



Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

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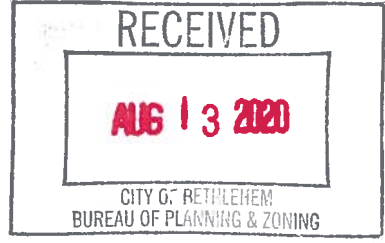
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Planning for the Future of Lehigh and Northampton Counties at 961 Marcon Blvd., Ste 310, Allentown, PA 18109 ■ (610) 264-4544 ■ lvpc@lvpc.org ■ www.lvpc.org

August 11, 2020

Darlene Heller, AICP
Director of Planning and Zoning
10 East Church Street
Bethlehem, PA 18018



**RE: Zoning Ordinance Amendment –
Grocery Store Use in Institutional (I) Zoning District
City of Bethlehem
Northampton County**

Dear Ms. Heller:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) will consider the subject amendment at its Comprehensive Planning Committee and Full Commission meetings, pursuant to the requirements of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). Discussion on agenda items largely happens during the Committee meeting. Both meetings are virtual, please see the meeting details below to attend. The LVPC will issue a follow-up letter after the Commission meeting should the Commission have any additional comments.

- LVPC Comprehensive Planning Committee Meeting
 - August 25, 2020 at 12:00 PM
 - Access via Web: <http://tiny.cc/CP0825>
 - Call-in Number: 1-872-222-9976
 - Conference ID: 594 791 690#
- LVPC Full Commission Meeting
 - August 27, 2020 at 7:00 PM
 - Access via Web: <http://tiny.cc/LVPC0827>
 - Call-in Number: 1-872-222-9976
 - Conference ID: 730 800 790#

The proposed zoning ordinance amendment considers the introduction of a 'grocery store' use in the Institutional (I) Zoning District. The petitioner requested the proposed amendment in conjunction with the possible future construction of a grocery store at 1838 Center Street.

The draft ordinance has the potential to 'encourage land use regulations to facilitate development in Centers and along Corridors' (of Policy 4.5) should appropriate accommodations be made in the proposal. However, as presented the proposal is generally inconsistent with the County Comprehensive Plan, *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, because it proposes the introduction of a 'grocery store' use in the Institutional (I) Zoning District throughout the municipality, which is inconsistent with the intent of the zoning district and because by-right commercial development in the District does not adequately 'guide the location and intensity of development' (of Policy 1.1).

The LVPC recommends that *if* the City further considers the proposed use in the Institutional (I) Zoning District that thorough evaluation and suitable measures be taken to provide for extensive conditions subject to development to 'promote context-specific design solutions' (of Policy 5.4); ensure it is supportive of pedestrian-scale development (of Policy 1.2); 'enhance the character and economic viability of cultural and historic assets' (of Policy 4.1) in the City; and 'ensure equitable access to fresh food and produce' (of Policy 5.3).

If you have any additional questions regarding the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to call. Kindly send a copy of the final amended zoning ordinance that is adopted by the City Council, per the requirements of the MPC.

Sincerely,



Samantha Smith
Chief Community Planner

cc: Eric Evans, City Administrator

