of buildings and areas of historic interest or importance within the City.

- **Historic Conservation Commission Design Guidelines** -- relevant sections concerning 'New Construction' (pp. 8-13): HCC encourages new construction that "(preserves) the cohesive ambiance of the Historic District with compatible, sympathetic, and contemporary construction, ... and (has) compatible ... materials, ... details and finishes".

Evaluation, Effect on Historic Conservation District, Recommendations: COA Application indicates intent to construct new concrete patio with stone veneer walls and bluestone caps at west side of existing dwelling. Dimensions of proposed patio are 17-feet 4-inches wide (as seen from front façade) x 37-feet deep x 2-feet 8-inches tall. Patio walls are interrupted at southwest and southeast corners with cast concrete steps leading down to surrounding landscape.

Based upon supplemental design drawings, proposed patio satisfies SIS 9 by avoiding destruction of historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize (historic) property and also by differentiating itself from existing by including stone details that are compatible with existing historic materials. Proposed patio also satisfies SIS 10 by integrating reveals in patio walls at junctions with existing historic structure, ensuring if patio is ever removed, essential form and integrity of historic property and its environment would remain unimpaired.

Relevant Design Guidelines for new construction within historic district note that new "additions should be positioned to have least visible impact from street. Additions at side elevations are generally appropriate, although it is recommended that they be set back ... from street." Proposed patio is appropriately located at side elevation and also appropriately sets back from front street. For clarification, Applicant should confirm dimension from front corner of existing dwelling to front of proposed patio. Same Design Guidelines continue that "new construction should use materials and textures in manner that is sympathetic to historic buildings; materials should be of similar or complementary color, size, texture, scale, craftsmanship and applicability to function performed. Traditional materials common within (historic district) such as brick, wood, stone and terra-cotta are recommended." Proposed materials of stone walls with bluestone caps are appropriate based upon relevant Design Guidelines; samples of proposed materials for HCC consideration are appreciated.

Discussion: Gary Lader and Brian Ziegler represented proposal to construct new concrete patio enclosed by stone veneer wall. Applicant summarized process of designing proposed patio and referenced previous renovation efforts on main house. Applicant clarified that proposed patio at west side of main house also wraps around rear corner of main house; continued by confirming that front wall of patio sets back 12-feet 10-inches from front corner of main house. Applicant submitted material samples of proposed stone: Seneca gray stone intended for wall veneers (matches stone foundation of main house) and blue stone slabs intended for cap; mortar joints will be gray in color. Applicant concluded by explaining that patio floor finish is concrete, with cast concrete steps at both rear (south) corners leading down to lawn.

Mr. Evans inquired about provisions for drainage. Applicant noted that patio will include one or two floor drains connected to existing underground leaders (already serving downspouts on main house) that drain to curb; continued that patio walls also include weepholes in mortar joints to address potential condensation. Mr. Simonson expressed appreciation for provided stone samples and requested clarification about mortar joints. Applicant explained that mortar joints will be gray in color with raised ribbon detail to match existing foundation walls of main house. Mr. Simonson continued by inquiring about number of concrete steps leading down from patio to lawn below. Applicant explained that maximum two steps will be required to compensate for elevation change. In response, Mr. Simonson confirmed that handrails are not required. Ms. Strasser requested clarification about height of patio wall. Applicant explained that grade of property drops from rear to front, so wall height at front (north) corner is approximately 4-feet 6-inches while wall height at rear (south) corner is approximately 3-feet 6-inches. Ms. Strasser continued by inquiring about height of wall from finished patio surface. Applicant noted that height of wall (including cap) is 2-feet 8-inches above finished patio surface; continued that wall thickness is 2-feet. Mr. Evans inquired if proposed patio requires steps leading down from existing sliding doors at side (west) façade of main house. Applicant confirmed that sliding doors lead down from existing kitchen; continued that finished floor of proposed patio is 7-inches lower than finished floor of kitchen, so patio is simple step down and does not require supplemental steps. Mr. Evans continued by inquiring about construction detail at intersection of main house and proposed patio. Applicant responded that lowest clapboard(s) on main house will be carefully

removed where needed to allow for installation of metal flashing between main house and proposed patio to prevent water penetration.

Public Commentary: none

Motion: The Commission upon motion by Mr. Simonson and seconded by Ms. Strasser adopted the proposal that City Council issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed work as presented, with modifications described herein:

1. The proposal to construct a new concrete patio enclosed by a stone veneer wall was presented by Gary Lader and Brian Ziegler.
2. Appropriate details for new patio include:
 - a. located at west side of existing dwelling and also wraps around rear (southwest) corner of main house; includes concrete floor with stone veneer walls
 - b. dimensions are 17-feet 4-inches wide (as seen from front façade) x 37-feet deep and sets back 12-feet 10-inches from front corner of main house
 - c. walls are 2-feet 8-inches tall from finished floor of concrete patio and are also 2-feet thick
 - d. walls are interrupted at southwest and southeast corners with cast concrete steps leading down to surrounding landscape
 - e. walls include stone veneer in Seneca gray color with raised ribbon mortar joints in gray color and bluestone caps
 - f. lowest clapboard(s) on existing dwelling to be carefully removed where needed for installation of metal flashing between main house and patio to prevent water penetration

The motion for the proposed work was unanimously approved.

General Business:

Minutes from HCC meeting on March 17, 2025, were approved by those attending that meeting, and with abstention by those not previously in attendance.

There was no further business; HCC meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



BY: _____

Jeffrey Long
Historic Officer
South Bethlehem Historic Conservation District
Mt. Airy Historic District