
M I N U T E S

BOARD: HISTORIC CONSERVATION COMMISSION, CITY OF BETHLEHEM

MEMBERS PRESENT: TODD CHAMBERS, CRAIG EVANS (VICE CHAIR), GARY LADER (CHAIR), MICHAEL SIMONSON, DESIREE STRASSER

MEMBERS ABSENT: (NONE)

STAFF PRESENT: JEFFREY LONG (HISTORIC OFFICER)

PRESS PRESENT: (NONE)

VISITORS PRESENT: JOSEPH ARI, SCOTT BARTKUS, ANDREW GEHRINGER, DOMINICK GURRERI, HASNAIN ILYAS, JOSEPH MCCARTHY, ERIC REIDLINGER, JOHN MARC RITTLE, JOSEPH SEDLER, CHRISTINE USSLER, BRETT WEBBER, CHRISTOPHER WORTON

MEETING DATE: MAY 18, 2026

The regular meeting of the Historic Conservation Commission (HCC) was held on May 18, 2026, at the City of Bethlehem Town Hall Rotunda, 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: 335-339 West Fourth Street

Property Owner: New Bethany

Applicant: Christopher Worton, Spillman Farmer Architects

Building Description, Period, Style, and Defining Features: This attached 3-story structure is a brick masonry institutional building clad in a painted Exterior Insulation and Finish System (EIFS) with a flat roof, raised parapet and simplified upper cornice. Double-hung windows differ in size and placement at each floor level and probably reflect interior floorplan layouts ... with little or no relation to original window placement locations. Three metal entrance doors at street level provide access to various spaces inside. Based on the Applicant's provided historical background with details from Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, the date of construction is indeterminate but seems to be ca. 1938-1950, but possibly as early as 1912. Window openings on the north (rear) façade depicted in a photo ca. 1970-1985 exhibit segmental brick arches at the lowest floor level, which are indicative of late 19th and early 20th century construction. That same photo confirms the upper-most floor level is a late 20th century addition and probably coincides with application of EIFS on the exterior façade. This structure replaces smaller-scale outbuildings and appendages to the much larger building to the west. Significant modifications over time have removed all defining architectural details, which prevent the ability to assign a specific architectural style. These details result in a structure that does not contribute to the Historic Conservation District.

Proposed Alterations: The Applicant proposes to demolish the existing 3-story annex in order to construct a new 4-story annex building.

Guideline Citations:

- **Secretary of the Interior's Standard (SIS) 9.** -- New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

- **Secretary of the Interior's Standard (SIS) 10.** -- New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.
- **Bethlehem Ordinance 1714.03 Purposes of Historic Conservation District** -- It is the purpose and intent of the City of Bethlehem to promote, protect, enhance, and preserve historic resources and traditional community character for the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation, protection and regulation of buildings and areas of historic interest or importance within the City.
- **Historic Conservation Commission 'Design Guidelines' concerning demolition** -- HCC will not recommend approval for demolition unless proposed demolition involves a non-significant building, provided that the demolition will not adversely affect those portions of a building that are significant.
- **Historic Conservation Commission** -- relevant Design Guidelines for new construction

Evaluation, Effect on Historic Conservation District, Recommendations: COA Application indicates intent to demolish existing 3-story annex building and replace with new, expanded 4-story annex. Current structure includes 5,500 square feet of spaces that address community needs; however, accompanying narrative clarifies that layouts and sizes of existing spaces no longer meet various needs and current accessibility requirements. In response, proposed replacement structure will occupy same site along West Fourth Street but also expand to north of site, resulting in approximately 16,000 square feet of spaces that meet current accessibility standards and offer differing spaces to address current community needs.

Relevant design guidelines concerning requests for demolition note that HCC encourages Applicant to "evaluate significance of buildings within historical district" and "all attempts to reuse historical buildings are exhausted prior to considering demolition". Guidelines continue that HCC will not recommend approval unless "proposed demolition involves non-significant buildings or building additions, provided demolition will not adversely affect parts of the site or adjacent properties that are significant" or when "Applicant has demonstrated they have exhausted all other options and will suffer undue economic hardship". Strictly interpreted, existing annex might qualify as "contributing structure" within Historical Conservation District because it was mostly likely constructed during District's period of interpretation (1885-1950). When considered as annex to much larger adjacent historic structure, one might also define annex as "non-significant building addition", whose demolition is permitted ... provided adjacent building is not adversely affected by proposed demolition. Applicant's narrative offers overview of existing spatial and code-compliance deficiencies while also describing how proposed expanded footprint to north of site will address those concerns and simultaneously resolve structural instability of adjacent hillside. Results of recent visual inspection concluded that this structure has been significantly compromised over time and original defining features were removed or covered over, so it can no longer be assigned specific architectural style; indeed, upper-most floor level dates after District's period of interpretation. Based upon relevant design guidelines, current proposal to demolish existing annex building is appropriate, pending discussion with HCC to address any questions or concerns. Should HCC determine that annex should be considered as contributing structure within Historic Conservation District, Applicant could still claim "undue economic hardship" per relevant guidelines concerning demolition but might be asked to provide cost estimate comparisons for "full demolition and new construction" vs. "renovating interior and exterior of existing with selective additions" to conclude that full demolition and new construction is indeed more cost effective.

Should HCC approve proposed demolition, request is predicated on Applicant's ability to replace lost building with new construction that satisfies relevant Secretary of Interior's Standards as well as Design Guidelines within Historic Conservation District. Applicant's supplemental narrative correctly identifies various categories of design principles from relevant guidelines ... starting with: Size, Scale and Proportion. Those guidelines note "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- and three-story buildings are the norm, buildings that digress from these standards by any great degree seriously impact the Historical Conservation District." Current design proposal of 4-story replacement at approximately 48-foot high contradicts guideline that height of new structure should not exceed height of existing annex (35-foot 8-inches), which currently serves as appropriate transition from dominant structure to west at 341-345 West Fourth Street (corner of Wyandotte Street) as it follows pitch of street and steps down to adjacent 2-1/2-story structure located at 333 West Fourth Street. However, close

inspection of provided architectural drawings indicates that Applicant addresses such concerns by stepping back front wall of upper-most floor level 5-feet from face of remaining façade, so discussion is warranted to determine appropriateness of overall height. Proposed roof landscape also includes new mechanical penthouse that steps back even further from front façade. Proposed replacement annex would appropriately serve as attached infill construction between existing historic structures on either side by adhering to existing building setback of streetscape, pending confirmation that it will be constructed to avoid destruction of existing historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property and also be undertaken in such manner that, if removed in future, essential form and integrity of historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

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; Streetscapes. Applicant's narrative explains that façade of proposed replacement annex respects setbacks, size and scale, shape and massing, rhythm and patterns along with height and width ratios of doors and windows on adjacent buildings. Similarly, proposed cream brick cladding for lower two floor levels creates continuity between similar cream bricks on façades of buildings on either side; however, discussion with HCC is warranted before appropriateness can be determined.

In summary, proposed replacement annex successfully addresses relevant guidelines concerning appropriate design features and elements found elsewhere within District ... pending assessment of recessed upper floor level; however, subsequent reviews with HCC should consider specific details such as proposed masonry types, window and door styles, expressed windowsills and lintels, cornice profiles, handrails, lighting fixtures, etc. For on-going project development, Applicant should note that mirrored, tinted or reflective glass is inappropriate within District, so proposed custom stained-glass window warrants specific discussion. Applicant should also reference 'Guidelines for Storefronts' before finalizing details of proposed storefront entrance.

Discussion: Christopher Worton and Christine Ussler represented proposal to demolish existing 3-story annex in order to construct new 4-story annex building. Applicant confirmed current desire to seek HCC permission for demolition, with opportunity to discuss proposed replacement structure and garner HCC feedback for ongoing design process. Applicant quoted New Bethany's mission statement: To offer hope and support to people who experience poverty, food insecurity, and homelessness. Applicant's programs address various community needs, including short-term housing; however, client base has expanded dramatically since global pandemic. Layout and sizes of existing spaces within annex structure are inadequate to address increasing needs, do not meet current building code and are not ADA-compliant. Proposed new structure addresses those deficiencies by creating greater number of spaces and improved sizes of rooms by occupying footprint of existing annex while also expanding to north ... ultimately tripling overall building size to 16,000 square feet while also integrating new passenger elevator.

Applicant then focused on demolition proposal, noting that existing annex (more than other properties on overall campus) does not adequately serve current needs; continued that other structures retain architectural integrity while annex lost historical significance over time through various modifications ... beginning with addition of upper-most floor level ca. 1950-1965 and then again in ca. 1987 with removal of distinctive entrance canopies, modified window placements and application of Exterior Insulation Finish System (EIFS). Mr. Lader inquired about building's construction method; Applicant responded that annex is wood-frame construction with brick exterior walls and wooden floor systems. Applicant continued that many options were studied to potentially salvage all or portions of existing structure; however, every study resulted in inability to retain and rehabilitate. During those studies rear retaining wall at north end of property also failed, so any new construction will require major structural improvements; removal of annex to address those concerns is most cost-effective approach. Mr. Lader inquired what is planned to ensure that neighboring structures are not compromised during proposed demolition. Applicant called attention to supplemental drawing sheets that identify Barry Isett & Associates as structural, civil and mechanical engineering consultants, with proposed measures to ensure during demolition that adjacent structures are stabilized and not compromised during infill construction. Mr. Simonson inquired if neighboring buildings are structurally independent from one another; Applicant confirmed they are indeed structurally independent, with no shared party walls. Mr. Evans inquired if engineering studies were already conducted to address structural concerns; Applicant responded that various structural concerns remain to be studied while

ongoing design process continues ... not only specific to proposed replacement building but also for stabilizing adjacent existing structures.

Applicant then summarized current design of proposed replacement, calling attention to relevant Drawing Sheets that show new structure within existing context of streetscape. Applicant focused on West Fourth Street (main) façade, calling attention to such concepts as height and width ratios of windows and doors and solids to voids ... with more solid wall than glass ... while respective rhythms and patterns of similar configurations of nearby structures. Applicant admitted that proposed upper-most floor level exceeds height of existing annex but is intentionally set back approximately 5-feet to help mitigate perception from public right-of-way below; continued that front wall of upper floor is angled to mimic Mansard roof of adjacent historic structure while proposed cladding is either slate or GAF Slateline asphalt shingles for look that is similar in texture, tone, scale and color of adjacent roof. Applicant also called attention to proposed two differing tones of brick for exterior façade, noting that existing annex has similar two brick colors which create visual continuity between large corner structure with adjacent row home; continued that this detail reinforces architectural identity along West Fourth Street and also helps to resolve current issue of multiple entrances. Ultimate desire is to unify various structures by emphasizing campus identity rather than series of desperate buildings. Mr. Lader noted that “trickiest detail” is intersection of proposed upper floor level with existing Mansard roof of neighboring historical structure ... specifically how to maintain existing decorative elements. Applicant responded that proposed new construction is cut back away from existing historic cornice to avoid damage. Mr. Lader suggested that Applicant could terminate new brick cornice in detail that is reduced in scale and gives more space between new construction and existing Mansard; Applicant agreed to study further. Applicant explained that existing administration building along Wyandotte Street has existing stained glass window that cannot be seen from public right-of-way, so proposed design for new annex along West Fourth Street abstractly replicates that historical element while also creating visual difference in façade. Mr. Lader inquired what function takes place on interior of proposed stained glass. Applicant noted that staircase is located behind proposed glass wall; continued that color rendition will be created by applying colored films to inside glass surface rather than traditional (and expensive) stained glass approach.

Mr. Chambers praised Applicant’s planning team while noting that proposed project “seems to be a model how to correctly execute a well-conceived building within the Historic Conservation District”; continued by noting he can instantly and clearly see what Applicant is striving to achieve. Mr. Chambers summarized various observations, including: appreciation for two-tone brick façade that references annex before it lost its historical integrity through various modifications; Mansard roof that helps to mitigate overall height of new proposal; various detailing that is “thoughtfully restrained” and relates to existing context but does not overpower; offset arrangement of windows at upper-most floor level, which pays homage to offset dormers at existing historical structure; proposed stained glass window that relates new building to organization’s history and mission. Mr. Chambers also noted concern about proposed rear stair (specifically “clunky” sloped roof) mainly visible from adjacent church parking lot. Applicant expressed own concerns about design of stair tower but also cited previous studies that did not slope roof made tower seem “overpowering”; agreed to investigate further. Mr. Lader inquired about building use and proposed construction type; Applicant responded that current proposal is steel structure with block masonry walls while uses include client services at entry level and residential units at upper floor levels.

Applicant agreed to return to HCC for subsequent review of revised design proposal that responds to various questions and concerns.

Public Commentary: John Marc Rittle, Executive Director of New Bethany, welcomed attendance of various staff and board members; expressed appreciation for HCC comments to initial design proposal; noted that current design represents culmination of more than three years of studies to address various structural concerns while also responding to dramatic increase in number of clients.

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

1. The proposal to demolish the existing 3-story annex in order to construct new 4-story annex building was presented by Christopher Worton and Christine Ussler.

2. Appropriate demolition of existing 3-story annex must include measures to ensure that adjacent historic structures are stabilized and not compromised during demolition and resulting new infill construction.

Notes: The Applicant agreed to return to HCC for subsequent assessments of such items as façade materials, windows, doors, roofing, exterior illumination, signage, etc. The City of Bethlehem will not issue an approved permit to demolish the existing annex until all planning applications have been successfully reviewed and approved.

The motion for the proposed work was unanimously approved.

Agenda Item #2

Property Location: 312 East Fourth Street

Property Owner: Andrew Gehringer, Holy Infancy Roman Catholic Church

Applicant: Joseph McCarthy

Building Description, Period, Style, and Defining Features: The church structure is a detached, 3-bay, stone masonry institutional building with a steep gable roof and cross-gable transept. Each bay includes an entrance portal with pointed Gothic arch and upper-level windows, also with pointed Gothic arches. The larger central bay with north-facing rose window extends up to become the church bell tower. Originally called St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church, it was constructed ca. 1865 but was later expanded and modified ca. 1886 to become Holy Infancy Roman Catholic Church. The church is Gothic Revival in style.

The adjacent rectory structure is a 3-story, detached brick masonry residential building with a low-pitched roof and shed-roof dormers. Defining features include an upper projecting ornamental cornice, full-height bays on either side of the central bay and 1-over-1 double-hung windows. Supported by double pairs of wooden columns, the entrance porch leads down to a stone masonry retaining wall with stone piers that delineate access onto the property. Constructed ca. 1910, this structure is Colonial Revival in style.

Proposed Alterations: The Applicant proposes to modify the existing stone retaining walls at the front (north) and side (west) of the rectory property and also to modify outside access into the rectory.

Guideline Citations:

- **Secretary of the Interior's Standard (SIS) 2** -- The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alternation of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
- **Secretary of the Interior's Standard (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 Standard (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 Standard (SIS) 9** -- New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
- **Secretary of the Interior's Standard (SIS) 10** -- New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.
- **Bethlehem Ordinance 1714.03 Purposes of Historic Conservation District** -- It is the purpose and intent of the City of Bethlehem to promote, protect, enhance, and preserve historic resources and traditional community character for the educational, cultural, economic and general welfare of the public through the preservation, protection and regulation of buildings and areas of historic interest or importance within the City.

- **Historic Conservation Commission ‘Design Guidelines’ concerning demolition** -- HCC will not recommend approval for demolition unless proposed demolition involves a non-significant building, provided that the demolition will not adversely affect those portions of a building that are significant.
- **Historic Conservation Commission** -- relevant Design Guidelines for new construction

Evaluation, Effect on Historic Conservation District, Recommendations: COA Application indicates intent to modify (Application states “restore”) existing stone retaining wall at front (north) of rectory property by reducing average height of wall 16-inches (from 3-feet 10-inches to 2-feet 6-inches) and reducing average height of piers 18-inches (from 6-feet 1-inch to 4-feet 7 inches). Because landscape extends to retaining wall just below stone cap, proposed reduction in overall wall height will necessitate significant changes to existing grade. Stone steps leading up from public sidewalk to entrance porch would also require modification in response to lowered wall height ... potentially resulting in removal of top step; similarly, set of adjacent steps leading up to neighboring property at east end (not depicted on provided drawing) would also require modifications to address lowered wall height. SIS 2 notes, “The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alternation of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.” SIS 5 explains that “Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.” Based on these standards, proposal to reduce overall height of existing stone walls 16-18 inches is inappropriate. SIS 6 notes “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.” Appropriate repairs to existing retaining wall should respect these standards.

Applicant’s narrative also proposes to “restore side entrance into Rectory”; however, Detail A on Drawing Sheet SP-2 is section detail for what is called “new structure” leading from existing macadam down into basement at side (west) façade. While section drawing is helpful, COA Application requires elevation (façade) views of all proposed new additions. Without such drawings that also include context of rectory, it is not possible to assess appropriateness of size, scale, proportions, materials, etc. of proposed addition. Recent on-site inspection confirmed that construction of side entrance is already underway; however, HCC has not yet assessed design proposal side entrance addition and new concrete block side walls were completed without associated Certificate of Appropriateness. According to relevant design guidelines, concrete block walls are inappropriate within Historic Conservation District. Appropriate materials for exterior walls include stone and brick masonry, stucco as well as wood cladding. Junction of existing stone wall at side (west) of property with yet another proposed set of walls for steps leading up onto existing rectory property will result in removal of distinctive end pier with stone cap. This junction is problematic and also deserves elevation (façade) views to understand ramifications of proposed new construction on existing historic wall. In addition, provided drawing offers no indication of proposed materials for new steps (side walls, risers, handrail, etc.), so appropriateness is not possible without various clarifications.

Applicant’s proposal to retain what remains of existing side (west) stone retaining wall after recent approved site work and then repair is appropriate; any lost or removed stones should be replaced in-kind while mortar joints should match existing in material, color rendition and style. If historic stones and cap segments were not salvaged during recent demolition, appropriate new stones and cap segments must also match existing in material, design, color, texture and style.

COA Application also mentions intent to install entrance to rectory basement while supplemental drawings and narrative indicate need to demolish existing 2-story wood-frame “surround” in order to accommodate. Similar to previous comments, lack of elevation (façade) views of existing conditions as well as proposed new construction that also depicts overall rectory structure are needed to assess such concerns as size, scale, proportions, proposed materials, etc. of new basement entrance in relationship to existing structure before appropriateness can be determined.

Discussion: Andrew Gehringer, Joseph McCarthy and Joseph Sedler represented proposal to modify existing stone retaining walls at front (north) and side (west) of rectory property and also to modify outside access into rectory. Mr. Chambers noted if former segment of now demolished stone wall was still standing, proposed entrance into basement would not be so visible from public right-of-way and potentially not required for HCC assessment. Applicant recounted previous HCC approval to remove segment of existing

stone wall at side (west) of property to allow for re-grading, filling abandoned coal bins and providing access for machinery to conduct needed façade and roof maintenance of both structures. Mr. Lader noted that proposed project scope “seems to be a lot of work”, with need to re-grade entire site just to reduce overall height of stone wall. Applicant responded that exterior maintenance of both structures is cost prohibitive without conducting proposed work scope in advance; continued that other properties along this block have lower walls at property line, so proposal is to be consistent in height with those while retaining salvaged materials for needed wall restoration. Applicant agreed to retain height of end pillar at neighboring property (at east end) to avoid modifying neighbor’s stone steps up onto property. Mr. Chambers inquired about intentions with existing iron fence between rectory and neighboring property; Applicant responded that iron fence segment will also remain. Mr. Lader questioned Applicant’s intent to remove entire stone wall and then re-construct at lower height. Applicant explained that pressure of existing landscaping between rectory and existing wall combined with blocked weep holes damage existing wall; continued that reputable stone masons explain those problems can only be addressed by taking entire wall down, installing new draining system and re-setting stone wall. Mr. Lader noted that provided drawings offer no construction details for proposed drainage system, etc.; Applicant agreed to include such details in subsequent submittal for HCC review to justify need to re-grade and lower height of stone wall while also confirming that stone elements already removed from side (west) wall were salvaged to use for reconstructed wall.

Applicant noted that proposed “restoration of side entrance” involves removal of 2-story, non-original structure to reveal existing rectory door; continued by explaining need to create new set of steps from grade up to existing landing that leads to side door. Mr. Evans inquired about accessibility concerns with proposal for new steps; Applicant confirmed it will not be ADA-compliant. Ms. Strasser inquired what is meant by “roof canopy” within project narrative. Applicant responded that existing roof of 2-story wood-frame structure will remain to become porch roof. Ms. Strasser continued by inquiring if posts of existing wood-frame addition can be salvaged to serve as structural support for porch roof; Applicant responded that existing posts will be salvaged to support roof, as needed.

Mr. Simonson inquired about new concrete block walls visible at side (west) façade. Applicant explained that series of coal bins dotting that portion of property were recently removed, so block walls were constructed to shore up that area, with goal of serving as side walls for new ramp leading down into basement; continued that current access into basement is set of bilco doors at rear of property, so this new access point offers improved basement access. Mr. Simonson inquired about resulting exposed concrete block walls. Applicant responded that proposed landscaping will ultimately cover most of new side walls. Mr. Lader encouraged Applicant to parge over any remaining visible block walls with stucco; Applicant was amenable to that suggestion.

Applicant called attention to proposed exterior steps oriented at 45-degree angle with existing segment of stone wall at side (west) of property ... noting stone pier at that location recently failed, so new steps resolve need to reestablish pier. Mr. Chambers inquired about intended purpose of new steps; Applicant explained that proposed steps offer most direct path between church and rectory. Mr. Evans inquired what happens where re-graded landscape at side (west) of property terminates with existing access drive between both structures; continued by suggesting potential need for new curb. Applicant confirmed intent to re-grade rectory landscape along western property edge to meet existing macadam access drive.

Mr. Chambers was amenable to Applicant’s proposal to reduce overall height of existing stone walls to address draining concerns and ongoing maintenance; continued by suggesting that Applicant should return to HCC with exterior elevation (façade) scale drawings that depict all proposed new steps, walls, entrances, etc., and indicate size and scale, proposed materials, etc. Mr. Simonson inquired if Applicant needs approval of concrete block walls as part of on-going stabilization efforts; Applicant noted that abandoned coal bins are now filled, so HCC is not creating undue hardship by requesting additional scale drawings before approval of proposed work scope is secured.

Public Commentary: none

Motion: The Commission upon motion by Mr. Evans and seconded by Mr. Chambers unanimously adopted proposal to table any decision about appropriateness of proposal to modify the existing stone retaining walls at front (north) and side (west) of rectory property and also to modify outside access into rectory in order to allow the Applicant opportunity address requested revisions and lacking details.

Agenda Item #3

Property Location: 313 East Third Street

Property Owner: AHSA, LLC

Applicant: Hasnain Ilyas

Building Description, Period, Style, and Defining Features: This structure is a detached, 3-story, 2-bay, masonry commercial building with a flat roof, altered façade with rough stucco finish, fixed single-lite windows at upper floor levels and a classically detailed storefront. The building dates from the early 20th century and is altered with Classical Revival details.

Proposed Alterations: The Applicant proposes to rehabilitate the front façade.

Guideline Citations:

- **Secretary of the Interior’s Standard (SIS) 2** -- The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alternation of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
- **Secretary of the Interior’s Standard (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 Standard (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 Standard (SIS) 7** -- Chemical or physical treatments ... that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
- **Secretary of the Interior’s Standard (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.
- **Historic Conservation Commission ‘Guidelines for Signage’**
- **Historic Conservation Commission** -- relevant Design Guidelines for new construction

Evaluation, Effect on Historic Conservation District, Recommendations: COA Application indicates intent to rehabilitate front façade as part of overall building renovations for new commercial tenant. Supplemental drawings do not depict existing building features, which is indicated on COA Application as required, so Application is incomplete.

Detail 1 on Drawing Sheet A-110 includes notation “façade to be painted”. Relevant Design Guidelines state “HCC will not recommend for approval ... applying waterproof or water repellent coatings (on masonry and stucco)” while Secretary of Interior’s Standard 7 states “chemical ... treatments ... that cause damage to historic materials will not be used”. HCC traditionally interprets these guidelines to avoid paint applied to masonry and stucco surfaces. Within project narrative, Applicant notes that existing stucco is failing; however, SIS 6 states “deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced”. In summary, Applicant’s proposal to paint front façade is inappropriate; appropriate alternative would be patching and repairing existing stucco as needed before applying new stucco finish coat with integrated pigment to avoid painting thereafter.

Though not indicated as “demolition (or) removal of building features” on COA Application, Applicant proposes to demolish existing classically detailed storefront of fluted pilasters supporting sign band and decorative cornice above storefront assembly and replace with various new details -- refer to Historic

Officer's photos of existing conditions. SIS 2 states: "The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alternation of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided." Similarly, SIS 5 explains "Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved." Finally, SIS 9 notes that "New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property."

Applicant's proposal to remove existing historical storefront and replace with new details is inappropriate.

Should HCC determine during discussion with Applicant that demolition of existing historical storefront is appropriate, Applicant should confirm proposed materials of replacement. One notation on Detail 1 of Drawing Sheet A-110 mentions "EIFS"; however, relevant design guidelines identify Exterior Insulation Finishing System (EIFS) as inappropriate material within Historic Conservation District. Appropriate materials include masonry, stucco, wood and potentially composite materials after careful discussion with HCC. Similarly, decorative trims at upper cornice and around upper-level windows are described as "stucco moulding" so clarification of proposed material is warranted (preferably with actual material samples) before appropriateness can be determined; appropriate materials include masonry, stucco, wood and potentially composite materials after careful discussion with HCC.

Proposed replacement storefront assembly of aluminum doors and windows in anodized bronze color is potentially appropriate, pending clarification that historic materials, features and details of existing storefront surround will not be damaged during installation along with receipt of written specifications and material samples for inspection. Similarly, proposed 2-over-2 replacement sash for upper-level windows are more appropriate than existing fixed single-lite sash; however, written specifications and material samples of proposed windows are needed to confirm appropriateness ... noting that simulated muntins should be applied to exterior window surfaces. Applicant should also confirm that all intended glazing is not tinted, mirrored or reflective to be considered appropriate within Historic Conservation District.

Applicant proposes new wall sconces at pilasters flanking each side of replacement storefront. Detail 1 on Drawing Sheet A-110 references "see lighting schedule" for details; however, no lighting schedule was provided. Without written specifications and (preferably) product sample, appropriateness of proposed wall sconces cannot be determined. Applicant should be aware that relevant design guidelines encourage "warm" exterior illumination within Historic Conservation District, so HCC interprets "warm" for LED lighting as maximum 3000-Kelvin color temperature. Applicant should also confirm that no raceways, junction boxes or conduits associated with proposed lighting are visible on building façade.

Applicant also proposes new building signage composed of individual pin-mounted back-lit letters within sign band. This approach is potentially appropriate but requires more detailed information, such as sizes of individual letters as well as overall dimensions of signage in relation to dimensions of sign band; material selection and thickness of proposed letters are also important. As with proposed wall sconces, Applicant should also confirm that no raceways, junction boxes or conduits associated with proposed lettering are visible on building façade.

COA Application and accompanying drawings make no mention of improvements to existing side and rear façades; however, all are visible from public right-of-way, so assessment of any intended improvements is also warranted. Similarly, Detail 1 Proposed 1st Floor Plan on Drawing Sheet A-100 indicates Applicant's intent to "replace existing walk-in cooler and freezer combination" with new addition at rear (north) façade; however, required façade drawings of existing or replacement addition that also include context of overall existing structure are missing, so appropriateness of size, shape, proportions, proposed materials, etc. cannot be determined.

Discussion: Hasnain Ilyas and Joseph Ari represented proposal to rehabilitate front façade. Mr. Lader inquired if Applicant could clarify what building façade historically looked like. Applicant noted that no historical photos of façade were located; however, building dates back to late 1800s but was later covered over with rough stucco while upper cornice was removed before covering with metal flashing. Applicant continued that existing exterior rough stucco is in poor condition and does not reflect typical façade finish found elsewhere within Historic Conservation District, so desire is not to repair and restore. Applicant also noted that EIFS is already found elsewhere within district ... including on structure across East Third Street ... and assumed EIFS is also appropriate for this façade. Mr. Lader responded that relevant guidelines specifically mention EIFS as inappropriate within district, noting need to regularly re-apply paint to exterior

surfaces and difficulty in keeping clean over time. Mr. Lader continued by inquiring why Applicant proposes to replace existing Classical Revival storefront with new but similar Classical details. Applicant explained that existing storefront details are “somewhat in disrepair” and admitted that proposed replacement “might not be classical” but still fits with neighboring buildings and noting desire for smooth stucco façade with applied moulding profiles. Mr. Simonson inquired about proposed material for various mouldings. Applicant responded that proposed moulded profiles are polystyrene, which can be covered with EIFS final coat upon installation for overall uniform finish; continued that this approach is also budget friendly. Mr. Simonson explained HCC never assessed this product within Historic Conservation District, so written specifications and material samples are needed before appropriateness can be determined. Mr. Chambers inquired why Applicant proposes to demolish existing storefront with nice detailing and replace it with polystyrene. Applicant noted that existing storefront needs repairs and “is not as attractive as design proposal”; also noted that upper stucco portion is rough finish while lower portion is smooth stucco and existing gooseneck fixtures have inappropriate exposed conduits ... so desire is to improve overall exterior façade that better reflects style of new commercial tenant.

Mr. Lader inquired about Applicant’s approach to rehabilitating front façade. Applicant assumes removal of existing rough stucco finish would damage brick façade beneath, so applying new stucco over existing should be sufficient to create flat surface that accepts various proposed moulding profiles; continued that proposed EIFS stucco finish for all exterior surfaces is waterproof and will unify entire façade. Ms. Strasser inquired if remaining façades will also receive new stucco treatment; Applicant responded that other façades are not part of current renovation proposal. Mr. Lader inquired about proposed rear addition; Applicant confirmed that existing cooler at north end of rear addition is damaged, so current proposal replaces cooler in-kind. Mr. Chambers also noted that existing pergola at rear of property obstructs view of rear addition from public right-of-way, so HCC assessment of replacement cooler is not needed.

Mr. Lader inquired if upper floor levels are currently occupied; Applicant confirmed that upper floor levels are not occupied and current work scope limits interior renovations to entry level. Mr. Chambers inquired about intentions with windows; Applicant responded with proposal for Kawneer replacement windows, with metal frames and casements. Mr. Lader noted that HCC is familiar with Kawneer systems but typically for storefront assemblies, so proposal might be “too heavy duty” and noted that HCC would need to assess written specifications and material samples before appropriateness can be determined. Applicant noted desire to match replacement windows at upper floor levels with new storefront assembly at entry level. Mr. Chambers encouraged Applicant to modify proposed trim details around upper-level windows with more simplified profiles, which will result in more affordable solution; continued by also encouraging Applicant to select replacement windows with “double-hung look” and simulated muntins applied to exterior glass surfaces. Mr. Chambers continued by encouraging Applicant to explore existing construction at window openings ... noting that proportions seem small and might have been filled in over time to make openings smaller. Mr. Simonson agreed, explaining that even if Applicant is not currently renovating upper floor levels, now is right opportunity to ensure that window openings accommodate egress requirements. Mr. Lader encouraged Applicant to investigate if another bay of windows at right of existing bays previously existed; if so, Applicant should reintroduce that bay of windows, resulting in three window bays. Applicant noted that layouts of upper floor levels include bathrooms at those potential window locations and agreed to explore further.

Applicant requested ability to move forward with proposed front façade rehabilitation. Mr. Chambers responded that HCC could support proposed storefront revisions with replacement Kawneer assembly; however, Applicant should explore various suggestions about upper-level windows (simplified trim, double-hung look with applied muntins, modified openings, potential for third bay) and return to HCC with results. Mr. Chambers continued by expressing inability to consider proposed EIFS façade treatment as appropriate based on relevant design guidelines and encouraged Applicant to explore other options before returning to HCC for subsequent discussions. Applicant countered that EIFS already exists within historic district. Mr. Lader explained that HCC recently approved EIFS applied to upper-level façades on large-scale development projects of 5+ stories that avoids direct contact with passersby and perception from public right-of-way below. Applicant suggested to apply traditional façade treatment initial 36-inches onto existing storefront, with EIFS above. Mr. Lader explained that not only EIFS but also various foam and plastic materials currently proposed for front façade are considered inappropriate; encouraged Applicant to

consider Historic Officer's suggestions for appropriate façade materials within historic district, including masonry, stucco, wood and potentially composite materials.

Public Commentary: none

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

1. The proposal to rehabilitate the front façade was presented by Hasnain Ilyas and Joseph Ari.
2. Appropriate details for replacement storefront include new Kawneer aluminum storefront assembly in anodized bronze color; glazing is not tinted, mirrored or reflective. **Note:** Applicant agreed to submit detailed scale drawing of aluminum and glass storefront that includes critical dimensions of all components along with written specifications and product sample via City of Bethlehem for final review by Chief Building Inspector, Historic Officer and HCC Chair prior to fabrication and installation.

Applicant was encouraged to return for subsequent HCC assessment of such items as façade materials that are not foam or plastic, simplified details for mouldings at upper-level windows along with proposed window types, written specifications for proposed lighting fixtures, more detailed information about proposed signage, etc.

The motion for the proposed work was unanimously approved.

Agenda Item #4

Property Location: 330 East Fourth Street

Property Owner: Nabila Youssef

Applicant: Factory39

Building Description, Period, Style, and Defining Features: This structure, located at the corner of Polk Street and East Fourth Street, is a detached 2-½-story, 3-bay, brick masonry and stucco dwelling with a front facing gable, small arched windows in the front gable, large roof dormers on the east and west with paired double-hung windows, built-in gutters, and a wide, yellow brick partially enclosed front porch with clay tile roof. The main house dates from ca. 1890, includes 1-over-1 double-hung windows and is Classical Revival in style. An earlier wood-frame front porch was replaced ca. 1920 with a brick masonry porch that is Spanish Revival in style, with brick arches supported by masonry piers, a brick balustrade and a clay tile roof. The house has a low concrete wall on both street fronts but has lost the associated wrought iron fence over time. The large, detached, single-story, multi-bay, brick masonry garage with flat roof located at the rear of the property is considered non-contributing to the Historic Conservation District because it was constructed after the district's period of significance (1885-1950) when South Bethlehem experienced dramatic development.

Proposed Alterations: The Applicant proposes to construct a new mixed-use building, with one commercial space and four dwelling units.

Guideline Citations:

- **Secretary of the Interior's Standard (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.

- **Historic Conservation Commission** -- relevant Design Guidelines for new construction

Evaluation, Effect on Historic Conservation District, Recommendations: COA Application indicates intent to construct new mixed-use building, with one commercial space at entrance level and four upper-level dwelling units. Current Applicant appeared during April 20, 2026, HCC meeting for assessment of slightly modified design from previous Applicant's proposal, noting existing Certificate of Appropriateness already allows for "demolition of existing single-family dwelling in order to construct 3 1/2-story mixed-use structure, with commercial space on first floor and four 2-bedroom dwelling units above, along with removal of existing rear garage structure". In response, proposed replacement structure must be assessed according to Secretary of Interior's Standards concerning new construction as well as relevant Design Guidelines which encourage new construction that "(preserves) cohesive ambiance of ... District with compatible, sympathetic, and contemporary construction, ... (matches) setbacks of adjacent buildings on streetscape and (has) compatible siting, proportion, (size and) scale, form, materials, fenestration, roof configuration, details and finishes". Following initial review of revised design proposal, HCC unanimously adopted proposal to table any decision so that Applicant could address requested revisions, including but not limited to: building setback to match setbacks of neighboring structures along this specific block; revised cladding materials; additional windows at rear (south) façade; alternative roof forms and reduction in finished floor heights at all floor levels, with desire to lower overall building height; creation of front plaza at commercial storefront that does not conflict with sight triangle.

Applicant now returns to HCC with slightly revised design for proposed new construction that is 3 1/2-stories tall and measures approximately 35-feet wide x 56.5-feet deep, which is similar in width but significantly deeper than adjacent dwellings along East Fourth Street. Provided scale drawings indicate that soffit height of proposed structure is approximately 30-feet, and peak of hip roof is approximately 40-feet, which is somewhat taller than 2 1/2-story historic structures along 300 block of East Fourth Street but reflects decrease in height from previous gable roof. Current design includes western building segment that aligns with setback of neighboring structure while eastern building segment steps forward as reference to existing front porch; upper floor levels cantilever 36-inches out over entry level to provide shelter for customers entering and exiting commercial tenant space. Supplemental drawing of proposed design within context of neighboring structures on Drawing Sheet A-3 is also helpful for comparison.

Provided scale drawings begin to address such design concerns as proposed materials (brick, lap siding, asphalt roof shingles) and fenestration (storefronts, 6-over-1 double-hung windows). Supplemental sheet of proposed materials indicates proposed selection of Glen-Gery "56-DD Red Brick". According to company website, this is molded thin-brick veneer which could be considered appropriate, pending HCC inspection of actual product and clarification about intended mortar joint color. Proposed lap siding is "Hardie Board" fiber cement cladding. Though not specifically mentioned within relevant Design Guidelines, HCC traditionally considers fiber cement cladding as appropriate as long as exposure is 7-inches and there is no stamped (fake wood) texture but rather smooth paintable surface. Proposed "slate-look" roof cladding appears to be so-called "Architectural" asphalt shingles, which is considered inappropriate within Historic Conservation District. As alternative to slate shingles, HCC traditionally considers GAF Slateline asphalt shingles in Antique Gray color as appropriate, with all open valleys (not woven closed) flashed with copper. There is also representation of proposed "corbel and structural brackets" and Applicant previously noted that upper brackets are decorative and fabricated from composite material while lower brackets are structural and fabricated from wood. Decorative brackets beneath eaves at select locations appropriately recall similar details of nearby contributing structures; however, detailed drawing with critical dimensions, etc. and product samples are appreciated to help determine appropriateness.

Design features such as windows that align vertically are appropriate. Per recent HCC recommendation, Applicant now includes two windows at each floor level of rear (south) façade. Proposed windows appear to be 6-over-1 double-hung; select windows at east and west (side) façades include packaged terminal air conditioners (PTAC) with integrated grilles beneath. There is no indication of intended window manufacturer or type, so clarifications along with written specifications and product samples are needed before appropriateness can be determined. If divided lites are not actual but simulated, Applicant should be aware that muntins must be installed on exterior window surfaces. Proposed window trims should be modified so that windowsills appropriately extend on either side beyond all window openings. Proposed storefront assemblies at entry level include such appropriate details as lower apron, shop windows and full-lite

entrance door, transoms with divided lites, etc.; however, there is no indication of traditional sign band above storefront that allows for signage of future commercial tenants, which can be remedied by raising height of lower cornice to underside of 2nd floor-level windows. One significant revision to previous design proposal is inclusion of paved seating area between western storefront and public right-of-way. Supplemental drawing indicating size, scale and proposed materials of so-called "sitting wall" would be appreciated for subsequent HCC assessment to help discern appropriateness. Applicant's subsequent reviews with HCC should also include written product specifications and cut sheets as well as actual samples of all proposed materials. Similarly, proposed storefront assemblies at front (north) façade as well as paneled door at rear (south) façade require clarifications about proposed materials before appropriateness can be determined. Applicant should also confirm that all intended glazing is not tinted, mirrored or reflective.

In addition, proposed materials for porch posts, porch roof cladding, stair assembly and handrails at rear (south) façade require clarification before appropriateness can be determined. There is no indication of proposed gutters and downspouts; however, Applicant should be aware that appropriate gutters are smooth metal half-round, and downspouts are smooth metal round within Historic Conservation District. Applicant is also encouraged to review relevant Design Guidelines for suggestions of appropriate signage and exterior lighting within Historic Conservation District in preparation for future HCC assessments.

Discussion: Dominick Gurreri and Eric Reidlinger represented proposal to construct new mixed-use building, with one commercial space at entry level and four upper-level dwelling units. Applicant explained many helpful suggestions made during previous HCC meeting were integrated into revised development project. In response to introductory comments by Historic Officer, Applicant clarified that proposed bricks are not thin-brick veneer but actual brick units; similarly, intended roof shingles are GAF Slateline asphalt shingles in Antique Gray color rather than architectural shingles depicted in supplemental materials. Mr. Lader expressed appreciation to Applicant for integrating various recommendations by HCC into overall project and encouraged Applicant to elaborate. Applicant noted that front of new building aligns with setbacks of neighboring structures while front wall of proposed patio aligns with porches of neighbors while also respecting sight triangle at traffic intersection. Applicant called attention to incorporation of windows at rear to animate that façade while previous gable roof was reinterpreted as hip roof to reduce overall building height and now approaches scale of neighboring structures. Mr. Lader inquired if Applicant explored changing to low-sloping roof and terminating front façade as flat parapet ... similar to neighboring structure at east across Polk Street. Applicant noted while many structures across Polk Street terminate in flat parapets all structures along this block of East Third Street are single- and double-residential structures, so preference is for residential rather than commercial roof style. Mr. Lader inquired about proposed materials for new patio wall. Applicant noted that existing retaining walls are concrete masonry, so initial thought is to replace in-kind but with piers at corners and openings. Mr. Lader suggested parging exterior surfaces of concrete walls rather than leaving raw but also recommended Applicant to explore brick as appropriate alternative that represents continuity of similar brick walls along this block. Mr. Simonson inquired about height of proposed "sitting wall"; Applicant responded that proposed wall is 18-inches to match height of existing, with piers that extend 12-18 inches higher.

Mr. Lader encouraged Applicant to explore raising cornice above commercial storefront to allow for traditional sign band; Applicant explained that upper-level façade cantilevers out over entry-level façade, so lower cornice intentionally terminates beneath that cantilever. Historic Officer confirmed that his comment about this topic omitted proposed overhang, so suggestion to raise lower cornice would not be successful. In response, Applicant suggested that double-sided blade sign at northeast corner of building façade would be appropriate alternative to traditional sign band. Mr. Evans welcomed potential for corner blade sign, recalling several similar successful signs elsewhere within Historic Conservation District.

Mr. Simonson inquired if Applicant intends to apply for variance to typical ADA compliance for access inside. Applicant responded that left (east) commercial storefront is entered on-grade, so ADA-compliance is satisfied. Mr. Chambers inquired if upper-level residential units are ADA-compliant. Applicant confirmed they are not compliant ... noting that stairs are used to access up to entry-level rear entrance from parking lot and then residents must navigate additional interior stairs up to upper residential floor levels.

Mr. Lader expressed appreciation for integration of windows at rear façade within revised design proposal; reminded Applicant that simulated muntins should be applied to exterior glazed surfaces. Applicant inquired

if proposed 6-over-1 double-hung sash are appropriate; Mr. Lader responded that proposed sash coordinate well with Craftsman Style detailing elsewhere. Applicant expressed appreciation for various HCC comments and requested approval of overall development project, with understanding for need to return with more specifics about various materials. Mr. Chambers suggested that Applicant could secure recommendation for approval of overall project but should be prepared to return for subsequent HCC assessments of written specifications and material samples of proposed building products, such as brick and mortar types and colors, storefront assembly, façade cladding, windows and PTAC grilles, gutters and downspouts, various trims, etc.

Public Commentary: none

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

1. The proposal to construct a new mixed-use building, with one commercial space and four dwelling units, was presented by Dominick Gurreri and Eric Reidlinger.
2. Appropriate details of replacement structure include:
 - a. new construction is 3 ½-stories tall and measures approximately 35-feet wide x 56.5-feet deep
 - b. soffit is approximately 30-feet high, and peak of hip roof is approximately 40-feet high
 - c. includes western building segment that aligns with setback of neighboring structure while eastern building segment steps forward as reference to existing front porch; upper floor levels cantilever 36-inches out over entry level at front façade

Note: Applicant agreed to return to HCC with written specifications and materials samples of various proposed building products for subsequent assessment.

The motion for the proposed work was unanimously approved.

Agenda Item #5

Property Location: 211 Mechanic Street

Property Owner: Scott Bartkus, 210 East Third Street, LLC

Applicant: Brett Webber, Brett Webber Architects

Building Description, Period, Style, and Defining Features: This structure is a 2-story, 4-bay, semi-detached, brick and concrete block masonry, mixed-use residential and commercial building with a low-slope roof. The building dates from ca. 1915 and originally served as storage for a hardware and appliance store on the same lot but facing East Third Street. Two segmental arch window openings on the upper floor level of the main (south) façade as well as two segmental arch window openings on the entry floor level of the side (east) façade are representative features from that period. Buildings on either side have been demolished over time, revealing brick masonry party walls at the west and east façades that were never intended to be exposed. The side (west) façade has been partially painted dark orange while the main (south) façade has been painted bright white. Masonry and wood frame additions connect this structure to the main commercial building facing East Third Street. Many architectural features have been lost over time, so it can no longer be identified by a defining style.

Proposed Alterations: The Applicant proposes to rehabilitate the building façades.

Guideline Citations:

- **Secretary of the Interior's Standard (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** -- see Agenda Item 2

- **Historic Conservation Commission ‘Design Guidelines’** -- relevant pages concerning Masonry

Evaluation, Effect on Historic Conservation District, Recommendations: COA Application indicates intent to rehabilitate existing structure to accommodate two commercial tenants at entry level and two residential units at upper floor level. Applicant initially appeared before HCC during March 16, 2026, meeting with proposal to paint all façades for uniform exterior appearance; associated COA Application also mentioned replacing select windows and doors. During resulting discussion, Applicant noted desire to amend original proposal with more comprehensive rehabilitation including: replacement windows and doors; new folding glass wall within existing garage bay; infilling masonry walls as needed; applying exterior stucco finish to each façade to unify entire building envelope. All parties mutually agreed that no action would be taken; instead, Applicant was complimented for rehabilitation vision and encouraged to submit new COA Application for assessment during future HCC meeting. Current COA Application and supplemental drawings reflect Applicant’s response to that suggestion.

Proposal to apply new 3-coat stucco finish onto existing exposed brick walls at both side (east and west) façades is appropriate, pending clarification that finish coat includes intended pigment rather than painting exterior walls thereafter. Similarly, proposal to “repair/replace existing stucco” at rear (north) façade is appropriate, pending clarification that new final pigmented coat will be applied to all surfaces for uniform appearance. Drawing A-301-1 of front (south) façade includes mention of “stucco on masonry” but is unclear if existing is to remain or if new final pigmented coat and/or new 3-coat stucco finish for overall uniform appearance is intended, so clarification is warranted before appropriateness can be determined.

Drawing A-301-1 includes notation about new half-round metal gutter and smooth metal round downspouts, which are appropriate; finish “to match finish of window system”.

Drawing A-301-1 includes mention of “new double-hung windows” and depicts two new 2-over-2 sash at right portion of upper-level facade, which replicate configuration of two existing windows at left portion of upper-level façade. Proposed windows are potentially appropriate, pending submittal of written specifications and (preferably) product samples to assess proposed materials, factory-applied finish, exterior-applied muntins, etc. It is unclear from provided drawings if other window locations at side (east) and rear (north) façades will also receive similar replacement windows, so clarification is warranted.

Drawing A-301-1 also includes depiction of “operable 3-panel aluminum storefront at existing garage opening”. HCC previously determined similar folding storefronts in existing garage openings as inappropriate within Historic Conservation District ... preferring system that rises vertically with horizontal divisions that mimic traditional garage doors ... so discussion is warranted. Should HCC determine current proposal as appropriate, Applicant should provide written specifications and (preferably) product sample for final review. Located above each garage door segment is “surface mounted LED downlight fixtures with deep snoot”; without associated written specifications and product sample, appropriateness of proposed fixture is not possible. Applicant should be aware that relevant design guidelines encourage “warm” exterior illumination within Historic Conservation District, so HCC interprets “warm” for LED lighting as maximum 3000-Kelvin color temperature. Applicant should also confirm that no raceways, junction boxes or conduits associated with proposed lighting are visible on building façade.

Same drawing includes mention of “Apartment tenant entrance solid painted door with upper lite clear glazed” for new door leading up to residential units at upper floor level; however, depiction includes 2-panel configuration with transom above and fails to mention proposed door material, so clarification is warranted ... preferably with written specifications and product sample for final review. Same drawing depicts “Commercial Tenant A Entrance” and “Commercial Tenant B” entrance doors but offers no details about proposed materials, so discussion is warranted before appropriateness can be determined.

Drawing A-301-2 depicts several replacement doors at rear (north) façade but offers limited details, no written specifications or product samples, so discussion is warranted.

For proposed replacement windows and doors, Applicant should confirm that all intended glazing is not tinted, mirrored or reflective to be appropriate within Historic Conservation District.

Drawing A-301-2 also depicts “new metal railing system at rooftop deck keylink pre-engineered cable rail system”; written specifications and products samples are appreciated before appropriateness can be determined. Same drawing also mentions “Greenscreen mesh panel attached to steel framed stair”; relevant HCC design guidelines do not mention “greenscreen mesh panels” as appropriate within Historic

Conservation District, so discussion is warranted before appropriateness can be determined. Same drawing also includes outline depiction of new exterior stair that will serve as secondary means of egress from upper floor level; however, drawing offers little detail about proposed stair and no written specifications are provided, so discussion is warranted before appropriateness can be determined.

Discussion: Scott Bartkus and Brett Webber represented proposal to rehabilitate building façades.

Applicant confirmed intention to re-stucco entire structure after removing areas of loose stucco and conducting needed repairs before applying final coat for overall uniform appearance. Applicant noted that new doors into both entry-level tenant locations match proposed 3-panel aluminum folding storefront proposed for existing garage opening; continued that new door leading up to upper-level residential units is solid 2-panel door and appreciated Historic Officer's suggestion that upper lite not be part of door but rather fixed transom. Applicant suggested that all replacement windows are Marvin Elevate Collection fiberglass windows, with metallic gray factory-applied finish and exterior applied simulated muntins; proposed half-round metal gutters and smooth round metal downspouts will match metallic gray color.

Mr. Evans inquired if proposed replacement doors have flush fronts; Applicant clarified that proposed aluminum doors leading into commercial spaces have full lites to match full-lite segments of folding storefront assembly within existing garage door opening, with door leading into right (eastern) commercial space integrated into folding storefront. Mr. Evans inquired if all existing windows will be replaced; Applicant responded that current proposal includes replacement windows except for two at side (east) façade facing parking lot but will now consider replacing those as well for overall uniform appearance.

Applicant confirmed that LED bulbs within proposed lighting fixtures will be max. 3000K in color temperature and agreed to submit details of proposed fixtures for future HCC consideration. Applicant also agreed to provide written specifications and, where possible, samples of proposed new metal railing system at rooftop deck and greenscreen mesh panel intended for steel framed egress stair at rear (north) façade. Applicant continued that proposed greenscreen is two-sided independent structure that provides framework for plantings to grow through (often seen on parking garages) attached onto weathering steel (galvanized, corten, etc.) that fits well within urban context.

Mr. Chambers expressed appreciation for Applicant's utilitarian approach for contemporary aesthetic that fits well within existing urban setting; continued with support of proposed folding storefront that also relates well with utilitarian context. Mr. Evans clarified that HCC's concerns with previous similar proposal included garage door opening within specific historical context (former firehouse) with proposed folding door system that "did not come close to what was there before"; continued by agreeing this structure and current proposal is very different situation and worthy of consideration. Mr. Simonson cautioned that proposed folding doors might impede public right-of-way when opened; Applicant responded that proposed door system "folds inside" and will not extend outside. Mr. Simonson noted similar caution that outdoor dining furniture cannot impede public right-of-way.

Applicant concluded with request to secure HCC support of overall concept, with intention of returning for subsequent HCC assessment of proposed doors, windows, fixtures and various materials.

Public Commentary: none

Motion: The Commission upon motion by Mr. Chambers 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 herein:

1. The proposal to rehabilitate all building façades was presented by Scott Bartkus and Brett Webber.
2. Appropriate details for façade rehabilitation include re-stuccoing entire structure after removing areas of loose stucco and conducting needed repairs before applying final coat for overall uniform appearance.

Note: Applicant agreed to return to HCC with written specifications and materials samples of various proposed building products for subsequent assessment, including but not limited to: folding storefront assembly, exterior doors, windows, lighting fixtures, metal railing system, greenscreen mesh panel system.

The motion for the proposed work was unanimously approved.

General Business:

Minutes from HCC meeting on April 20, 2026, were approved by those attending that meeting, and with abstention by those not previously in attendance.

Mr. Evans inquired about status of new commercial tenant at 306 Brodhead Avenue, noting that customers often park on public sidewalk. Mr. Simonson responded that inappropriate signage within sign band was previously removed while vinyl signage within storefronts remains; continued that tenant is aware of need for HCC assessment of various signage, with potential to remove and/or replace, as needed.

There was no further business; meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



BY:

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