
M I N U T E S

BOARD: HISTORIC CONSERVATION COMMISSION, CITY OF BETHLEHEM

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: TODD CHAMBERS

STAFF PRESENT: JEFFREY LONG (HISTORIC OFFICER)

PRESS PRESENT: NONE

VISITORS PRESENT: ANTHONY VALDEZ, KEVIN WENCK, CONSTANTINE ZANNAKIS

MEETING DATE: FEBRUARY 24, 2025

The regular meeting of the Historic Conservation Commission (HCC) was held on February 24, 2025, in Room A-100 of 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: 306 South New Street

Property Owner: Greenway I, Inc.

Applicant: The Barbecue Boys, LLC

Building Description, Period, Style, and Defining Features: Construction of this semi-detached 6-story commercial building located on the corner of South New Street and West Third Street was initiated in 2016 and it is Contemporary in style. The primary facades on both streets include glass and aluminum storefronts at the street level, are clad in brick on the second through fourth floors, while the upper-most floor levels and the corner are clad in glass and metal panels. The façade of the sixth floor is set back and has a thin projecting roof, creating an open-air terrace along the north and east facades. As a reminder, HCC is mandated with preserving structures dating from the designated era of the Historic Conservation District (ca. 1895 - 1950); thus, this building is not considered significant to the District.

Proposed Alterations: The Applicant proposes to install a new illuminated wall sign and to add a business logo and operational hours to the entrance door.

Guideline Citations:

- **Bethlehem Ordinance - Article 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'**-- Care should be taken in mounting signs to minimize damage to materials. This includes reusing hardware or brackets from previous signs. Design Guidelines continue (p. 3) that HCC "will not recommend for approval aluminum sign boxes with internal ... lights and translucent sign faces".

Evaluation, Effect on Historic Conservation District, Recommendations: COA Application indicates intent to install new signage onto existing sign band and also onto glazed entrance door for new commercial tenant; scale drawing of proposed signage with elevation view of front façade (as required on COA Application) is not included, so Application is incomplete.

Provided graphics indicate existing signage at sign band centered above recessed entrance will be replaced with internally illuminated sign cabinet fabricated from 0.125-inch routed aluminum face with 1/2-

inch-thick white acrylic push-through letters; only letters will be illuminated. Angle aluminum frame to be installed using masonry bolts into existing sign band includes hinge at top for servicing. Proposed white LED lighting on inside surface of cabinet is 6500K color temperature. Letters in bright white color spell out "BARBEQUE BOYS" in large, bold, all uppercase serif lettering in so-called 'College' font; 1/2-inch-thick offset pinstripe detail in bright white color serves as border around sign. Sign measures 28-inches high x 144-inches wide, which matches dimensions of existing sign; thickness of sign cabinet is 4-inches. Installation of modern lettering on Contemporary style structure is appropriate; proposed offset pinstripe detail as border around sign is also appropriate. HCC traditionally encourages use of warm white or ivory instead of bright white color, so discussion is warranted. One notation on provided supplemental drawing indicates body and face of new sign to be painted "bronze" while another notation indicates "cool grey" as proposed color, so clarification is warranted. Installing new signage that matches dimensions of existing sign is appropriate; Applicant should strive to use existing mounting locations for replacement sign to avoid unnecessary damage to sign band. According to relevant Guidelines for Signage, aluminum sign boxes with internal lights and translucent sign faces are inappropriate within Historic Conservation District; Applicant should consider flat sign on rigid backer with no internal illumination (similar to existing signage) as appropriate alternative. Should HCC determine proposed sign box as appropriate after discussing with Applicant, internal LED illumination should be limited to maximum 3000K color temperature in satisfaction of design guidelines to use low-wattage warm lightbulbs.

Provided graphics indicate another proposed sign that measures approximate 14-inches tall x 22-inches wide fabricated from vinyl in bright white color to be installed on left glazed entrance door. Top text line includes letters that spell out "BARBEQUE BOYS" in large, bold, all uppercase serif lettering in so-called 'College' font. Centered within second text line are large all uppercase sans-serif letters that spell out "HOURS" while remaining three text lines include hours of operation in sans-serif lettering. Proposed signage is appropriate pending clarification of following details:

- height and width dimensions of existing glazed door panel to confirm that proposed signage indeed fits
- indicate critical dimensions for installing new signage; ex.: top of sign is ??-inches down from top of glazed panel; bottom of sign is ??-inches up from bottom of glazed panel
- confirm vinyl signage will be installed on inside glass surface

Applicant might also consider pinstripe detail similar to proposed wall sign as border around "BARBEQUE BOYS" logo to make it more legible from public right-of-way

Discussion: Kevin Wenck and Constantine Zannakis represented proposal to install new illuminated wall sign and to add business logo and operational hours to entrance door. Applicant confirmed desire for sign box with push-through lettering and LED illumination on inside back surface of box in bright white color to illuminate only lettering and pinstripe border.

Mr. Lader explained HCC considers aluminum sign boxes with internal lights as inappropriate within Historic Conservation District based on relevant design guidelines; continued that HCC encourages back-lit pin-mounted letters resulting in halo effect as appropriate alternative. Applicant offered sample sign to illustrate that only push-through letters will be illuminated by internal lights while remaining surfaces of box sign are solid and not translucent. Mr. Evans appreciated Applicant's provided sample, noting difference between typical box signs identified within design guidelines ... with front panels that are fully translucent and easily changed out with new panels; in contrast, Applicant's proposal is solid box with only punch-through letters that glow when illuminated. Mr. Lader requested additional clarification; Applicant noted that front face of sign is routed out and letters are pushed through, resulting in solid background and translucent lettering that reads "BARBEQUE BOYS" while pinstripe border is also translucent. Applicant continued by expressing concern that maximum 3000K color temperature illumination is too "yellow" for intended purpose ... especially when mounted to back inside surface of box ... and might not offer sufficient illumination for letters to read. Mr. Evans inquired if proposed 4-inch thickness of sign box can be reduced; Applicant explained that 4-inch dimension represents minimum space needed between LED bulbs on inside back surface of box and push-through acrylic letters for proper illumination. Mr. Evans continued by inquiring if proposed box sign is appropriate for larger scale signage; Applicant explained this type of box sign can be used for all scales of signage, noting currently used elsewhere for small bodegas, etc. Applicant continued that proposed sign has same dimensions as existing signage and confirmed intent to use existing hanging

brackets, so no traces of former sign will be visible after installation. Ms. Strasser requested clarification about proposed colors; Applicant confirmed 'PMS Cool Grey 11' is intended for signage background to closely match color of existing sign band while push-through letters and pinstripe border will be perceived as white in color during daytime and translucent at night.

Mr. Simonson inquired if Applicant is willing to incorporate suggested pinstripe detail around logo in glazed panel to match wall sign and also if vinyl signage is applied to inside glass surface; Applicant appreciated suggestion to include pinstripe detail around logo and confirmed that vinyl signage will be applied to inside glass surface. Applicant agreed to provide requested dimensions of glazed panel entrance door via City's planning office to confirm that proposed door signage fits. **Notes:** Applicant confirmed on Feb. 25 that glazed panel measures 87-inches tall x 30-inches wide, so proposed signage fits; also confirmed that top of sign is installed approximately 21.5-inches down from top of glazed panel and bottom of sign is installed approximately 44-inches from bottom of glazed panel.

Public Commentary: none

Motion: The Commission upon motion by Mr. Evans 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 install a new illuminated wall sign and to add a business logo and operational hours to the entrance door was presented by Kevin Wenck and Constantine Zannakis.
2. Appropriate details for a new illuminated wall sign include:
 - a. signage installed at existing sign band is centered above recessed entrance
 - b. internally illuminated sign cabinet is fabricated from 0.125-inch routed aluminum face with 1/2-inch-thick white acrylic push-through letters; only letters and pinstripe border will be illuminated
 - c. new sign measures 28-inches high x 144-inches wide, which matches dimensions of existing sign; thickness of sign cabinet is 4-inches
 - d. aluminum frame to be installed using masonry bolts into existing sign band; reuse of existing sign brackets of former signage is encouraged to avoid unnecessary damage
 - e. white LED lighting on inside surface of cabinet is maximum 6000K in color temperature; **note:** no conduits, raceways or junction boxes are visible at front façade
 - f. letters in bright white color spell out "BARBEQUE BOYS" in large, bold, all uppercase serif lettering in so-called 'College' font; 1/2-inch-thick offset pinstripe detail in bright white color serves as border around sign
 - g. sign face and remaining surfaces are 'PMS Cool Grey 11' to match color of existing sign band while push-through letters and pinstripe surround will be perceived as white in color during daytime and translucent at night
3. Appropriate details for new signage at the left glazed entrance door include:
 - a. sign measures approximately 14-inches tall x 22-inches wide; fabricated from vinyl in bright white color and installed on inside surface of left glazed entrance door
 - b. top text line includes letters that spell out "BARBEQUE BOYS" in large, bold, all uppercase serif lettering in so-called 'College' font; Applicant has option to include pinstripe detail as frame around logo to match new wall sign
 - c. centered within second text line are large all uppercase sans-serif letters that spell out "HOURS"
 - d. remaining three text lines include hours of operation in sans-serif lettering
 - e. top of sign is installed approximately 21.5-inches down from top of glazed panel; bottom of sign is installed approximately 44-inches from bottom of glazed panel

The motion for the proposed work was unanimously approved.

Agenda Item #2

Property Location: 15 East Fourth Street

Property Owner: Jea ill Chung

Applicant: Anthony Valdez

Building Description, Period, Style, and Defining Features: This structure is a 3-story, 3-bay, semi-detached masonry commercial and residential building with a flat roof. Constructed ca. 1880, the building was originally Italianate in style, as evidenced by the detailed upper cornice; however, many original defining features were lost when exposed façades were treated with a stucco veneer and given an etched pattern (often referred to as "Brickote") in imitation cast stone in a medium gray color during the mid-20th century. A recessed entrance door with divided lites leads to upper-level residential units while a glazed entrance door, a large shop window and an awning associated with the entry-level business location are more recent renovations.

Proposed Alterations: The Applicant proposes to replace the existing awning cover and also to replace existing window signage with a new logo.

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 - Article 1714.03 Purposes of Historic Conservation District** -- see Agenda Item 1.
- **Historic Conservation Commission 'Guidelines for Signage'** -- see Agenda Item 1

Evaluation, Effect on Historic Conservation District, Recommendations: COA Application indicates intent to install new cover on existing awning and to install new signage in shop window for new commercial tenant; scale drawing of proposed signage with elevation view of front façade (as required on COA Application) is not included, so Application is incomplete.

According to supplemental photomontage, existing awning measures 169-inches wide and extends out 52-inches from building façade; front flap measures 10-inches tall while overall awning height is not indicated. Proposed awning bed includes series of alternating green and bright white stripes while front flap is only bright white in color. Front flap includes text line measuring 5-inches tall x 90-inches wide that reads "LA KANG CHICKEN & RICE" in all uppercase serif lettering followed by subsequent text line measuring 2 1/2-inches tall x 27 1/2-inches wide that reads "Thai Restaurant" in smaller serif lettering; all letters are green in color to match green awning stripe. Relevant design guidelines note that appropriate awnings within Historic Conservation District are made of canvas, so Applicant's proposal for awning of "acrylic material" is inappropriate and should be reconsidered. Applicant should also confirm that replacement cover is appropriately open on both ends. HCC traditionally encourages warm white or ivory rather than bright white color within Historic Conservation District, so discussion is warranted; otherwise, remaining details of proposed awning cover are appropriate.

According to supplemental photomontage, existing shop window measures 70-inches tall x 63 1/2-inches wide while proposed signage measures 48-inches tall x 24-inches wide; signage will be centered vertically and horizontally within existing window. Sign includes text line near top that reads "LA KANG" in large, bold, all uppercase, serif lettering in bright white color; near bottom of sign is text line that reads "CHICKEN" followed by subsequent text line that reads "RICE" ... all in bold but smaller all uppercase serif lettering, also in bright white color. Centered between upper and lower text lines is depiction of rooster in shades of red, brown and blue colors. All four corners of proposed design include filigree detail in warm white or ivory color that serves as implied frame around sign. Applicant should confirm that sign is fabricated from vinyl and will be installed on inside glass surface; otherwise, details of proposed window signage are appropriate.

Discussion: Anthony Valdez represented proposal to replace existing awning cover and also to replace existing window signage with new logo. Applicant explained that existing awning cover is acrylic and

includes side panels, so original intent was to replace with similar acrylic cover with side panels but is amenable to canvas fabric and no side panels. Mr. Evans noted that HCC encourages Sunbrella brand (or comparable) fabric awnings which tend not to fade over time. Mr. Simonson inquired if Applicant is amendable to warm white or ivory stripes as more appropriate alternative to proposed bright white color. Applicant inquired if proposed green color for alternating stripes should also be revised. Mr. Evans noted that HCC does not dictate specific colors but clarified that bright white colors tends to look dirty soon after installing while warmer white colors do not show dirt over time. Applicant was amenable to warm white or ivory color as alternative to proposed bright white color. Mr. Evans expressed concern that lettering on front flap might be too "crowded" upon review of provided photomontage; continued that Applicant might consider omitting smaller text line and making larger text line even larger to better "read" for those walking or driving by. Mr. Lader agreed, noting that Applicant might wish to omit "LA KANG" on front flap because that will also appear on shop window; continued that "Thai Restaurant" might be sufficient text line for front flap. Applicant explained "LA KANG" represents corporate name for several other restaurant locations, so that detail is important for consistency and requested time to consider suggestions. Mr. Evans agreed that resulting motion should include language that allows Applicant to consider design options before submitting for final review by relevant parties.

Mr. Simonson inquired if proposed window sticker is fabricated from vinyl, with preference to install on inside surface of shop window; Applicant confirmed that window sticker is fabricated from vinyl and will be installed on inside of glass surface. Mr. Simonson continued by inquiring about remaining area of shop window depicted in black color on provided photomontage; Applicant explained that areas beyond proposed signage indicated in black color are clear and do not receive any window sticker. Mr. Simonson inquired if Applicant might consider warm white or ivory color as appropriate alternative to proposed bright white color and also inquired if Applicant intends to install operational hours on glazed entrance door. Applicant was amendable to warm white or ivory color and does not intend to install operational hours on glazed door or within shop window; also confirmed that sticker is centered vertically and horizontally within shop window. Applicant noted that "Established 2025" in small lettering will also appear beneath rooster graphics, aligned with bottom of filigree detail.

Public Commentary: none

Motion: The Commission upon motion by Mr. Simonson and seconded by Mr. Lader 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 replace the existing awning cover and also to replace existing window signage with a new logo was presented by Anthony Valdez.
2. Appropriate details for the replacement awning cover include:
 - a. existing awning measures 169-inches wide and extends out 52-inches from building façade; front flap measures 10-inches tall
 - b. replacement cover includes series of alternating dark green and warm white stripes while front flap is warm white in color; fabric is Sunbrella (or comparable) canvas and both sides are open

Note: Applicant agreed to submit revised design for lettering on front awning flap via City of Bethlehem Planning Office for final review by Chief Building Inspector, Historic Officer and HCC Chair before resulting permit is issued.

3. Appropriate details for new window signage include:
 - a. vinyl sign measures 48-inches tall x 24-inches wide; installation is centered vertically and horizontally within existing window on inside glass surface
 - b. sign includes text line near top that reads "LA KANG" in large, bold, all uppercase, serif lettering in warm white color; near bottom of sign is text line that reads "CHICKEN" followed by subsequent text line that reads "RICE" ... all in bold but smaller all uppercase serif lettering, also in warm white color
 - c. centered between upper and lower text lines is depiction of rooster in shades of red, brown and blue colors

- d. all four corners of design include filigree detail in warm white color that serves as implied frame around sign; small serif lettering that reads "Established 2025" aligns with bottom filigree detail

The motion for the proposed work was unanimously approved.

General Business:

Minutes from HCC meeting on January 27, 2025, were approved by those attending that meeting, and with abstention by those not previously in attendance.

There was no further business; HCC meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



BY:

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