
MEETING MINUTES PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD AUGUST 17, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT

Robert Melosky, Chairman
Matthew Malozi, Vice Chairman
Joy Cohen

VISITORS PRESENT

Edward Boscola, Water & Sewer
Karen Andrews, BDA Architects
Adam Citrullo, BOHLER
Jason Posh,
Andrew Bull, Hanover Engineering
Kyle Haydt, Pennoni

MEMBERS ABSENT

Eddie Burgos
Thomas Barker

STAFF PRESENT

Matthew Deschler, Solicitor
Darlene Heller, Bureau of Planning & Zoning
Craig Peiffer, Bureau of Planning & Zoning
Fiona Hernandez, Secretary
Basel Yandem, Public Works

The August 17, 2023 meeting of Planning Commission held at the City of Bethlehem Town Hall, was called to order by Chairperson, Robert Melosky at 5:00 PM

AGENDA ITEM #1: APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 13th, 2023

Motion: Ms. Joy Cohen made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted.

Second: Mr. Matthew Malozi

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0

AGENDA ITEM #2: ACT 537 SPECIAL STUDY, City of Bethlehem Wastewater Treatment Plant

Proposed Work: Mr. Edward Boscola, from the City of Bethlehem discussed the proposed amendment to Bethlehem's Act 537 Plan. The purpose of Pa DEP's Act 537 Sewage Facilities Program is to help address existing sewage disposal needs, and to help prevent future problems through the proper planning, permitting and design of all types of sewage facilities.

Discussion: Mr. Boscola gave a brief high-level overview of the special study – Act 537. Act 537 is a state law that governs the planning management of

Municipal wastewater treatment and collection systems. This plan allows the City to forecast a budget to expand the plant due to increased population changes.

Mr. Malozi asked if this was a capital improvement or building anything new and does this require PA DEP approval. Mr. Boscola responded it is a capital improvement, and they've already received a water quality management permit to install the system.

Ms. Cohen wanted to clarify that adding the additional equipment that processes the sewer treatment increases the efficiency of the current equipment and reduces the cost of future costs. Mr. Boscola stated yes, it increases the efficiency of the primary clarifier so they can treat more organic waste.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion: Mr. Matthew Malozi made a motion to provide favorable support.

Second: Ms. Joy Cohen

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0

AGENDA ITEM #3: SKETCH PLAN REVIEW

(23-002 Sketch Plan Review) – 23070011 – 1223 WEST BROAD STREET – SKETCH PLAN REVIEW –Zoned CL, plan dated May 5, 2023.

Property Location: 1223 W. Broad St.

Developer/Engineer: BDA Architects

Proposed Work: Representing the property was Ms. Karen Andrews, from BDA Architects who discussed the proposed plan. The applicant proposes to remove the former drive-thru, and construct a two-story elevated addition containing six (6) multi-family dwellings (4 two-bedroom and 2 two-bedroom units) and add a rooftop 40-seat Seasonal Dining area above the one-story existing structure and a roof top tenant amenity space above the proposed addition. The parcel contains 30 existing parking spaces. The parcel measures 165' along West Broad Street and 150' along 12th Avenue, and totals 0.568 acres, or 24,750 Square Feet.

Discussion: Mr. Malozi wanted to clarify that Ms. Andrews would have to go to the Zoning Hearing Board for a special exception to be granted a waiver for three more parking spots, or is that a variance that has to be sought. Ms. Heller responded by saying they allow special exception relief for parking in the CL Zoning district if it can meet certain criteria.

Mr. Malozi was interested if there was an internal connection between the residences and the restaurant. Ms. Andrews said no, they would have to exit the lobby and enter through a different door.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion: Mr. Matthew Malozi made a motion to pass along favorable comments made by the council tonight along with comments in the City's August 14, 2023 review letter.

Second: Mr. Robert Melosky

Result of Vote: The motion carried 4-0

AGENDA ITEM #4: LAND DEVELOPMENT & SUBDIVISION PLAN REVIEW

(23-004 LD) – 23030007 – 2571-2651 Easton Avenue – Land Development Plan – WARD 14, Zoned CS, plans dated February 28, 2023, and last revised June 9, 2023.

Property Location: 2571 – 2651 Easton Ave

Property Owner: Mr. Jason Posh

Developer/Engineer: Bohler Engineering

Proposed Work: Representing the property was Mr. Adam Citrullo, from Bohler Engineering who discussed the proposed plan. The Applicant proposes to construct a 2,500 SF pad site within the subject Shopping Center, on a 7.351-acre lot. The pad site will accommodate a Fast-Food Restaurant with Drive-Through Service and site improvements including parking, access roadways, lighting, landscaping, utilities and stormwater conveyance facilities.

Discussion: Ms. Cohen noticed a driveway to the east and a marker that said stop and wanted clarification on the plan on how to enter/exit the site. Mr. Citrullo stated that's the bypass lane for the "Coffee Shop" and Pott's hot dog stand. The "STOP" helps reduce interference with the bypass lane for Pott's Hot Dogs. Mr. Melosky, stated the traffic flow is a bit chaotic in that area and appreciates anything that would help organize traffic flow.

Ms. Cohen had a question regarding low-level Landscaping between the drive-thru and the building on the Easton Avenue side by the shrubs and trees to help shield the ques. Mr. Citrullo and Mr. Posh were open to suggestions. They agreed to additional Landscaping to help conceal the queue from the road. Mr. Yadem stated they did ask for more trees in the parking lot for shade.

Mr. Malozi wondered if the proposed inlets for stormwater drainage were new. Mr. Citrullo said they were required to present additional inlets for stormwater drainage and have planned catch basins.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion: Ms. Joy Cohen made a motion to approve the request, with the following condition:

1. The Applicant shall meet the requirements in the June 30, 2023 review letter.
2. The request for waivers regarding the stormwater ordinance for HDPE and PVC storm water pipes may be administratively approved by the engineering department.
3. The Applicant shall consider additional landscaping on the East/South East side of the drive thru.

Second: Mr. Matthew Malozi

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0

AGENDA ITEM #5: LAND DEVELOPMENT & SUBDIVISION PLAN REVIEW

(23-006 LD&S) – 23040002 – 1620 East Fourth Street. (Taco Bell) - Land Development and Subdivision Plans – Ward 17, Zoned IR, plans dated March 10, 2023, and last revised July 12, 2023.

Property Location: 1620 E. 4th St.

Developer/Engineer: Hanover Engineering

Proposed Work: Representing the property was Mr. Andrew Bohl, from Hanover Engineering who discussed the proposed plan. Mr. Bohl, LVIP VII, proposes to Subdivide Lot 23 (144,833 SF / 3.32 Acre) into two lots: Lot 23A (82,195 SF / 1.88 Acres) and Lot 23B (62,637 / 1.44 Acres). The Applicant Summerwood Corp. proposes Land Development for Lot 23B, to construct a 2,722 SF Fast-Food Restaurant with Drive-Through Service and site improvements including off-street parking for 32 cars, access roadways, lighting, landscaping, utilities and stormwater conveyance facilities.

Discussion: Ms. Cohen wanted some clarification on the North side of the parcel along 4th Street to show a connection from the existing sidewalk into the property, along with a marked crosswalk. Mr. Bohl showed where the sidewalk comes across the drive-thru to ensure visibility for cars and on the road.

Ms. Cohen asked about a connecting sidewalk along lots 24 and 23's driveway. Mr. Bohl stated there is already a crosswalk with striping in the drive-in/out area.

Ms. Heller said six months after Sheetz, Taco Bell, and another development to the west are constructed, LVIP has agreed to do an additional traffic study.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion: Ms. Cohen made a motioned to approve the request, with the following condition:

1. The Applicant shall meet all of the requirements on the August 9, 2023 review letter.
2. Additional consideration for the sidewalks along 4th street be clearly marked.

Second: Mr. Matthew Malozi

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0

AGENDA ITEM #6: LAND DEVELOPMENT & SUBDIVISION PLAN REVIEW

(23-007 LD) – 23060002 – 3769 COMMERCE CENTER BLVD.– Land Development Plan – Ward 16, Zoned IN-O, plan dated May 31, 2023.

Property Location: 3769 Commerce Center Blvd.

Developer/Engineer: Pennoni

Proposed Work: Representing the property was Mr. Kyle Haydt, from Pennoni Associates who discussed the proposed plan. The applicant proposes to construct an 81,840 SF Addition to an existing 508,821 SF warehouse/manufacturing building and construct a 35-car parking lot at the southeast corner of the building on a 26.70-acre lot (Majestic Bethlehem Center/Bethlehem Commerce Center, LLC, Lot #5).

There were no comments from the public.

Motion: Ms. Cohen made a motioned to approve the request, with the following condition:

1. The Applicant shall meet all of the requirements in the August 3, 2023 review letter, with the exception of the zoning section item #1 which has been removed.

Second: Mr. Matthew Malozi

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0

AGENDA ITEM #4: DISCUSSION ITEMS

Ms. Heller reviewed possible upcoming items for the September PC meeting. Also mentioned was the September meeting need to be rescheduled later in the month.

There being no further business, upon a Motion by Robert Melosky, a Second by Matthew Malozi, and a unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 6:20 PM.

ATTEST:

Darlene Heller, Commission Secretary

MEETING MINUTES PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT

Matthew Malozi, Vice Chairman
Eddie Burgos
Joy Cohen

VISITORS PRESENT

Mike Simonson, Chief Code Officer
Jim Preston, Esq.
Philip Siebert
Eric Evans, Business Manager

MEMBERS ABSENT

Robert Melosky, Chairman
Thomas Barker

STAFF PRESENT

Matthew Deschler, Solicitor
Darlene Heller, Bureau of Planning & Zoning
Craig Peiffer, Bureau of Planning & Zoning
Fiona Hernandez, Secretary
Basel Yandem, Public Works

The September 28, 2023 meeting of Planning Commission held at the City of Bethlehem Town Hall, was called to order by Vice Chairperson, Matthew Malozi at 5:00 PM.

AGENDA ITEM #1: APPROVAL OF MINUTES – August 8, 2023

Discussion: Due to Mr. Eddie Burgos not attending the August meeting, Council was unable to vote. The vote will continue to the October meeting.

AGENDA ITEM #2: VACANT PROPERTY REVIEW

Property Location: 1101 Mechanic Street

Property Owner: Andre Simon

Proposed Work: Representing the property was Mr. Simonson, from the City of Bethlehem who discussed the proposed plan. Based on his observations as inspector and the supplied photos, which confirm the above conditions exist at the property, he requested the Planning Commission to (a) approve the submitted draft resolution to declare the property blighted, (b) document its planning recommendation for future uses of the property, and (c) otherwise advance the listed property to Blighted Property Review Committee for further proceedings.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion: Ms. Joy Cohen made a motion to approve the proposed resolution determining 1101 Mechanic St as blighted and approving the planning recommendations for future

uses of the property as per the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law and various City ordinances, including Article 149 of the City Codified Ordinances, and to forward these recommendations to the Blighted Properties Review Committee and the City Redevelopment Authority.

Second: Mr. Eddie Burgos

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0

Property Location: 409 East Washington Avenue

Property Owner: Andre Simon

Proposed Work: Representing the property was Mr. Simonson, from the City of Bethlehem who discussed the proposed plan. Based on his observations as inspector and the supplied photos, which confirm the above conditions exist at the property, he requested the Planning Commission to (a) approve the submitted draft resolution to declare the property blighted, (b) document its planning recommendation for future uses of the property, and (c) otherwise advance the listed property to Blighted Property Review Committee for further proceedings.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion: Ms. Joy Cohen made a motion to approve the proposed resolution determining 409 East Washington Ave as blighted and approving the planning recommendations for future uses of the property as per the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law and various City ordinances, including Article 149 of the City Codified Ordinances, and to forward these recommendations to the Blighted Properties Review Committee and the City Redevelopment Authority.

Second: Mr. Eddie Burgos

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0

Property Location: 633 Pembroke Road

Property Owner: Andre Simon

Proposed Work: Representing the property was Mr. Simonson, from the City of Bethlehem who discussed the proposed plan. Based on his observations as inspector and the supplied photos, which confirm the above conditions exist at the property, he requested the Planning Commission to (a) approve the submitted draft resolution to declare the property blighted, (b) document its planning recommendation for future uses of the property, and (c) otherwise advance the listed property to Blighted Property Review Committee for further proceedings.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion: Ms. Joy Cohen made a motion to approve the proposed resolution determining 633 Pembroke Road as blighted and approving the planning recommendations for future uses of the property as per the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law and various City ordinances, including Article 149 of the City Codified Ordinances, and to forward these recommendations to the Blighted Properties Review Committee and the City Redevelopment Authority.

Second: Mr. Eddie Burgos

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0

Property Location: 218 West 3rd Street

Property Owner: Hui-Bing Wu

Proposed Work: Representing the property was Mr. Simonson, from the City of Bethlehem who discussed the proposed plan. Based on his observations as inspector and the supplied photos, which confirm the above conditions exist at the property, he requested the Planning Commission to (a) approve the submitted draft resolution to declare the property blighted, (b) document its planning recommendation for future uses of the property, and (c) otherwise advance the listed property to Blighted Property Review Committee for further proceedings.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion: Ms. Joy Cohen made a motion to approve the proposed resolution determining 218 West 3rd St as blighted and approving the planning recommendations for future uses of the property as per the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law and various City ordinances, including Article 149 of the City Codified Ordinances, and to forward these recommendations to the Blighted Properties Review Committee and the City Redevelopment Authority.

Second: Mr. Eddie Burgos

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0

AGENDA ITEM #3: LAND DEVELOPMENT & SUBDIVISION PLAN REVIEW

(19-008LD) – 19070009- Moravia Street Apartments Land Development Plan – 968 Benner Avenue - Ward 1, Zoned RT, Plan dated June 16. 2019.

Property Location: 968 Benner Avenue

Property Owner: Nancy & Allan Finnegan

Developer/Engineer: Philip Siebert, Landscape Architect

Proposed Work: Representing the property was Mr. Siebert, from URDC who discussed the proposed plan. The applicant proposes the construction of a three (3) unit apartment building on a 0.25-acre lot.

Discussion: Ms. Cohen questioned the special variance need for the sidewalk slope and who approves the variance either City or State. Mr. Malozi stated it's called a technically infeasible ADA ramp and it's filed with Public Works. Mr. Basel Yandem said it's filed with the City and stays on record.

Mr. Burgos inquired about the sanitary connection on the main line and wanted to know if it was a saddle. Mr. Siebert responded by saying they have three sanitary connections proposed and all connected on Moravia Street and he believes they are saddle connections.

Mr. Malozi wanted to know about the tie into city stormwater and how the site drains to ensure it doesn't exacerbate or create any issues. Mr. Siebert showed the plans for drainage to Moravia and Benner Streets and away from the property into existing storm drains. Mr. Yandem clarified the drainage is going through the grass area on the property, which they hope has some infiltration before it reaches the street.

Mr. Malozi said there was mention of vehicle access across the depressed curb on the two streets, and wanted to know about the unnamed alley. Mr. Siebert showed that the plan utilizes that vacated half street.

Mr. Malozi asked about the building renderings. Mr. Siebert showed an older rendering and stated the upper part of the building is stucco with a cultured stone veneer beneath.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion: Ms. Joy Cohen made a motion to approve the request, with the following condition:

1. The Applicant shall meet the requirements in the September 14, 2023 review letter.

Second: Mr. Eddie Burgos

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0

AGENDA ITEM #4: NON-UTILITY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Proposed Work: Ms. Heller reviewed the spreadsheet that outlines spending timeline and funding sources for all capital projects through 2028. Mr. Evans provided information related to City financing and budgets.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion: Ms. Joy Cohen made a motion to approve the request, with the following condition:

1. Forward to City Council as presented with a positive recommendation for adoption.

Second: Mr. Eddie Burgos

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0

AGENDA ITEM #5: DISCUSSION ITEMS

Ms. Heller reviewed possible upcoming items for the October PC meeting agenda.

There being no further business, upon a Motion by Matthew Malozi, and a unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM.

ATTEST:

Darlene Heller, Commission Secretary



MEETING MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD
October 12, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT

Matthew Malozi, Vice Chairman
Joy Cohen
Thomas Barker

VISITORS PRESENT

Dallas Basha
Christine Ussler, Artefact
Andy Bohl, Hanover Engineering

MEMBERS ABSENT

Robert Melosky, Chairman
Eddie Burghos

STAFF PRESENT

Darlene Heller, Bureau of Planning & Zoning
Craig Peiffer, Bureau of Planning & Zoning
Basel Yandem, Public Works

The October 12, 2023 meeting of Planning Commission held at the City of Bethlehem Town Hall, was called to order by Vice Chairperson, Matthew Malozi at 5:00 PM.

AGENDA ITEM #1: APPROVAL OF MINUTES –August 17 2023 and September 28, 2023

Discussion: Mr. Malozi noted that there is no quorum to take action on the minutes and the vote will be tabled.

AGENDA ITEM #2: SKETCH PLAN REVIEW

(23-003 Sketch Plan Review) – 23090013 – 608 PIERCE STREET – SKETCH PLAN REVIEW –Zoned RT and SH Overlay, plan dated September 7, 2023.

Property Location: 608 Pierce Street

Property Owner: Dallas Basha

Proposed Work: The applicant proposes to maintain the existing structure, converting the medical office into a rental office and the remaining space into an amenity space for tenants. The Applicant proposes the removal of the existing parking lot and the construction of 5 single-family attached dwellings, each containing 5 bedrooms for the intended use as Student Housing. The Applicant also proposes the installation of 18 off-street parking spaces accessed from Parkhill Street. The parcel totals 0.458 acres, or 19,946 Square Feet.

Discussion: Mr. Malozi noted that since this is a sketch plan, the Commission will not be taking formal action.

Ms. Ussler noted that they are working on constructing 5 attached single-family homes with the intended use as Student Housing. The architecture consists of 2 ½ stories. They

are trying to keep the 1 large magnolia tree. They will not be able to keep the others but plan to replace them.

Ms. Heller noted that there is a question regarding the parking, otherwise the project meets the zoning requirements. Ms. Ussler stated that the Engineer did review the comments and feels that they can comply.

Ms. Cohen noted that she'd like to see color renderings of the elevation to compare with the surroundings and architectural detail. Ms. Ussler stated that the Commission will receive it when they reach future submissions.

Mr. Malozi asked how many bedrooms per unit will be provided. Ms. Ussler stated there will be 5 bedrooms. The building will be front facing on Packer Avenue with zero set-backs. Parking will front in and back out onto Parkhill Street.

Mr. Barker mentioned his concern about a dumpster pad. Mr. Basha indicated that they are opting for traditional trash bins per unit and will outline that in the next submission. They do not intend to have a commercial dumpster. Mr. Barker asked if there will be any bicycle racks. Mr. Basha noted that he would like to have them and hopefully include in the next submission. Mr. Barker also asked about the grading differences. Ms. Ussler stated that some homes will have steps in the back. They are trying to make sure there isn't a lot of wall showing and are looking at greening the area.

Mr. Malozi asked about the use of the existing building. Ms. Ussler stated that the 2nd and 3rd floor apartment units will remain. The first floor will be a small commercial use with a possible gym for residents.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion: There was no motion as the Commission will not be taking formal action on the sketch plan.

AGENDA ITEM #3: LAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW

(23-009 LD) – 23060017 – 1610 Spillman Drive - LAND DEVELOPMENT– Ward 17, Zoned IR, plans dated June 21, 2023, last revised August 21, 2023.

Property Location: 1610 Spillman Drive

Developer/Engineer: Steel9/Andy Bohl, Hanover Engineering

Proposed Work: The applicant proposes to construct a four-story, 98-room Hotel (Tru by Hilton), with 93 off-street parking spaces on a 1.65-acre (71,874 SF) parcel.

Discussion: Mr. Bohl of Hanover Engineering explained the project and noted that they will be using the existing access points on the common property line with lot 9 which is the existing Candlewood Suites Hotel. He also discussed the proposed parking plans and proposed connection with the existing utilities located within Spillman Drive or already on the lot. Trees, shrubs and perennials/groundcover will be included. The applicant will comply with the City's comment letter. He noted that they received LVPC approval in August and they are waiting for the approval letter from the DEP regarding the planning module.

Ms. Heller noted that the City is requiring a post- development traffic study. Mr. Bohl stated that a post-development traffic study will be completed and they have no plans to make any changes to the bus stop that LANTA already has at the property. Ms. Cohen asked if the dumpster will be enclosed and Mr. Bohl stated that it will be enclosed with stone veneer and have landscaping.

Mr. Yandem said that the developer also agreed to redo the crosswalks at Spillman Drive and Lynn Avenue at the completion of construction. Mr. Bohl stated that was acceptable to the applicant.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion: Ms. Cohen made a motion to approve the land development plan for 1610 Spillman Drive from the drawings dated August 21, 2023 contingent upon satisfactorily meeting the requirements of the City letter dated October 3, 2023, and the Engineers requirement for repainting the crosswalks at Lynn Avenue and Spillman Drive.

Second: Mr. Barker

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0

AGENDA ITEM #4: DISCUSSION ITEMS

Ms. Heller noted that there have been no new submissions in the last few months. She also stated that it could be a few months until the land development plan for Pierce Street is before the Commission.

There being no further business before the Commission, a motion was made by Mr. Barker and seconded by Mr. Malozi to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 6:31 PM.

ATTEST:

Darlene Heller, Commission Secretary