
**MEETING MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD
MARCH 12, 2026**

MEMBERS PRESENT

Robert Melosky, Chairman
Matthew Malozi, Vice Chairman
Joy Cohen
Richard Pongracz

VISITORS PRESENT

Joe Rentko, Black Forest Engineering

MEMBERS ABSENT

Eddie Burgos

STAFF PRESENT

Matthew Deschler, Solicitor
Cathy Fletcher, Bureau of Planning and Zoning
Craig Peiffer, Bureau of Planning and Zoning
Stephany Sebesta, Planning and Zoning
Geoffrey Karanja, Bureau of Public Works

The March 12, 2026, 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 February 12, 2026

Motion #1: Ms. Cohen

Second: Mr. Malozi

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0-1. Mr. Pongracz abstained as he was absent from the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM #2: LAND DEVELOPMENT

Property Location: 1224 Eaton Avenue

Property Owner: Abe Atiyeh

Developer/Engineer: Joe Rentko, Black Forest Engineering

Proposed Work: The applicant proposes to maintain the existing single-family detached dwelling and existing driveway and construct three single-family attached dwellings (aka townhomes or rowhomes) and two single-family semi-detached dwellings (aka duplex or twins) for a total of five new dwellings; 11 off-street parking spaces, emergency turnaround, dumpster enclosure and other site appurtenances. Vehicular access for the new dwellings is proposed via a new ingress/egress drive along the east end of the property.

Discussion: Mr. Rentko gave a brief overview of the proposed Land Development. Mr. Rentko explained that the previously built townhomes were successful at 1216 Eaton Avenue with installing an underground detention basin which addresses the 100-year flood plan. The proposed plan Land Development will have less than 10,000 sf of

impervious coverage and an above ground basin for stormwater management is proposed.

Mr. Melosky asked for more information about the zoning relief granted by the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Rentko responded, the Applicant received zoning relief at the Zoning Hearing Board's December 17, 2025, meeting for the following: to permit the construction of five (5) new dwelling units, a reduction of 120 SF per dwelling and the driveway is permitted to be 21'-2" in width where 24' is required.

Mr. Peiffer went over the City's review letter, Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) letter, and the LVPC letter in brief.

Mr. Melosky asked if there will be sidewalk added. Mr. Rentko proposed a walkway along the rear of the dwellings where entry can be made while the front is primarily for parking. Mr. Melosky asked if the City is requesting sidewalk, Mr. Peiffer stated the sidewalk is a request. Mr. Melosky asked if the City is agreeable to the location of the sidewalk Mr. Rentko suggested. Mr. Peiffer stated that is something the City would accept and will work with the architect.

Mr. Melosky asked for more information on the above ground infiltration basin and the location of the trash collection. Mr. Rentko explained the garbage area will be enclosed and the infiltration basin will have foliage that is water tolerant and will not need to be maintained. Mr. Peiffer added there is a comment in the review letter addressing the foliage that stated more trees need to be added to the area.

Mr. Malozi asked if the proposed sidewalk that runs along the western side of the property could cut east to the front of the dwellings. Mr. Peiffer agreed that was a good solution. Mr. Rentko explained there are trees along the western property line that the Applicant wants to preserve but agreed that this was an option. Mr. Melosky stated the sidewalk can be maneuvered in a way to not harm the surrounding trees and roots. Mr. Rentko said there could potentially be a pinch point between the corner of the house and tree that would make the sidewalk there difficult but willing to look at this as an option.

Mr. Malozi asked if the dwellings are intended to be rented or owner occupied. Mr. Rentko responded they will be rentals. Mr. Malozi asked where a retaining wall is located as noted on the plans. Mr. Rentko explained that it was a standard on the legend, there will be no retaining wall. Mr. Rentko does plan on installing a 6" curb on the east side of the property for stormwater management.

Mr. Malozi asked for more information on the landscaping and screening for the site. Mr. Rentko explained the dwellings are facing the front of the apartment complex next-door with shrubs running along the property line which the Applicant proposes to keep. Mr. Malozi then asked if the lighting for the dwellings are wall packs. Mr. Rentko answered that statement was correct.

Mr. Peiffer was asked by Mr. Melosky if there were any significant comments from the Fire Marshall. Mr. Peiffer answered the focal point of the Fire Marshall was that there is

enough room on the property for a fire apparatus to turn around. Mr. Peiffer explained the paved area in back is for this reason.

Mr. Pongracz asked if the Applicant foresees overflow parking in the designated area. Mr. Rentko explained that section will be posted "No Parking" to deter people from utilizing it for parking. Mr. Pongracz questioned if a tenant has a party, where guests will park. Mr. Rentko explained there is a parking lane on Eaton Avenue that can be used.

Mr. Melosky asked for more details on the topography of the property. Mr. Rentko explained most of the property naturally slopes to North and the northernmost portion of the property slopes to the south.

Ms. Cohen asked to confirm the fire apparatus has enough room to turn around and asked if the three townhomes will be like the renderings submitted for the twin home just with an added unit. Mr. Rentko explained that it was correct, to remain in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance, the dwellings needed to be split. Ms. Cohen asked for clarification on the floor plans submitted. Mr. Rentko stated the bedroom labeled on the first floor is incorrect and that space will be part of the kitchen or living room. Ms. Cohen asked if the floor plan will be revised. Mr. Rentko stated the architectural were to change as the bedroom may be omitted. Ms. Cohen asked if the footprint of the dwelling would change. Mr. Rentko stated the footprint will remain the same.

Ms. Cohen stated the renderings of the dwellings do not match the surrounding neighborhood. Mr. Rentko explained the façade is a close match to the apartment complex next-door which ties in with the neighborhood with the stone veneer.

Mr. Melosky asked if the intent is to use brick on one side and asked Mr. Peiffer was the City would like to see. Mr. Peiffer responded that the City is open and amendable to stone or brick masonry. The City prefers the first floor to be masonry with some detailing, like a water table or sills and the use of more masonry than vinyl.

Ms. Cohen asked if there would be sidewalk in-between the two buildings. Mr. Rentko could not guarantee there will be sidewalk, but he and the Applicant will be required from the City. Ms. Cohen asked if regrading will need to be done for sidewalks or patios. Mr. Rentko answered there will need to be some regrading done.

Mr. Melosky asked if the Applicant is amendable to everything discussed. Mr. Rentko answered the Applicant is willing to do address all comments.

After discussion with Mr. Rentko and the Planning Commission the decision was made to table this Land Development until Mr. Rentko can discuss the terms with the client and the comments in the review letter can be addressed.

There were no comments from the public.

No motion was made, the Applicant has decided to come back at a later date for Land Development approval from the Planning Commission.

AGENDA ITEM #3: DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mr. Peiffer reviewed the upcoming Agenda items.

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 5:57 PM.

ATTEST:

Craig D. Peiffer, Commission Secretary