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**MEETING MINUTES**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD**  
**December 11, 2025**

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MEMBERS PRESENT

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

VISITORS PRESENT

Drew Nyman, Base Engineering Inc.  
Nicholas Youssef  
Joseph Rentko, Black Forest Engineering  
Kevin Horvath P.E., Keystone Consulting Engineers, Inc.  
Victor Scomillio, Esq. Holzinger, Harak & Scomillio  
Rocco Ayvazov, Monocacy General Contracting Real Estate  
Todd Chambers, MKS Architecture  
Daniel Klem, Muhlenberg University  
Kate Durso, Esq. Fitzpatrick, Lentz & Bubba  
Joe Klocek, Lehigh University  
Tom Serpico, Pennoni Associates, Inc.

MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

Matthew Deschler, Solicitor  
Cathy Fletcher, Bureau of Planning & Zoning  
Craig Peiffer, Bureau of Planning & Zoning  
Basel Yandem, Public Works

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The December 11, 2025, meeting of Planning Commission held at the City of Bethlehem Town Hall, was called to order by Chairperson, Robert Melosky at 5:00 PM.

**AGENDA ITEM #1: APPROVAL OF MINUTES November 13, 2025**

**Motion #1:** Ms. Cohen

**Second:** Mr. Pongracz

**Result of Vote:** The motion carried 4-0-1 Mr. Burgos abstained.

**AGENDA ITEM #2: Minor Land Development Plan – Deferral Request**

**Property Location:** 902 East Macada Road

**Property Owner:** St. Thomas United Church of Christ

**Developer/Engineer:** Base Engineering Inc.

**Proposed Work:** The Applicant proposes to expand the parking lot on the southern end, adding 29 new spaces, increasing the count from 61 to 90, and adding 9,574 SF of new impervious coverage. The Applicant seeks a deferral from SALDO Sections 1349.14 and

1349.15 for the installation of concrete sidewalk, curb and driveway apron along the East Macada Road frontage.

**Discussion:** Mr. Nyman gave a brief overview of the proposed plan. Mr. Melosky asked Mr. Peiffer for comments from the City. Mr. Peiffer responded there is a letter in the Commissioner's packets from the City's Engineering Department outlining the reasonings for the deferral request and their support for the deferral. Mr. Melosky asked if the Applicant understood the terms of the deferral. Mr. Nyman stated he understood and agreed.

Mr. Malozi asked if there are any plans to widen East Macada Road. Mr. Yandem responded there are no plans at this time to widen the road.

**There were no comments from the public.**

**Motion #2:** Mr. Pongracz made a motion to approve the sidewalk curbing and apron deferral.

**Second:** Mr. Burgos

**Result of Vote:** The motion carried 4-0. Ms. Cohen recused herself.

### **AGENDA ITEM #3: Land Development Plan**

**Property Location:** 330 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street

**Property Owner:** Nicholas Youssef

**Developer/Engineer:** Joesph Rentko, Black Forest Engineering

**Proposed Work:** The applicant proposes demolishing the existing structures and constructing a 3-story mixed use building with ~1,800 SF of Commercial space on the ground floor and four two-bedroom dwelling units (apartments) on the upper floors; 8 off-street parking spaces and site improvements on a 0.1648 acre or 7,182 SF lot measuring 40' along the front lot line by 179.55' in depth.

**Discussion:** Mr. Rentko gave a brief overview of the proposed plan. The Applicant has received approval from the Historic Conservation Commission for the demolition and approval from the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Rentko explained if the Planning Commission approves the Land Development plan, they will need to go in front of the historic board again for approval to construct the proposed plan.

Mr. Peiffer highlighted points from the City's review letter. Mr. Peiffer also read comments from the letters sent by the EAC and LVPC.

Mr. Rentko talked about parking for the proposed plan and explained the layout of the parking lot. Due to the topographic nature of the lot, the parking lots have been split into two for a total of eight parking spots, one being handicapped. Two spaces are allocated for the retail space on the first floor.

Mr. Melosky asked if the Applicant is willing to comply with all of the comments in the City's review letter. Mr. Rentko stated they are willing to comply with all of the comments.

Mr. Pongracz asked if residents and retailers will use the same entrances. Mr. Rentko explained the entrances will be separate and there will be no disturbances to the residents.

Mr. Malozi asked if any of the parking spaces will be leased for the retail space. Mr. Rentko stated if more than two spaces are needed, then the property owner would lease more spaces for retail. Mr. Malozi asked for clarification on the Zoning Hearing Board's ruling. Mr. Peiffer explained that the Zoning Hearing Board's decision on parking is that there are two spots allocated for retail and if more are needed in the future, the owner of the property must seek more parking options such as leasing more parking spaces.

Mr. Pongracz noted that Polk Street is narrow and is worried that the new retail space will cause more traffic. It was explained that Polk Street is one-way and would not cause more issues with traffic.

**There were no comments from the public.**

**Motion #3:** Mr. Malozi made a motion to approve the Land Development at 330 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street contingent upon the Applicant meeting all of the conditions in the City's November 5, 2025, comment letter.

**Second:** Mr. Burgos

**Result of Vote:** The motion carried 5-0.

#### **AGENDA ITEM #4: Land Development Plan**

**Property Location:** 46-52 West Broad Street

**Property Owner:** 46-52 West Broad Street LLC (Plamen Ayvazov)

**Developer/Engineer:** Kevin J. Horvath, P.E., Keystone Consulting Engineers, Inc.

**Proposed Work:** The Applicant proposes to maintain the existing structure and redevelop it into an experience center; the below grade police training center will remain as-is. To the east of the bank, the applicant proposes to develop the parking lot into a 2,212 SF, two story structure to contain a Commercial Restaurant (Note: the rendering shows this as a three-story structure). To the north of the bank building and above the bank building the applicant proposes to construct a seven-story structure to contain 61 dwellings (28 one-bedroom units and 33 two-bedroom units), with ground floor lobby and loading area, and second floor amenity space. The parcel is a corner lot and a through lot, bounded by West Broad Street to the south, Guetter Street to the west, West Raspberry Street to the north and the redeveloped Boyd Theatre site to the east. The parcel measures 95.5' along Board Street and 193.24' along Guetter Street. Per Deed, the parcel totals 18,145 SF or 0.4166 Acres. The existing building, originally known as the Union Bank & Trust Company, is identified as an historic resource, individual landmark.

**Discussion:** Mr. Ayvazov gave a brief overview of the proposed plan. Attorney Scomillio noted that the current southern façade will retain all of the current features. Mr. Chambers explained the intent is to keep the buildings features with the addition

having a significant amount of glass. Mr. Chambers gave more details on the elevations and noted that the addition is setback from the top of the current building 10-12 feet.

Mr. Horvath noted the Applicant has spoken to Bethlehem Parking Authority regarding parking for the building and stated the Walnut Street and North Street Garages would be used for residents and patrons of the commercial space. Mr. Horvath spoke about the City's review letter and that he and the Applicant are amendable to all the comments in the letter. The question Mr. Horvath had regarding general comment #2 is void as under the new SALDO there is no requirement for landscaping; therefore, a waiver is not required.

Mr. Peiffer gave highlights to the City's review letter. Mr. Peiffer asked Mr. Chambers if the in-fill addition between the Boyd Theatre and Wells Fargo was to be three occupied floors or two-story volume on the first floor with a second floor above. Mr. Chambers answered there are two stories of occupied spaces. Mr. Peiffer noted that the EAC would like to see bird friendly glass on the addition to lessen the chances of bird deaths.

Mr. Melosky asked for more details on the bird-safe glass options. Mr. Chambers answered he and the Applicant are still looking into all options. Mr. Melosky asked Dr. Dan Klem to speak on the topic. Dr. Klem encourages the use of bird-safe glass as studies show the glass does reduce the number of bird deaths. Mr. Chambers said he will be working with the City and will reach out to Dr. Klem. Mr. Ayvazov agreed and is open to using bird-safe glass.

Mr. Peiffer noted in LVPC's comment letter it speaks about the parking and encourages the Applicant to speak with Bethlehem Parking Authority. The EAC letter noted bicycle parking and that there should be a bike rack for retail clients and residents.

Mr. Melosky asked if there is a tenant for the commercial space. Mr. Ayvazov answered there is no tenant at this time. Mr. Ayvazov wants a lessee to be an experience center or a space centered around children's activity.

Ms. Cohen asked about the proposed materials being used on the building. Mr. Chambers explained there will be metal panels similar to the panels being constructed at ArtsQuest. Mr. Chambers explained the masonry will match what is currently on the building. It was also explained the decision for material is not set and the Applicant is still looking into all of their options. Mr. Ayvazov stated there will be brick but he would like the bank to stand out against the apartments. Ms. Cohen asked where bike racks would be located inside the building. Mr. Chambers explained there will be a bike storage room in the northern section of the building. Ms. Cohen asked if that is the same location as the garbage and if that was inside as well. Mr. Ayvazov answered it will be inside as well separate from the bike room, similar to the Boyd. The lowest floor in the current building is used by Bethlehem City Police for training. If they do not return to the site once construction is done, a majority of that space will be used for storage. Ms. Cohen asked if there were any turnaround requirements for fire. Mr. Ayvazov answered no as the building is on two main roads. Ms. Cohen asked if the Applicant is working with Bethlehem Fire. Mr. Horvath answered they are in communication with Fire. Mr.

Ayvazov explained the commercial and residential spaces are separated in case of fire and both buildings are protected.

Mr. Malozi asked if the entire Wells Fargo building will remain. Mr. Ayvazov answered yes, the addition will be on stilts and separate from the Wells Fargo building. Mr. Malozi asked if the Applicant is required to look into bird-safe glass. Mr. Ayvazov answered it is not required but he wants to work with Dr. Klem to find a solution. Mr. Malozi asked if the comments from LANTA are required. Mr. Horvath stated they are proposing to upgrade the curb ramps at the two corners of Guetter Street. The intent is to make the ramp ADA compliant. Mr. Horvath and Mr. Yandem agreed a crosswalk by Raspberry Street is not needed and upgrading the crosswalks is acceptable.

**Motion #4:** Ms. Cohen made a motion to approve the Land Development Plan at 46-52 West Union Boulevard contingent upon the Applicant meeting all of the conditions in the City's review letter dated December 4, 2025, except General Comment #2, per old SALDO 1349.08(f)(2), provide for "a minimum of ten (10%) percent of the area represented by approved plantings; whereas new SALDO 1349.19(H)(1) provides for an exception for this requirement in the Central Business District, and consider comments from the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission Letter dated September 25, 2025, and the Environmental Advisory Council Letter dated November 3, 2025.

**Second:** Mr. Burgos

**Result of Vote:** The motion carried 5-0.

#### **AGENDA ITEM #5: SKETCH PLAN**

**Property Location:** University Drive (110 Mountain Drive S)

**Property Owner:** Lehigh University

**Developer/Engineer:** Pennoni Associates, Inc.

**Proposed Work:** The site is located within Lehigh University's Main Campus and is between 67 University Drive (McClintic-Marshall Hall) and 64 Quad Drive (Drinker House). The parcel is irregular in shape and totals 97.81 acres, or 4,260,604 SF. The parcel is sloped and is ostensibly wooded. The Applicant proposes to construct a 23,394 SF residence hall to be known as East Hill Residence Halls.

**Discussion:** Mr. Serpico gave a brief overview of the proposed plan. Mr. Klocek explained the need for expanding Lehigh University's resident halls. The proposed residence hall will be for Freshmen only. Freshmen are not allowed cars on campus and this alleviates the need for parking. There is a steep slope, and the building is sectioned into four wings, but it is one building. Mr. Klocek noted they have been speaking with the Bethlehem Fire Department about how to access the building.

Mr. Melosky noted that the façade is mostly stone. Mr. Klocek stated that they want to match the surrounding buildings, but that the material is similar to a slate tile.

Mr. Peiffer highlighted some points from the City's review letter. The main recommendation is not to exceed five feet in height of the retaining walls or use a vegetated crib wall that could exceed five feet.

Mr. Melsoky asked if Lehigh University had decided that the new residence hall will always be Freshmen only. Mr. Klocek answered the plan is to keep the majority of rooms for Freshmen and have some Sophomore students.

Attorney Durso asked if any relief will be needed by the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Peiffer answered no, as the slopes are considered manmade.

Ms. Cohen asked if there is any drop-off/loading area for new students, and an area for on-site refuse collection. Mr. Serpico answered there is a loading area that delivery trucks and service vehicles can utilize. Mr. Klocek noted garbage is picked up every day so there is no garbage site on the sketch plan. Ms. Cohen asked about the new parking spaces. Mr. Serpico explained there is a reduction in spaces as the residents will not have cars. The plan is to make the area more pedestrian friendly.

**AGENDA ITEM #6: DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Mr. Peiffer gave an overview of upcoming Land Development submissions.

There being no further business, upon a Motion by Robert Melosky, a Second by Matthew Malozi, and a unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM.

**ATTEST:**

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Craig D. Peiffer, Commission Secretary