
MINUTES

BOARD: HISTORIC CONSERVATION COMMISSION, CITY OF BETHLEHEM

MEMBERS PRESENT: SETH CORNISH, CRAIG EVANS, ROGER HUDAK, GARY LADER, KENNETH LOUSH, CHAZ PATRICK, MICHAEL SIMONSON

MEMBERS ABSENT: ANTHONY SILVOY

STAFF PRESENT: DARLENE HELLER, JEFFREY LONG, ALICIA MILLER KARNER

PRESS PRESENT: ED COURRIER (BETHLEHEM PRESS), SARA SATULLO (LEHIGH VALLEY LIVE/ EXPRESS TIMES), JEFF WARD (WFMZ)

VISITORS PRESENT: PLAMEN AYVAZOV, DENNIS BENNER, KIM CARRELL-SMITH, JORDAN CLARK, ANTONIO FIOL-SILVA, PAUL HARAK, CHAD JARRAH, GEORGE LIOUDIS, BILL SCHEIRER, ALEXANDER TORRES, CHRISTINE USSLER

MEETING DATE: NOVEMBER 15, 2021

The regular meeting of the Historic Conservation Commission (HCC) was held on November 15, 2021, at the City of Bethlehem Rotunda, Bethlehem City Hall, 10 East Church Street, Bethlehem, PA. HCC Chair Gary Lader called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Agenda Item #1

Property Location: 125 East Third Street
Property Owner: Southside 125, LLC
Applicant: Chad Jarrah

Building Description, Period, Style, and Defining Features: This structure is an attached, three-story, mixed-use masonry building with a flat roof that dates from ca. 1910. Brick pilasters support a decorative upper cornice with ornamental end brackets. The structure is Classical Revival in style, with primary façade materials of light brown brick and cast stone. The original storefront was altered during the late-20th century with beige face brick while the area above (extending to the second-floor windowsills) recently received unfinished T1-11 vertical plywood siding. Aluminum-framed double entrance doors centered within the storefront are flanked on one side by a display window and on the other side by a recessed paneled entrance door leading to residential units above.

Proposed Alterations: It is proposed to install new casement-style window replacements that are much larger than the existing upper-level double-hung windows.

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.
- **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.

Evaluation, Effect on Historic Conservation District, Recommendations: COA Application indicates intent to replace existing double-hung windows at second- and third-floor levels with larger casement

windows to satisfy emergency egress requirements for upper-level apartment units. Proposed window replacements are Andersen E-Series aluminum-clad casements with clear glass and exterior applied muntins as simulated divided lites. Casements at second floor level measure 54-inches tall x 28-inches wide and include two pairs (one for each interior room), with heavy mullion to fill gap between. Painted medium-density overlay (MDO) panels with trim infill above casements imply original decorative transom. Casements at third floor level measure 60-inches tall x 28-inches wide and also include two pairs (one for each interior room), with heavy mullion to fill gap between.

Proposed casement windows are appropriate as presented, with following clarifications:

- confirm proposed factory-applied exterior color finish
- identify proposed material and color (if factory-applied) of mullions between pairs of casements

Discussion: Chad Jarrah and Christine Ussler represented proposal to install new casement-style window replacements that are much larger than existing upper-level double-hung windows. Applicant noted both upper-level windows originally included stained glass transoms ... each with one large fixed central window flanked on either side with double-hung sash to illuminate large interior space behind; however, current floor plan layouts include interior division walls centered at each upper-level window. Proposed window replacements reflect need for central window divisions while resulting openings also satisfy required emergency egress. Applicant confirmed two potential choices for factory-applied exterior finish color: bronze and black, noting desire for HCC to approve both options, with selection finalized during on-going project development to rehabilitate remaining façade; also noted mullions between window pairs to be fabricated with MDO or aluminum and painted to match finalized window color. Mr. Lader inquired about potential to reestablish decorative stained-glass transoms rather than replace with solid (panel) construction; Applicant noted current (lower) ceiling heights of spaces behind windows would interrupt transom detail. Mr. Lader continued by inquiring if Applicant would consider adjusting ceiling(s) behind windows; Applicant responded that custom stained-glass replacements are cost prohibitive and current proposal for panel details is not inappropriate while representing affordable solution. Mr. Evans noted proposed panels do not prevent Applicant from installing appropriate stained-glass replacements at later date, if desired; also noted willingness to consider both color finish options as appropriate within resulting motion so Applicant can continue with ongoing studies to rehabilitate remaining façade.

Public Commentary: none

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

1. Proposal to install new casement-style window replacements at 125 East Third Street was presented by Chad Jarrah and Christine Ussler.
2. Appropriate new window replacements include following details:
 - a. existing double-hung windows at second- and third-floor levels to be replaced with larger casement windows to satisfy emergency egress requirements for upper-level apartment units
 - b. replacements are Andersen E-Series aluminum-clad casements (or comparable) with clear glass and exterior applied muntins as simulated divided lites
 - c. casements at second floor level measure 54-inches tall x 28-inches wide and include two pairs (one for each interior room), with heavy mullion to fill gap between; painted medium-density overlay (MDO) panels with trim infill above casements imply original decorative transom
 - d. casements at third floor level measure 60-inches tall x 28-inches wide and include two pairs (one for each interior room), with heavy mullion to fill gap between
 - e. heavy mullions between each pair of new casements are fabricated from aluminum or MDO, painted to match factory-applied finish of new casements
 - f. factory-applied finish for aluminum details is either bronze or black, with Applicant finalizing selection during project development and also confirming with City of Bethlehem, for inclusion with project file to reference during subsequent reviews and resulting permits

The motion for the proposed work was unanimously approved.

Agenda Item #2

Property Location: 13 West Third Street

Property Owner: George Lioudis

Applicant: Alexander Torres

Building Description, Period, Style, and Defining Features: This structure is a two-and-one-half-story, three-bay, painted brick masonry building. It was originally constructed ca. 1880 as a side-gable residence with multi-lite window sash and is late Victorian in style. A commercial front addition with Italianate influences was completed ca. 1900 and includes a corbelled brick and ornate projecting upper cornice along with a flat roof. The storefront was altered and expanded during the mid-20th century and includes aluminum-frame entrance doors and windows shaded by candy-stripe awnings with scallop detailing on the front valance flaps.

Proposed Alterations: It is proposed to paint the exterior walls and trim, to replace the existing front awning and to replace existing signage to reflect a new corporate logo.

Guideline Citations:

- **Secretary of the Interior's Standards (SIS) 9.** -- see Agenda Item #1
- **Bethlehem Ordinance 1714.03 Purposes of Historic Conservation District** -- see Agenda Item #1
- **Historic Conservation Commission 'Guidelines for Signage and Awnings'** -- Care should be taken in mounting signs to minimize damage to historic materials. This includes reusing hardware or brackets from previous signs. If reusing existing hardware or attachment locations is not an option, select mounting locations that can be easily patched if the sign is removed. This includes locating holes in mortar joints rather than directly into bricks or masonry, which will facilitate repair if the sign is removed or relocated in the future.

Evaluation, Effect on Historic Conservation District, Recommendations: COA Application indicates intended exterior renovations in tandem with interior improvements "to celebrate Lehigh Pizza's history and reestablish its prominent legacy on the Southside while also showcasing the future of the business".

Based upon SIS and relevant design guidelines, HCC does not consider painted masonry appropriate; however, existing masonry is already painted so proposal is considered appropriate maintenance of current condition. Similarly, painting of various trim is considered appropriate maintenance ... noting HCC does not assess paint color palettes.

Proposal to remove existing awnings across front façade as well as at both side façades and replace with single awning (approx. 60-inches wide) at recessed entrance with front valance flap and no exposed support rods with Sunbrella canvas-like vinyl woven fabric in "Dubonnet Tweed" is appropriate with following clarification:

- sides of awning should be open (current proposal indicates closed sides)

Proposal to replace existing signage to reflect new corporate logo involves two different sign locations. Existing rectangular blade sign at southwest corner to be replaced with new round sign three-feet in diameter at similar upper floor-level location. Design of new sign includes "LEHIGH" in all upper-case, serif lettering centered vertically and horizontally followed by "PIZZA" in all upper-case serif lettering along with Bethlehem star detail above. Integrated within two concentric circles at outer perimeter is slogan "THE VALLEY'S FAVORITE PIZZA" at top of sign and "ESTABLISHED 1975" at bottom of sign ... in smaller, all upper-case, sans-serif lettering. Signage background is pink in color while lettering and details are dark red in color. Proposed replacement blade sign is appropriate with following clarifications:

- identify material and thickness of proposed sign backer
- clarify application method for all graphics (applied vinyl, painted, etc.); if graphics are cutouts applied to each side of backer, recommended max. thickness is 1-inch
- clarify intended hanging method; **note:** HCC recommends decorative scroll hanging brackets for blade signs
- confirm new sign is not illuminated; otherwise, clarify intended illumination method

Existing signage at east gable (consisting of various channel letters with integrated neon tubes along with pizza logo) to be replaced with new round sign 8-feet in diameter centered vertically and horizontally within

upper east gable. Design of new sign repeats details of proposed blade sign but is proportionally larger; illumination accommodated by “low wattage lighting installed behind parapet wall”.

Proposed replacement sign is appropriate with following clarifications:

- identify material and thickness of sign backer
- clarify application method for all graphics (applied vinyl, painted, etc.); if graphics are cutouts applied to backer, recommended max. thickness is 1-inch
- clarify intended installation method, with preference for fasteners that are not visible
- confirm all conduits, raceways and junction boxes that service proposed illumination are not visible from building façade; **note:** HCC recommends LED color temperature limited to max. 3000K for appropriate warm illumination within HCD

Discussion: George Lioudis and Alexander Torres represented proposal to paint exterior walls and trim, to replace existing front awning and to replace existing signage to reflect new corporate logo. Applicant represents larger Lehigh University student group together with Owner, with current submittal for exterior renovations relating to overall project ... including items not typically assessed by HCC. Applicant expressed preference for replacement awning with closed sides “to hide industrial nature of existing entrance door and awning support frame” but is willing to install awning with open sides, as needed. Applicant confirmed new blade sign and new building sign are fabricated from aluminum approx. 3/8-inches thick, with graphics painted directly onto aluminum surface (no vinyl lettering or graphics). Applicant continued by expressing desire to retain existing light fixtures at current blade sign; Mr. Lader noted existing lights extend out quite far and might need adjusting to accommodate size and shape of replacement sign. Mr. Lader continued by inquiring if Applicant is cooperating with specific sign company ... noting that experienced firms can offer guidance about appropriate lighting and replacement hanging brackets; Mr. Simonson noted replacement blade sign seems thicker than existing sign so Applicant’s desire to reuse existing brackets and lighting is concerning. Applicant confirmed initial coordination efforts with FastSigns (Allentown); also noted that new aluminum sign will be installed onto existing gable façade using masonry expansion bolts. Mr. Evans explained points of attachment for needed fasteners (wall sign as well as scroll bracket for blade sign) should be existing mortar joints to avoid further damage to brick masonry units.

Public Commentary: none

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

1. Proposal to paint exterior walls and trim, to replace existing front awning and to replace existing signage to reflect new corporate logo at 13 West Third Street was presented by George Lioudis and Alexander Torres.
2. Appropriate façade improvements include following details:
 - a. repainting existing painted masonry and various trim; **note:** Historic Conservation Commission does not assess paint color palettes
 - b. remove existing awnings across front façade as well as at both side façades and replace with single awning (approx. 60-inches wide) with Sunbrella canvas-like vinyl woven fabric in “Dubonnet Tweed” at recessed entrance; new awning has open sides, front valance flap and no exposed support rods
 - c. existing rectangular blade sign at southwest corner to be replaced with new round sign 3-feet in diameter at similar upper floor-level location; design for both sides of new sign includes:
 - i. “LEHIGH” in all upper-case, serif lettering centered vertically and horizontally followed by “PIZZA” in all upper-case serif lettering along with Bethlehem star detail above
 - ii. integrated within two concentric circles at outer perimeter is slogan “THE VALLEY’S FAVORITE PIZZA” at top of sign and “ESTABLISHED 1975” at bottom of sign ... in smaller, all upper-case, sans-serif lettering
 - iii. signage background is pink in color while lettering and details are dark red in color
 - iv. new sign constructed of 3/8-inch-thick aluminum, with graphics painted directly onto aluminum surface

- v. new historically appropriate decorative scroll bracket to replace existing (inappropriate) metal channels for hanging new sign, with fasteners inserted into mortar joints to avoid damage to existing brick masonry façade
 - vi. Applicant to cooperate with signage company (yet to be finalized) to either reuse existing lighting fixtures or to replace with more appropriate gooseneck fixtures; **note:** Historic Conservation Commission recommends LED color temperature limited to max. 3000K for appropriate warm illumination
- d. existing signage at east gable (consisting of various channel letters with integrated neon tubes along with pizza logo) to be replaced with new round sign 8-feet in diameter centered vertically and horizontally within upper east gable; design of new sign includes:
- i. "LEHIGH" in all upper-case, serif lettering centered vertically and horizontally followed by "PIZZA" in all upper-case serif lettering along with Bethlehem star detail above
 - ii. integrated within two concentric circles at outer perimeter is slogan "THE VALLEY'S FAVORITE PIZZA" at top of sign and "ESTABLISHED 1975" at bottom of sign ... in smaller, all upper-case, sans-serif lettering
 - iii. signage background is pink in color while lettering and details are dark red in color
 - iv. new sign constructed of 3/8-inch-thick aluminum, with graphics painted directly onto aluminum surface
 - v. masonry expansion bolts to be used for installing new sign, with fasteners inserted into mortar joints to avoid damage to existing brick masonry façade
 - vi. new illumination is accommodated by low wattage lighting installed behind parapet wall, with no conduits, raceways and junction boxes visible from building façade; **note:** Historic Conservation Commission recommends LED color temperature limited to max. 3000K for appropriate warm illumination

The motion for the proposed work was unanimously approved.

Agenda Item #3; note: Mr. Loush confirmed conflict of interest with agenda item, abstaining from discussion and resulting resolution.

Property Location: 317-327 South New Street

Property Owner: 325 South New Street Development, LLC

Applicant: Rafael Palomino and Jeffrey Quinn

Proposed Alterations: It is proposed to construct a new, multi-story, mixed-use structure that incorporates the façade of an existing contributing building at the project site.

Guideline Citations:

- **Secretary of the Interior's Standards (SIS) 5.** -- Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
- **Secretary of the Interior's Standards (SIS) 6.** -- Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
- **Secretary of the Interior's Standards (SIS) 9.** -- see Agenda Item #1
- **Bethlehem Ordinance 1714.03 Purposes of Historic Conservation District** -- see Agenda Item #1
- **Historic Conservation District Design Guidelines concerning New Construction** -- including but not limited to following:
 - (1) Size, Scale and Proportion - New construction should relate to the dominant proportions, size and scale of period buildings (1895 to 1950) in the district.
 - (2) Rhythm and Patterns - Design elements of principal facades should reflect and maintain neighborhood patterns of period buildings (1895 to 1950), including but not limited to the following: prevalent number of bays; door and window placement; floor-to-floor and cornice heights; spacing

between windows and doors and between windows and cornices or rooflines; and dimensions of the facade's base and cornice.

(3) Window and Door Openings - The size and design of window and door openings should be similar to those of period buildings (1895 to 1950) in the immediate neighborhood.

(4) Materials and Textures - Building materials, textures and treatments should be compatible with those of period buildings (1895 to 1950) in the immediate neighborhood. Traditional materials common in the Historic Conservation District, such as brick, wood and stone, are preferred.

(5) Architectural Details - New construction should include details and appurtenances reflecting the character defining features of neighborhood buildings of period significance (1895 to 1950), such as porches, porticos, cornices, lintels, arches, quoins, and chimneys.

(6) Shape and Massing - New construction should incorporate massing, building shapes, and roof shapes that are present in period buildings (1895 to 1950).

- (7) Streetscapes - New construction shall reflect prevailing setbacks, and physical elements which define streetscapes, such as brick walls, wrought iron fences, building facades or combinations of these which form visual continuity and cohesiveness with the period buildings (1895 to 1950).
- **Historic Conservation Commission 'Guidelines for Signage and Awnings' -- see Agenda Item #1**
- **Historic Conservation Commission 'Guidelines for Storefronts'**

Evaluation, Effect on Historic Conservation District, Recommendations: Applicant presented during HCC meetings on January 25, 2021, and February 22, 2021, resulting in motion for City Council to deny request to demolish existing structures and replace with 13-story mixed-use development project; motion passed 6-0 (with one abstention). HCC appreciated integration of historical façade at 321-323 South New Street into overall design and noted relative success of storefronts at street level; however, height of proposed high-rise was determined inappropriate for immediate streetscape as well as for overall Historic Conservation District. Applicant returned to HCC on April 26, 2021, with revised proposal for ten-story design and yet again on June 21, 2021, with similar nine-story design, resulting in motion (against recommendation by Historic Officer) for City Council to issue COA for proposed work, as follows:

- demolition of existing structures at 319, 321-323 (except 3-story Italianate front façade), 325 and 327 South New Street
- rehabilitation of salvaged front façade at 321-323 South New Street, for integration into overall development project
- replacement structure is nine-story, mixed-use building that measures approx. 110-feet wide, approx. 75-feet deep, approx. 88-feet high at shortest (southwest) corner and approx. 92-feet at tallest (northwest) corner ... excluding mechanical penthouse
- entry level includes 6,500 SF of commercial and community spaces while upper floor levels include 8,000 SF each, with mix of one-bedroom/one-bath and two-bedroom/two-bath apartments
- floor heights of lowest levels match those of neighboring buildings while intermediate cornice above third floor level emphasizes transition from commercial street level to residential upper floor levels

HCC motion passed 4-2-1 (with one abstention); City Council approved motion during subsequent meeting on July 6, 2021.

Current COA Application represents response to HCC recommendation that future project development unifies upper-level façades with façades at street level for more cohesive design and addresses such details as window and door types, cast sills and lintels, cornice profiles and façade materials along with street-level storefronts with awnings. Accompanying drawings indicate current design proposal still envisions demolition of all existing structures while integrating salvaged front façade at 321-323 South New Street; Applicant should clarify intended approach to protect historical façade during pending demolition as well as resulting rehabilitation efforts. Proposed design remains nine-story, mixed-use building that measures approx. 110-feet wide, approx. 75-feet deep, approx. 88-feet high at shortest (southwest) corner and approx. 92-feet at tallest (northwest) corner but also includes mechanical penthouse obscured from view by louvered equipment screening. Upper-level façades now appropriately align with street level façades resulting in more cohesive design while storefronts appropriately respond to pitch of South New Street by stepping down to meet adjacent public sidewalk. Aside from rehabilitated historical façade, initial three floor levels are clad in large-format limestone panels, which is appropriate. Proposed storefronts are

appropriate, pending clarification about frame materials and confirmation that glazing is not tinted, colored or reflective. Awnings above storefronts with open ends are also appropriate, pending confirmation that fabric is canvas or canvas-like woven vinyl. Paneled sign bands above storefronts are appropriate, pending clarification about proposed materials. Similar paneled cladding at structural posts and second-level façade above passageway to East Graham Place also warrants discussion.

Exterior cladding of fourth through seventh floor levels is smaller-format limestone panels for vertical window groupings at West (front), North (side) and East (rear) façades, with dark red brick elsewhere; both materials are appropriate, pending submittal of associated specifications and product samples. Two upper-most floor levels are clad with metal panels, which is not identified within relevant design guidelines as appropriate; however, HCC recently determined metal panel siding appropriate for upper-most floor levels of similar high-rise design to mitigate visual impact of overall building height, so discussion is warranted before appropriateness is determined and Applicant submits product samples for final consideration. Profiled cornice mouldings delineate changes in façade cladding; such cornices are appropriate, pending clarification about proposed material and profiles, with HCC preference for cast stone elements. Provided drawings indicate brick façades at fourth through seventh floor levels currently extend out slightly beyond walls below, which is inappropriate; similarly, two intermediate structural posts at North (side) façade are not centered between window bays above ... both posts should shift slightly left or window bays above should shift slightly right. Applicant should also consider setting back two upper-most floor levels to help mitigate visual impact of overall building height.

Window placements have improved from previous submittal. 1-over-1, double-hung sash with expressed sills and lintels are appropriate, pending submittal of window specifications and noting HCC preference for cast stone elements. Most windows are depicted with dark panels beneath sills; however, panel material is not indicated so clarification is warranted. Relevant design guidelines indicate “plain, modern flush doors are inappropriate”; however, solid doors depicted at East (rear) façade seem to serve utilitarian purposes so exception could be made, pending clarification about proposed material. Applicant is encouraged to slightly adjust placements of utilitarian doors so that centerline of each door aligns with centerline of associated window bay above. Applicant should also clarify intentions for dealing with inevitable trash collection.

Discussion: Jordan Clark represented proposal to construct new, multi-story, mixed-use structure that incorporates façade of existing contributing building at project site. Applicant submitted several product samples and specifications, including: aluminum panel intended for upper-most floor levels in lighter color; brick veneer as stucco product (paneled system) on insulated panels; cast stonework for windowsills, lintels and cornice mouldings; limestone veneer panels in different formats; Stergis aluminum windows.

Mr. Lader inquired about addition of metal panels at upper floor levels; Applicant noted change in material helps mitigate overall building height and relates to similar metal panels at nearby new construction. Mr. Lader continued by expressing appreciation of Applicant's development of front (west) façade but noted side and rear façades are also quite visible but design still requires further development; also mentioned existing retaining wall at adjacent Greenway (does not appear on Applicant's drawings) might offer opportunity for new structure to open to Greenway by offering more glazing at side and rear facades; Applicant explained commercial tenant for entry level requires closed walls with no glazing at side and rear for kitchen and associated services. Mr. Lader inquired if layout of kitchen(s) could be reconsidered to better address façade facing Greenway. Applicant explained interior trash chutes at each floor level lead down to collection bins in basement so trash will only be taken outside on dedicated collections days ... avoiding need for trash corrals at rear. Mr. Lader encouraged Applicant to better delineate rear façade to appear less utilitarian because of high visibility ... perhaps with awnings, pergolas, etc.; Applicant noted intent to re-construct retaining wall at Greenway as part of project scope.

Mr. Lader expressed appreciation for proposed metal panels in relation to nearby new construction but questioned scale of various items, noting building still appears disjointed; continued that current design includes many traditional details so upper cornice is also needed in place of simple shadow line, as currently depicted. Mr. Lader questioned logic of limestone panels around upper-level windows and inquired if Applicant would consider bay windows instead (as reference to similar detail at adjacent contributing structure and also originally proposed by Applicant with initial COA Application); Applicant explained original design with bay windows was reconsidered due to associated costs. Mr. Lader continued by expressing appreciation for improvements at initial three floor levels ... noting proposed limestone

façade panels represent elegant design solution. Mr. Lader also noted cornice at eighth floor level helps mitigate overall building height but noted rear (east) façade appears more massive and monotonous than front façade ... perhaps due to wider spacing between windows and more brick than at other facades. Mr. Lader continued with concern about integrating historic façade within overall project design ... noting existing upper cornice aligns with windows above but seems lost elsewhere; also inquired if panels depicted beneath select windows is associated with individual air-handling units. Applicant confirmed grilles beneath certain windows are associated with envisioned HVAC systems but also noted project engineering is on-going so additional windows might require similar grille elements as well. Mr. Lader inquired if proposed brick veneer stucco is Exterior Insulation Finishing System (EIFS); Applicant confirmed current proposal is EIFS system. Mr. Long clarified EIFS is considered inappropriate within Historic Conservation District and offered brick veneer as appropriate alternative. Mr. Evans noted uncertainty about proposed metal panel siding at upper-most floor levels but also noted upper-most cornice works in combination with metal panels so uncertain which approach is more appropriate. Mr. Hudak repeated previous personal comment that Applicant is developing air space (air rights) above Graham Place, resulting in personal gain by developing income-producing units above public right-of-way; expressed appreciation for improvements made by Applicant since previous COA Application.

Public Commentary: none

Motion: HCC upon motion by Mr. Lader and seconded by Mr. Evans adopted proposal to table decision to determine appropriateness of proposed work. HCC felt it provided sufficient feedback concerning inability to approve current proposal and encouraged Applicant to address such issues as: cornice lines; create more unified front façade; address design of highly-visible side and rear façades, especially in relation to nearby Greenway; center service doors at rear façade with window bays above; incorporate more storefront glazing at side (and potentially at rear) façade; consider appropriate alternatives to proposed EIFS stucco system; present actual products (not just written specifications) for proposed windows and doors, cast stone details, etc.

The motion to table a decision about the appropriateness of the proposed work was approved 6-0-1, with abstention by Mr. Loush.

Agenda Item #4; notes: Mr. Lader confirmed conflict of interest with agenda item, abstaining from discussion and resulting resolution; Mr. Evans led resulting discussion as HCC Vice-Chair.

Property Location: 24-30 West Fourth Street

Property Owner: B Land Co., LLC

Applicant: B Land Co., LLC

Proposed Alterations: It is proposed to construct a new, six-story, mixed-use structure.

Guideline Citations:

- **Secretary of the Interior's Standards (SIS) 9.** -- see Agenda Item #1
- **Bethlehem Ordinance 1714.03 Purposes of Historic Conservation District** -- see Agenda Item #1
- **Historic Conservation District Design Guidelines concerning New Construction** -- see Agenda Item #3
- **Historic Conservation Commission 'Guidelines for Storefronts'**

Evaluation, Effect on Historic Conservation District, Recommendations: Applicant initially appeared before HCC on March 17, 2014, seeking approval to demolish two-and-one-half story mixed-use brickoted masonry building at 30 West Fourth Street (corner of Vine Street) and replace with L-shaped seven-story mixed-use building with roof terrace designed by Howard Kulp Architects. Proposed new structure had brick façades, projecting bays with fiber-cement siding, corner balconies at second- through fifth-floor residential units as well as curved corners at sixth and seventh floor levels. Applicant appeared on agenda for HCC meeting on August 18, 2014, with revised design proposal seeking approval of twelve-story mixed-use building; however, meeting minutes indicate that item was subsequently removed from agenda. Applicant returned during special HCC meeting on September 29, 2014, with revised design proposal seeking approval to demolish corner structure as well as nearby two-and-one-half story Queen Anne mixed-use building at 24 West Fourth Street and replace with larger nine-story mixed-use building with roof terrace

also designed by Howard Kulp Architects. After comprehensive assessment by Historic Officer, presentation by Applicant, discussion involving HCC members followed by public comments, HCC approved motion 5-2 (and against recommendation by Historic Officer) for City Council to issue COA to demolish both existing structures and replace with nine-story mixed-use building. Demolition approval was conditional upon Applicant providing photographic documentation of building at 24 West Fourth Street prior to demolition along with removal and preservation of historical features and elements (character-defining windows, masonry units, metal finial, front door, etc.); documentation to be done according to Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) standards. Replacement structure included eight full stories and ninth floor level set back 5-feet from façade, with first-floor commercial space, residential units on remaining floors and roof terrace. Proposed materials included limestone and glass at storefront along with masonry piers and heavy lower cornice delineating transition from commercial entry level to remaining residential floor levels above that included brick, glass and fiber cement panels; east façade visible above neighboring structure required modification to have blind windows or other scaling devise ... with final material selections as well as façade and cornice details to be reviewed by HCC at future meeting.

Current COA Application references previous COAs from late 2014 to demolish two existing structures and replace with new, nine-story, mixed-use building by noting intent “to modify architecture and reduce building height ... to six stories with restaurant on first floor ... (otherwise) all other information contained in Case #515 and #516 remain(s) unchanged”; thus, appropriateness of proposed demolition as well as overall size, scale, massing and proportions of replacement structure were already determined by HCC as appropriate and are not part of current assessment ... especially considering reduction in overall building height from nine to six stories. However, Applicant’s claim that various details previously determined by HCC as appropriate and subsequently approved by City Council (beyond height reduction) remain unchanged is incorrect ... as evidenced by supplemental Drawing Sheets provided by new project architect SITIO. Original storefront with limestone, glass, masonry piers and heavy cornice has been replaced with fully glazed façade with no other materials previously determined as appropriate. Current design proposal depicts glazed entrance doors flanked by display windows and with transoms above, which are appropriate ... pending confirmation that glazing is not tinted, colored or reflective. Relevant design guidelines depicting components of appropriate storefronts also include apron at sidewalk level, overall sign band above transoms for signage above as well as storefront cornice across entire width of façade to delineate commercial entry level from residential floors; thus, redesigned fully glazed storefront is inappropriate due to lack of typical design components. Historic Conservation District includes many typical storefronts with recessed entrances but with remaining shop windows aligned with upper walls of façade above; however, current design recesses entire storefront assembly (doors and windows) several feet back from upper façade so discussion is warranted to determine appropriateness. Façades of remaining floor levels include brick and glass, which were previously determined as appropriate materials; however, original red brick masonry is replaced with “light grey” and “dark grey” brick, which are not typical within the Historic Conservation District. Similarly, fiber cement panels are replaced with “wood tone metal panels” and “grey metal panels”. As discussed with previous agenda item, metal panel cladding is not identified within relevant design guidelines as appropriate; however, HCC recently determined metal panel siding appropriate for upper-most floor levels to mitigate visual impact of overall building height, so discussion is warranted before appropriateness is determined and Applicant submits product samples for final consideration. Profiled cornice mouldings delineating changes in façade cladding within initial design were determined as appropriate ... pending clarification about proposed material and profiles; however, intermediate and upper cornices are not depicted with current design. East façade visible above neighboring structure is not depicted within provided Drawing Sheets so appropriateness of required blind windows or other scaling devise (described in previous COA) cannot be determined. Similarly, south façade is not depicted with current submittals so appropriateness cannot be determined.

Previous design included defined structural bays with windows appropriately aligned vertically while current proposal includes inappropriate shift in window alignments between second and third floor levels and again between fourth and fifth floor levels. Relevant design guidelines state new construction façades should have “similar proportions of solids (walls or siding) to voids (storefronts, windows and door openings) of neighboring buildings.” Floor-to-ceiling window openings of current design proposal are contemporary in style and do not relate to solids and voids of nearby contributing structures. Relevant design guidelines also note windows historically comprise approximately one-quarter of exterior wall’s surface area while

proposed window openings inappropriately comprise approximately one-half surface of exterior walls. Design guidelines continue that windows should be functionally similar (such as double-hung windows) and have similar muntin or grid patterns along with expressed sills and lintels as neighborhood's historic buildings so current windows are inappropriate. In closing, COA requirement for Applicant to submit specific material selections along with façade and cornice details for review by HCC remains open.

Discussion: Dennis Benner and Antonio Fiol-Silva represented proposal to construct new, six-story, mixed-use structure. Applicant described desire to have design aesthetic shared by current and subsequent agenda item, which also explains various design revisions from previous (2014) COA Application; continued by admitting current proposal has proportionally more glass and less wall surface area but also contemporary design aesthetic that is more typical for South Bethlehem. Mr. Evans inquired about overall building height of revised design proposal; Applicant confirmed current building height is 67-feet, as measured from street level. Mr. Simonson inquired about overall building height of previous design; Applicant noted height of previous nine-story design was approx. 97-feet (excluding mechanical penthouse) and contended that lower building height works better for immediate neighborhood ... specifically nearby Lehigh University dormitories (**note:** structures are located beyond boundaries of Historic Conservation District and not considered as contributing). Mr. Simonson noted HCC appreciation of overall height reduction; continued by requesting clarifications about proposed metal panels as alternative to original fiber-cement panels along with design intentions for south and east façades (currently not depicted); Applicant noted metal panels are intended as select design components (mostly above and below upper-level windows) in gray color as reference to color of nearby slate roofs but would be amenable to fiber-cement panels in similar gray color, if preferred by HCC ... also noting better longevity of metal panels. Mr. Evans requested clarification about setback of front façade at approx. 45-feet; Applicant explained front façade is in alignment with no setback, change in brick color (from red below to gray above) occurs at horizontal line connecting to cornice height of adjacent structure. Mr. Simonson requested clarification about setback at commercial storefront; Applicant explained current storefront design sets back from remaining upper façade to create awning condition that shields storefront from elements but would consider aligning storefront and also integrating typical solid storefront design elements, as suggested by relevant design guidelines. Applicant continued that storefront setback at side façade relates to outdoor seating area along retaining wall adjacent to sidewalk along Vine Street. Mr. Loush requested clarification about proposed window rhythms, noting current windows seem oversized for Historic Conservation District and do not align vertically; Applicant agreed to consider smaller-scale windows and also to reconsider window alignments as part of on-going design process. Mr. Lader noted smaller windows are more energy efficient; Applicant responded current market desire is for larger-scale windows than design guideline suggestion of 25% void (windows) to 75% solid (walls) but agreed to explore. Mr. Simonson requested clarification that proposed windows align with floorplan layouts behind; Applicant noted that windows align with living rooms and bedrooms of proposed living units, while bathrooms are all interior spaces. Mr. Cornish expressed appreciation for reduction in overall building height as well as division at implied cornice between third and fourth floor levels with differing brick colors to help visually mitigate building height; continued that current percentage of proposed glazing is appropriate but vertical misalignment of windows is concerning.

Public Commentary:

Kim Carrel-Smith: expressed appreciation for reduction in overall building height; encouraged Applicant to provide scale drawings of new proposal that include shadow studies in conjunction with adjacent buildings ... especially for benefit of business owners located directly across West Fourth Street; noted street is rather narrow at project location so any structures taller than typical two- and three-story buildings might loom over neighborhood; expressed concern that Applicant references non-contributing structures as well as buildings located outside Historic Conservation District as justification for various design elements instead of adhering to design guidelines that reference contributing structures within district's boundaries

Bill Scheirer: expressed appreciation for reduction in height to six stories; also appreciated variation at differing floor levels, noting current design is less repetitive as it transitions vertically, in comparison to previous design that repeated same façade design at all upper floor levels; encouraged Applicant to integrate cornice at upper-most floor level to visually terminate top of building in deference to typical contributing historical buildings within Historic Conservation District.

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

1. Proposal to construct new, six-story, mixed-use structure at 24-30 West Fourth Street was presented by Dennis Benner and Antonio Fiol-Silva.
2. Appropriate new building includes following details:
 - e. semi-detached structure with flat roof measures approx. 78-feet wide x approx. 70-feet deep x 67-feet high ... excluding mechanical penthouse
 - f. entry level includes 2,900 SF of commercial space along with 1,850 SF of residential support spaces while upper floor levels include 5,000 SF each, with mix of one-bedroom/one-bath and two-bedroom/two-bath apartments; rooftop terrace is accessible to tenants
 - g. front (north) and side (west) entry-level façades include glazed entrance doors flanked by display windows, all with glazed transoms above; appropriate glazing is not tinted, colored or reflective. **Notes:** Applicant agreed to further develop storefronts by integrating lower apron at sidewalk, overall sign band above transoms along with cornice across entire façade to delineate commercial entry level from residential floors above and also by aligning storefront façade with façade of upper floor levels (rather than recessing storefront back several feet back, as originally presented)
 - h. façades of remaining floor levels include brick in “light grey” and “dark grey” colors along with “wood tone metal panels” and “grey metal panels”; associated windows require further development by organizing them according to structural bays so they align vertically
 - i. rear (south) and side (east) facades were not presented as part of current design proposal and require future assessments, noting previous COA required blind windows or other scaling devices to delineate side (east) façade visible above neighboring structure
3. Subsequent COA Applications should focus on unifying upper-level façades for more cohesive design approach and also include depictions of shadows cast by new building on neighboring properties. Future Applications should also include product submittals for such details as window and door types, sills and lintels as well as cornices along with concepts for exterior lighting and overall building signage.

The motion for the proposed work was approved 6-0-1, with abstention by Mr. Lader.

Agenda Item #5

Property Location: 128 East Third Street

Property Owner: 128 South, LLC

Applicant: Plegmer Ayuzov

Building Description, Period, Style, and Defining Features: This structure is a one-story, detached, brick masonry commercial building that is partially clad in vertical metal-panel siding. It was originally constructed in the late 1800s as a three-story furniture store, but the front façade has been significantly altered and currently includes a recessed commercial entrance with contemporary storefront windows and an applied shed roof with asphalt shingles. The distinctive gable detail centered within the shed roof references previous use as an A&P grocery store. The structure experienced several rear additions so that it extends the entire depth of the block to Mechanic Street, with side and rear facades of brick masonry dating from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as evidenced by segmental brick arched window and door openings. Architectural features have been lost over time so it can no longer be assigned a defining style.

Proposed Alterations: It is proposed to demolish the existing single-story building and construct a new, six-story, mixed-use structure.

Guideline Citations:

- **Secretary of the Interior’s Standards (SIS) 9.** -- see Agenda Item #1

- **Bethlehem Ordinance 1714.03 Purposes of Historic Conservation District** -- see Agenda Item #1
- **Historic Conservation District Design Guidelines concerning New Construction** -- see Agenda Item #1
- **Historic Conservation Commission 'Guidelines for Storefronts'**

Evaluation, Effect on Historic Conservation District, Recommendations: Applicant presented during HCC meeting on October 18, 2021, resulting in unanimously supported motion to table decision about proposed demolition and new development project. HCC encouraged Applicant to return for subsequent review of revised design proposal that responds to expressed concerns, including size, scale and proportion of overall structure along with such details as non-traditional storefronts and punched window openings without expressed sills and lintels. Applicant offered to utilize computer-generated street model for viewing proposed project from various pedestrian-level vantage points within Historic Conservation District. HCC welcomed opportunity outside traditional HCC meeting setting to view Applicant's computer models; however, such meeting has not yet been scheduled. Applicant currently requests continued discussion of initial COA Application with no revisions to original design proposal but supplemented by two new Drawing Sheets with aerial views of project site from four vantage points above Historic Conservation District, with computer-generated depiction of design proposal imported into each view. Several views strategically include glimpses of distant larger-scale buildings as well; however, most depicted taller structures are either outside boundaries of Historic Conservation District (i.e. Lehigh University campus, former Bethlehem Steel site, etc.) or date after district's period of interpretation (1895-1950) ... making them non-contributing to district and not part of streetscape and greater neighborhood when applying relevant design guidelines.

COA Application indicates intent to demolish existing main structure along with rear additions and replace with new commercial and residential building. Accompanying drawing sheets depict proposed replacement structure as six-story, mixed-use building approx. 80-feet wide, approx. 135-feet deep and approx. 68-feet high, with no mechanical penthouse. Proposed entry level includes approx. 2,500 square feet of commercial space located at corner of East Third Street and Webster Street, with remaining square footage dedicated to support spaces for residential tenants. Proposed upper floor levels include mix of studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments totaling 55 units, with private terraces for select upper-level units. Provided drawings do not indicate any below-grade basement/cellar level or on-site parking spaces.

HCC previously expressed consensus that existing structure no longer contributes to Historic Conservation District due to limited remnants of original building fabric, so request for HCC to approve demolition is typically predicated on Applicant's ability to replace lost building with new structure that satisfies relevant SIS as well as design guidelines concerning size, scale, massing and proportions. Current design proposal fills void left by demolished structures, which is appropriate. However, guidelines continue by noting "new construction should reflect the dominant cornice and roof heights of adjacent buildings and proportions of building elements to one another and the streetscape" and continue "In South Bethlehem, where two-, three- (and four-) story buildings are the norm, buildings that digress from these standards by any great degree seriously impact the Historic Conservation District. If large-scale construction is considered, particular attention will be given to ... the effect of the proposed building on the streetscape and the (District) as a whole." Current design proposal digresses from dominant cornice heights of nearby contributing structures, which are two-, two- and one-half and three stories tall, by rising six stories. Design guidelines continue that new construction façades should have "similar proportions of solids (walls or siding) to voids (storefronts, windows and door openings) of neighboring buildings." Large-scale punched openings of current design proposal are contemporary in style and do not relate to solids and voids of nearby contributing structures. Relevant design guidelines note windows historically comprise approximately one-quarter of exterior wall's surface area while proposed window openings inappropriately comprise approximately one-half surface of exterior walls. Based upon relevant design guidelines, current proposal for six-story structure is inappropriate for immediate streetscape and more generally for overall Historic Conservation District, best illustrated by provided photomontages on final Drawing Sheet titled "Street Context". Appropriate design solution would be limited to three or four stories ... conceivably with additional fifth floor level if significantly set back (min. twelve feet) from front façade to avoid perception from street level below; contributing structures nearby offer ample examples of appropriate relationships for solid walls to window voids.

Relevant design guidelines continue by referencing such important issues as: Rhythm and Patterns, Window and Door Openings, Materials and Textures, Architectural Details, Shape and Massing as well as Streetscapes. Though conceived as one structure, overall building mass shifts in materiality from dark brown brick to dark metal panels as front façade sets back at upper floor levels and as building turns corner along Webster Street. East façade also includes decorative metal screen at entry level while west façade also has applied stucco. According to relevant design guidelines, brick and stucco are appropriate façade materials; however, proposed metal panels and decorative screens require clarification and subsequent review of product submittals before appropriateness can be determined. As previously stated, proposed rhythm and patterns of punched windows are contemporary in style; design guidelines also note windows should be functionally similar (such as double-hung windows) and have similar muntin or grid patterns along with expressed sills and lintels as neighborhood's historic buildings so current windows are inappropriate. Relevant design guidelines also depict design components of appropriate storefronts, including apron at sidewalk level, glazed entrance doors flanked by display windows and with transoms above as well as overall sign band and cornice across full width of façade to delineate commercial entry level from residential floors above. Proposed storefront of full-height plate glass segments that recess back from public sidewalk, interrupted by arcade of brick piers along with lack lower apron, upper sign band and cornice above is inappropriate due to missing typical design components. In addition, intended door locations for access into entry-level commercial space(s) are not indicated; appropriate entrance doors should be accessed from sidewalk at East Third Street.

If proposed six-story structure is determined appropriate by HCC following Applicant discussion, subsequent reviews should address in more detail such items as proposed window and door types, windowsills and lintels, cornice profiles and various façade materials as well as visible exterior illumination. Applicant should be aware that tinted, colored and reflective glazing is inappropriate. Applicant should also reference 'Guidelines for Storefronts' before finalizing components and details of proposed storefronts. Similarly, 'Guidelines for Signage' offer suggestions for building signage concepts to avoid future tenants from approaching HCC with individual sign proposals.

Discussion: Plegmer Ayuazov, Paul Harak and Antonio Fiol-Silva represented proposal to demolish existing single-story building and construct new, six-story, mixed-use structure. Mr. Lader acknowledged main discussion point from previous meeting remains proposed building height. Applicant countered Historic Officer's comment about taller structures beyond Historic Conservation District boundaries, having counted at least eleven taller buildings within district; Mr. Long clarified most/all taller buildings date after District's period of interpretation and are considered non-contributing. Mr. Lader noted corner location helps to justify case for taller structure (rather than in-fill project sandwiched between two shorter buildings). Applicant continued that design proposal recesses as it extends vertically, helping to mitigate overall building height and giving impression of collection of structures rather than one monolithic building; also noted recent HCC appropriateness determination of other six-story structures proposed nearby. Mr. Simonson confirmed City has no concerns with proposed demolition of existing structure and requested clarification about proposed setbacks of current design; Applicant noted that as building rises, it steps back to create roof terraces for select residential units while building façade also changes color and/or material at each setback to help overall structure relate to similar smaller-scale buildings nearby. Mr. Simonson noted proposed roof height at upper-level setback relates closely in height to nearby Goodman Building addition (30-32 East Third Street) previously determined by HCC as appropriate (see Case #771: Sept. 20, 2021). Mr. Simonson also referenced height indications of various setbacks on revised front façade drawings recently submitted to City Hall by Applicant; **note:** revised façade drawing was not in possession of Historic Officer or other HCC members prior to meeting. Mr. Evans inquired about dimension of setbacks; Applicant responded that setbacks are 6-feet deep (**note:** provided drawings indicate 5-feet setbacks), with intentional tonal differences in façade treatments at each setback to emphasize change in depth. Mr. Simonson inquired about proposed locations for storefront entrance; Applicant confirmed storefront entrance faces main façade (accessed from East Third Street) while private entrance for residential tenants is located at side façade (accessed from Webster Street). Mr. Lader expressed appreciation for sophistication of current design and proposed façade materials but also noted previous discussion with HCC requested Applicant to lower building height to better align with cornice heights of nearby structures ... noting immediate streetscape includes two- and three-story structures, so relevant design guidelines restrict heights of new construction to similar building heights. Applicant countered that current design proposal is

not one large building block but rather “broken apart into several building units and almost disappears” along the streetscape. Mr. Lader appreciated approach to break apart building into segments and could accept four-story structure but additional two floor levels resulting in six-story structure is counter to relevant design guidelines, noting need to align cornice of new structure with cornice heights of nearby contributing structures along East Third Street. Mr. Cornish also appreciated design approach to break down overall building into segments and encouraged Applicant to continue with design improvements by removing two upper-most floor levels in deference to relevant design guidelines. Applicant countered that impression of five- or six-story structure depends upon select views, noting views further east and west along Third Street also include taller structures. Applicant concluded by noting willingness to return to HCC for further exploration of proposed façade materials to visually mitigate impression of overall height but noted economic factors associated with developing project site prevent ability to lower building height. Mr. Simonson noted fellow HCC concerns about number of floor levels but encouraged consideration of overall building height instead, noting proposed Goodman addition nearby is four floor levels but has overall height of contemporary five-story structure.

Public Commentary:

Kim Carrel-Smith: appreciated setbacks at select locations as well as material differences to help mitigate overall building height at front façade; encouraged Applicant to address similar issues at rear façade facing Mechanic Street and Greenway; greatest concern is proposed building height, noting this portion of East Third Street is one of last few intact stretches of contributing structures within Historic Conservation District and remains attractive to residents and shoppers because of pleasant scale and walkability, so new structure should be limited to four stories; also noted unpleasant experience of pedestrians encountering new construction built out over public right-of-way. Applicant clarified proposed building is not constructed out over sidewalk but rather arcade of structural piers aligns with property line while storefront recesses back from piers.

Bill Scheirer: noted personal impression that current design proposal is too tall, too plain and too repetitive; has similar concerns about subsequent agenda item.

Alicia Miller Karner, Bethlehem Director of Community and Economic Development: reminded HCC about time limit associated with current COA Application (**note**: Application was tabled during previous HCC meeting) so motion resulting from current discussion is required; if HCC recommends denial of current Application, motion must include clear guidance for benefit of Applicant about what should be amended to make subsequent COA Application appropriate.

Motion: HCC upon motion by Mr. Lader and seconded by Mr. Cornish recommended to deny the proposal that City Council issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed work as presented, based upon Applicant’s inability to satisfy Secretary of Interior’s Standards (SIS) 9. concerning new construction (specifically that new work “will be compatible with the historic ... size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment), Bethlehem Ordinance 1714.03 Purposes of Historic Conservation District as well as Historic Conservation Commission Design Guidelines concerning New Construction. The motion for the proposed work failed 2-5, with Mr. Evans, Mr. Hudak, Gary Lader, Mr. Loush, Mr. Patrick and Mr. Simonson not supporting the motion.

In response, Mr. Lader noted HCC requires determination that overall design approach of new construction is appropriate before approving request to demolish existing structure intended for replacement. Ms. Miller Karner clarified that language within relevant City Ordinance does not require HCC consensus on new construction prior to approving demolition, noting various mechanism in place that require Applicant to obtain all necessary approvals and building permits for replacement structure including COA prior to issuance of demolition permit.

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

1. Proposal to demolish existing single-story building and construct new, six-story, mixed-use structure at 128 East Third Street was presented by Plegmer Ayuazov, Paul Harak and Antonio Fiol-Silva.
2. Appropriate new building includes following details:

- a. demolish existing (non-contributing) main structure along with all rear additions and replace with new commercial and residential building; **note:** new project is contingent upon Applicant obtaining all necessary approvals and building permits for replacement structure including COA prior to issuance of demolition permit
 - b. replacement detached structure with flat roof is approx. 80-feet wide, approx. 135-feet deep and approx. 68-feet high, with no mechanical penthouse, no below-grade basement/cellar level and no on-site parking
 - c. entry level includes approx. 2,500 SF of commercial space located at corner of East Third Street and Webster Street, with remaining square footage dedicated to support spaces for residential tenants; upper floor levels include mix of studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments totaling 55 units, with private terraces for select upper-level units
 - d. entry-level façades include glazed entrance doors flanked by display windows along with glazed transoms above, interrupted by arcades of brick piers at front (north) and at both side façades; **note:** appropriate glazing is not tinted, colored or reflective
 - e. overall building mass shifts in materiality from dark brown brick to dark metal panels as front façade sets back at upper floor levels and as building turns corner along Webster Street; side (east) façade also includes decorative metal screen at entry level while remaining side (west) façade also has applied stucco
3. Subsequent COA Application should include product submittals for such details as window and door types, sills and lintels, metal panels and screens, handrails as well as cornices along with concepts for exterior lighting and overall building signage.

The motion for the proposed work was approved 5-2, with Mr. Cornish and Mr. Lader not supporting the motion, noting the proposed building height is inappropriate due to the negative impact of a six-story building on the existing streetscape of one-, two-, two-and-one-half and three-story buildings based upon its failure to comply with: Secretary of Interior's Standards (SIS) 9. concerning new construction (specifically that new work "will be compatible with the historic ... size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment), Bethlehem Ordinance 1714.03 Purposes of Historic Conservation District as well as Historic Conservation Commission Design Guidelines concerning New Construction.

Agenda Item #6; notes: Mr. Lader confirmed conflict of interest with agenda item, abstaining from discussion and resulting resolution; Mr. Evans led resulting discussion as HCC Vice-Chair.

Property Location: 117 East Fourth Street

Property Owner: SOBE 117, LLC

Applicant: SOBE 117, LLC

Building Description, Period, Style, and Defining Features: This structure is a one-and-one-half-story recreational building with split-face block walls and metal-panel siding with a low-pitch gable roof with similar metal-panel cladding. The building was constructed in the late 20th century, is Contemporary in style and is considered non-contributing to the Historic Conservation District because it was constructed after the district's period of significance (1895-1950) when South Bethlehem experienced dramatic development.

Proposed Alterations: It is proposed to demolish the existing single-story building and construct a new, seven-story, mixed-use building with a lower-level parking garage.

Guideline Citations:

- **Secretary of the Interior's Standards (SIS) 9.** -- see Agenda Item #1
- **Bethlehem Ordinance 1714.03 Purposes of Historic Conservation District** -- see Agenda Item #1
- **Historic Conservation District Design Guidelines concerning New Construction** -- see Agenda Item #3
- **Historic Conservation Commission 'Guidelines for Storefronts'**

Evaluation, Effect on Historic Conservation District, Recommendations: COA Application indicates intent to demolish existing structure and replace with new commercial and residential building. Accompanying drawing sheets depict proposed replacement as multi-story, mixed-use building measuring 140-feet wide x 160-feet deep. Central portion of proposed development project measures 63-feet wide, rises seven stories and measures 80-feet high at front (south) façade, with no mechanical penthouse; rear façade (facing Greenway) is twelve-feet deeper due to pitch of project site. Three-story wing addition measuring approx. 38-feet wide x 63-feet deep x 42-feet high flanks west side of main structure while similar three-story wing addition measuring approx. 38-feet wide x 63-feet deep x 36-feet high flanks east side of main structure. Proposed entry level includes approx. 2,700 square feet of commercial space centrally located at front (south) façade, with remaining square footage dedicated to parking garage entrance, support spaces for residential tenants as well as several living units. Proposed upper floor levels include mix of studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments for overall total of 70 units, with amenity lounge and attached terrace at third floor level along with private side terraces and rooftop terraces accessed from select units. Provided drawings also indicate below-grade basement/cellar level that accommodates 34 parking spaces.

As previously stated, existing recreational building is non-contributing to Historic Conservation District due to its construction after district's period of significance; therefore, request for HCC approval to demolish is predicated on Applicant's ability to replace lost building with new structure that satisfies SIS as well as relevant design guidelines concerning size, scale, massing and proportions. Current design proposal fills void left by demolished structure, which is appropriate. However, guidelines continue by noting "new construction should reflect the dominant cornice and roof heights of adjacent buildings and proportions of building elements to one another and the streetscape" ... and ... "If large-scale construction is considered, particular attention will be given to ... the effect of the proposed building on the streetscape and the (District) as a whole." Although recently renovated as living units, existing adjacent structures west of project site (currently referred to as "Brinker Lofts") were originally utilitarian in nature so individual floor heights are taller than typical residential construction. Peak of gabled roof of corner structure is approx. 68-feet and peak of adjacent shorter structure is approx. 45-feet; however, dominant cornice height (as described within relevant design guidelines) is approx. 55-feet for taller structure and approx. 35-feet for shorter structure. Existing structure at east of project site (currently Holy Infancy School) retains original institutional use, with individual floor heights also taller than typical residential construction and cornice height of flat roof approx. 50-feet. Buildings at city block corners within Historic Conservation District are often taller than remaining structures on same block and serve to "anchor" corner scenario, so cornice dimensions of appropriate new infill construction should not exceed cornice heights of existing contributing structures. Side wings of current design proposal appropriately refrain from exceeding heights of adjacent structures; however, main central portion of design proposal measures 80-feet tall and inappropriately exceeds cornice heights of adjacent contributing structures. Current assessment should also consider rear (north) façade, which rises yet another twelve feet due to pitch of site and results in overall cornice height of 92-feet, as perceived from adjacent Greenway. Siting of proposed project is due south from Greenway, which would result in long shadows cast out over Greenway during significant portions of each day. Design guidelines continue that new construction façades should have "similar proportions of solids (walls or siding) to voids (storefronts, windows and door openings) of neighboring buildings." Floor-to-ceiling windows of current design proposal are contemporary in style and do not relate to solids and voids of nearby contributing structures. Relevant design guidelines note windows historically comprise approximately one-quarter of exterior wall's surface area while proposed window openings inappropriately comprise approximately one-half surface of exterior walls. Based upon relevant design guidelines, current proposal for seven-story structure is inappropriate for immediate streetscape and more generally for overall Historic Conservation District. Appropriate design solution would be limited to three or four stories ... conceivably with additional fifth floor level if significantly set back (min. twelve feet) from front and rear façades to avoid perception from street level below ... while contributing structures nearby offer ample examples of appropriate relationships for solid walls to window voids.

Relevant design guidelines continue by referencing such important issues as: Rhythm and Patterns, Window and Door Openings, Materials and Textures, Architectural Details as well as Streetscapes. Building elements shifts in materiality from red brick to gray brick as front façade sets back at upper floor levels and as building recesses at east wing. According to relevant design guidelines, red brick is

appropriate façade material while grey brick is not typically found within Historic Conservation District, so discussion is warranted. Relevant design guidelines continue that windows should be functionally similar (such as double-hung windows) and have similar muntin or grid patterns along with expressed sills and lintels as neighborhood's historic buildings so current windows are inappropriate. Like previous COA Application, current design also includes inappropriate shift in vertical window alignments between second and third floor levels. Relevant guidelines also depict design components of appropriate storefronts, including apron at sidewalk level, entrance doors flanked by display windows with transoms above as well as overall sign band and cornice across full width of façade to delineate commercial entry level from residential floors above. Proposed storefront of full-height plate glass segments is inappropriate due to lack of appropriate storefront components.

If proposed seven-story structure is determined appropriate by HCC following discussion with Applicant, subsequent reviews should address in more detail such items as proposed window and door types, windowsills and lintels (all currently lacking), cornice profiles (also lacking) as well as visible exterior illumination. Applicant should be aware that tinted, colored and reflective glazing is inappropriate. Applicant should also reference 'Guidelines for Storefronts' before finalizing components and details of proposed storefronts; similarly, 'Guidelines for Signage' offer suggestions for building signage concepts to avoid submittals to HCC from future tenants with individual sign proposals.

Discussion: Antonio Fiol-Silva and Dennis Benner represented proposal to demolish existing single-story building and construct new, seven-story, mixed-use building with lower-level parking garage. Applicant explained intent to harmonize building elements with remainder of block as in-fill design consisting of three structures of varying heights, noting average heights of adjacent existing structures is three-and-one-half stories. Applicant confirmed need to further detail storefronts in accordance with relevant design guidelines and to also align windows vertically within structural bays; also agreed to return to HCC for finalizing material selections. Applicant admitted one compact structure at uniform building height could accommodate same number of residential units and would also be shorter; however, entire block would appear uniform so special nature of existing structures become lost. Mr. Evans expressed appreciation for design concept that allows existing corner buildings to remain vibrant so elevating height of central portion of new structure flanked on either side by lower wings is unique solution; continued that central section could be lowered in height by increasing width as compromise to homogeneous infill solution within center portion of block. Applicant clarified that current proposal honors existing buildings by pulling away from them with lower connecting wings and also allowing taller development at central portion of overall block, with new "wings" on either side that allow natural light and air on all sides of tower for residential units while also allowing for side terraces; continued that central portion is intentionally taller and lighter, with lower wings that "give breathing room" between tower and neighboring contributing structures while taller wings would result in loss of roof-top terraces intended for use by tenants. Applicant also noted lower but wider solution for central portion of block would compromise ability to accommodate natural light and air by changing floorplan layouts of residential units. Mr. Evans continued by expressing appreciation for Applicant's respect of contributing structure and sensitivity of design solution for those structures, noting HCC desire to encourage positive development that respects period of interpretation of Historic Conservation District. Mr. Patrick considered design as continuation of tradition already established by recent rehabilitation of adjacent Brinker Lofts. Mr. Simonson inquired about potential for rooftop mechanical penthouses on one or more building components; Applicant responded that individual mechanical units might dot roof landscape(s) to avoid major rooftop mechanical equipment. Mr. Hudak noted other similar mixed-use development projects currently planned nearby and questioned need for so many new residential units within Historic Conservation District.

Public Commentary:

Kim Carrel-Smith: expressed excitement about this specific block and especially about concept to demolish existing non-contributing recreational building (while also noting no personal animus against Boys and Girls Club) ... acknowledging importance of Holy Infancy school building to fabric of neighborhood as well as recently-completed, award-winning rehabilitation of Brinker Lofts; continued that zoning might allow really tall structures in South Bethlehem but relevant design guidelines do not allow tall structures within Historic Conservation District so central portion should be reduced in height by one or more stories, with compromise to raise height of adjacent wings accordingly; expressed appreciation for lower three-story

segments adjacent to existing structures but stressed need for Applicant to “massage” design by lowering central portion ... also calling attention to much smaller-scale residential structures across East Fourth Street as well as 92-foot height of tower at rear façade facing Greenway; continued that rear façade does not engage Greenway;

Bill Scheirer: noted personal impression that current design proposal is too tall, too plain and too repetitive.

Alicia Miller Karner, Bethlehem Director of Community and Economic Development: admitted not typically appreciative of contemporary design but personal impression of current proposal represents significant example of importance for project longevity (proposed materials, etc.); requested HCC to seriously consider project, as currently proposed... admitting understanding of concerns about proposed height in relation to design guidelines but noted proposed amenities of remaining project counter such concerns.

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

1. Proposal to demolish existing single-story building and construct new, seven-story, mixed-use building with lower-level parking garage at 117 East Fourth Street was presented by Dennis Benner and Antonio Fiol-Silva.
2. Appropriate new building includes following details:
 - a. demolish existing (non-contributing) structure and replace with new commercial and residential building; **note:** new project is contingent upon Applicant obtaining all necessary approvals and building permits for replacement structure including COA prior to issuance of demolition permit
 - b. replacement attached (infill) structure is multi-story, mixed-use building measuring 140-feet wide x 160-feet deep
 - i. central portion of new development project measures 63-feet wide, rises seven stories, measures 80-feet high at front (south) façade and has flat roof with no mechanical penthouse; rear façade (facing Greenway) is twelve-feet deeper due to pitch of project site
 - ii. three-story wing addition measuring approx. 38-feet wide x 63-feet deep x 42-feet high flanks west side of main structure while similar three-story wing addition measuring approx. 38-feet wide x 63-feet deep x 36-feet high flanks east side of main structure; wing additions have flat roofs with rooftop terraces
 - c. entry level includes approx. 2,700 square feet of commercial space centrally located at front (south) façade, with remaining square footage dedicated to parking garage entrance, support spaces for residential tenants as well as several living units; upper floor levels include mix of studio, one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments for overall total of 70 units, with amenity lounge and terrace at third floor level along with private side terraces and rooftop terraces accessed from select units
 - d. below-grade basement/cellar level accommodates 34 parking spaces
 - e. building elements shifts in materiality from red brick to gray brick as front façade sets back at upper floor levels and as building recesses at east wing
 - f. front (south) entry-level façade includes glazed entrance doors and display windows, all with glazed transoms above; appropriate glazing is not tinted, colored or reflective. **Notes:** Applicant agreed to further develop storefronts by integrating lower apron at sidewalk and overall sign band above transoms; upper-level windows require further development by organizing them according to structural bays so they align vertically; rear façade also requires further development to provide connection with adjacent Greenway
3. Subsequent COA Application should include product submittals for such details as window and door types, sills and lintels as well as cornices and handrails along with concepts for exterior lighting and overall building signage.

The motion for the proposed work was approved 5-1-1, with abstention by Mr. Lader and with Mr. Cornish not supporting the motion, noting the proposed building height is inappropriate due to the negative impact of a seven-story building on the existing streetscape of two-and-one-half and three-story buildings based upon

its failure to comply with: Secretary of Interior's Standards (SIS) 9. concerning new construction (specifically that new work "will be compatible with the historic ... size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment), Bethlehem Ordinance 1714.03 Purposes of Historic Conservation District as well as Historic Conservation Commission Design Guidelines concerning New Construction.

New Business:

Mr. Simonson requested review of (draft) amendments to HCC Ordinance recently provided by HCC members via email, including process of administrative approvals and fees associated with COA Applications; receipt of suggested revisions appreciated by November 19.

Mr. Lader noted various online commentary about public access limitations to HCC meetings, with requests to return to online format rather than requiring in-person attendance; suggestions also included request to convene future meetings somewhere in South Bethlehem. Ms. Miller Karner confirmed receipt of similar communication, noting requests were already forwarded to relevant parties at Bethlehem City Hall; also noted benefit of hosting HCC meetings in Town Hall because of ability to live stream meetings.

Mr. Lader reminded HCC members that motions cannot be based upon "like or preference" but rather appropriateness based upon relevant Secretary of Interior's Standards and design guidelines.

General Business: Minutes from HCC meeting on October 18, 2021, were unanimously approved by those attending that meeting, with abstention by those not previously in attendance.

There was no further business; HCC meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



BY:

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