

# CITY OF BETHLEHEM

## Department of Community and Economic Development Interoffice Memo

**To:** Planning Commission Members

**From:** Tracy E. Samuelson, Planning and Zoning Bureau

**Re:** Key Points of Draft Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

**Date:** October 8, 2021

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You received the Draft SALDO last week. We understand there is a significant amount of material in the Ordinance, therefore creating a summary list of key points will hopefully assist you in reviewing the entire document. We can review the following key sections at our meeting next Thursday.

- Section 1341.07 – Modifications, Waivers and Deferrals. This section typically refers to deferrals for curb and sidewalk, reductions in street widths, or alternatives that reduce impervious coverage.
- Article 1342 – Definitions. All proposed definitions have been reviewed against the Zoning Ordinance so that both ordinances are consistent. Saldo continually references the Zoning Ordinance definitions.
- Article 1345 – Preliminary/Final Plans. All land development and major subdivision plans will be referred to as Preliminary/Final Plans. The Fee Schedule for submissions will also reflect this reference. The submission procedure is much clearer and delineates the applicant's and the Planning Bureau's responsibilities for circulating plans.
- Article 1346 – Minor Subdivisions, Minor Land Developments, Lot Line Adjustment Plans, and Lot Consolidations. The abbreviated procedure for the administrative review and approval of these minor plans is described. Lot Consolidations only require preparation of a unification deed comprising all lots to be merged. We will no longer require the applicant to prepare a surveyed plan simply to merge lots. Once the deed description is approved, the approved deed description will need to be recorded. This will be a significant savings to the applicant.
- Article 1348 – Recording of Plans. A more specific procedure is outlined in this Section.
- Article 1349 – Design Standards and Required Improvements. In Section 1349.04, Streets, Private streets are required to be built to the same standards as public streets. Most new cul de sac streets in the City within the last 15 years are

private streets. Future streets will most likely be private also, therefore clearly stipulating this requirement ensures that all streets in the city will be durable. In Section 1349.04.E, the Access Management section is expanded to create many safety requirements for motorists. The chart for Design Standards for Streets on p. 55 was examined carefully and reduced cartway widths were included when appropriate. Section 1349.04.L, required transportation improvements, incorporates requirements for bicycle and pedestrian improvement, and permits the payment of a fee in lieu of street widening, transit improvements, or the installation of curbing and sidewalk. In Section 1349.08, Stormwater Management, subsection C entitled Green Stormwater Design stipulates policies incorporating rain gardens, bioswales, vegetated areas in the public right of way, and porous pavers. Many of the above policies reflect the goals of the City's Climate Action Plan.

- Appendix A – Statements, Forms, and Letters. This Appendix incorporates all signature block wording and the Time Extension Request for all applications.
- Appendix B – GIS Standards for Plans. This has been required for many years. It is currently part of the Saldo and is just continuation in the proposed Saldo.

Summary – Since the current Saldo is very outdated, the main goals of the proposed Saldo are the following:

- Incorporate the City's adopted Climate Action Plan goals and objectives, including less impervious surfaces, green stormwater design, more pedestrian friendly and bike friendly streets and sidewalks, narrower streets, clearer landscaping requirements.
- Formally include LANTA and the EAC in the plan review process.
- Clarify procedures for submission, classification, and review of Major and Minor LD and Sub plans
- Simplify Lot Consolidation Plan procedures.

Next Steps – We will review the draft Saldo at next Thursday's meeting. Any comments and changes you recommend will be considered for incorporation into the draft ordinance. The staff will be incorporating more Climate Action Plan goals into the ordinance also. Once these changes have been made, the proposed Saldo will be forwarded to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission for a review and recommendation. When we receive the LVPC comments, we will schedule another review and a vote on the ordinance at a future Planning Commission meeting. After your vote, the ordinance will be forwarded to City Council for a public hearing and subsequent adoption.



Tracy E. Samuelson  
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