



# CITY OF BETHLEHEM

BUREAU OF PLANNING AND ZONING

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September 16, 2024

Matthew Chartrand, PE  
Bohler Engineering, PA, LLC  
74 W Broad Street, Suite 500  
Bethlehem, PA 18018

RE: **((24-005 Sketch Plan Review) – 24080002– 2141 COMMERCE CENTER BOULEVARD (LVIP VII) – SITE PLAN REVIEW – Ward 16, Zoned IR, plans dated August 9, 2024.**

Dear Sir:

The purpose of this letter is to provide overall planning and guidance to the applicant and the Zoning Hearing Board prior to special exception and variance review by the Zoning Hearing Board.

The applicant proposes a resubdivision to redistribute parcel acreages among 2 existing lots. On proposed Lot A, the Applicant proposes to construct a 216,000 SF Warehouse with associated parking on the 18.49-acre parcel. On proposed Lot B, the Applicant proposes to construct a 101,000 SF Warehouse with associated parking on the 8.14-acre parcel. The site is located in the IR – Industrial Redevelopment zoning district.

In the IR-Industrial Redevelopment “Warehousing or Storage as a Principal Use” requires Special Exception review and approval by the Zoning Hearing Board. In addition, the developer requests relief from total parking requirements for the proposed Lot B. The Applicant shall submit an Appeal Application for the following relief:

- a. Proposed Lots A and B. A Special Exception to permit Warehousing or Storage as a principal use; Ref. 1305.01(e).
- b. Proposed Lot B. A Variance to reduce the minimum required off-street parking, 101 required, 50 proposed.

Comments regarding the Site Plan Review requirements specified in Article 1322.01 and 1322.02 of the Zoning Ordinance (attached) follow:

## **SITE PLAN REVIEW**

1. Site plan review by the Planning Commission is required because this is a land development plan that will ultimately also require Zoning Hearing Board review. (Section 1322.02(a)(1)(ii)). Site plan review includes provisions related to Natural Resources, Building Arrangement, Access and Parking, Utilities Special Features
2. Natural Resources – There are no existing natural resources on the site. The redevelopment of the site will add some pervious coverage, landscaping and tree canopy.
3. Building Arrangement – This 26+ acre parcel is a gateway location along Route 412 as northbound traffic enters Bethlehem. The building locations meet all zoning ordinance requirements but, because of the building size, proposed use of the buildings and the number of parking spaces and loading docks, the Planning Bureau requests that the applicant continue to work with the city and the Planning Commission for the inclusion of appropriate design elements and landscaping to enhance the site.
4. Access, Parking and Circulation – Zoning relief is requested from required vehicle parking on lot B. Traffic impacts and circulation will be reviewed more specifically during land development review. PennDOT review will be required for this proposal.

5. Utilities – All utilities are accessible to the site. Utility access and stormwater management will be reviewed more specifically during land development review.
6. Special Features – As noted above, buffers, landscaping, building materials and design will be further reviewed as plans for the site continue through the development process. The site is a gateway location along Route 412.

Additional comments to be addressed at the Subdivision & Land Development Plan review stage are attached.

**This plan will be placed on the October 10, 2024 Planning Commission agenda. Please let us know who will be attending in person.** As a site plan submission, no formal action is required from the Planning Commission; however, the Planning Commission may make recommendations to the Zoning Hearing Board regarding the overall plan.

Sincerely,



Darlene L. Heller, AICP  
Assistant Director of Planning and Zoning

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Geoffrey Karanja  
David Taylor  
Craig Baer

Robert Taylor  
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Greg Cryder  
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Enc.

## **Additional Comments Related to the Overall Land Development**

### **PUBLIC WORKS**

#### **Engineering**

1. Existing and proposed features, including, but not limited to, utilities, profiles, landscaping, lighting and details shall be shown on separate plans.
2. Existing and proposed monuments/iron pins shall be shown on plans.
3. Submit Deed/legal description for each parcel proposed for consolidation for review.
4. Existing and proposed impervious coverage areas shall be shown. A stormwater fee will be charged for the increase in impervious area.
5. A stormwater management report shall be submitted to the City and LVPC for new impervious surfaces over 10,000SF. A copy of the LVPC review letter shall be submitted.
6. An erosion & sedimentation control plan will be required and shall be reviewed by PADEP. A copy of the NPDES permit shall be submitted to the City.
7. The following notes are required on the land development plans:
  - a. By submission of these plans the engineer on record certifies that these plans are in complete conformance with the City of Bethlehem Storm Water Management Ordinance.
  - b. Accurate as-built plans shall be kept up to date during the construction process. At the completion of the project record drawings shall be developed from the as-built plans and submitted to the City Engineer's Office. All final drawings shall show North American Datum (NAD) 1983 State Plane Coordinates in feet (Pennsylvania South, FIPS Zone 3702) and the digital file shall be in State Plane Feet Coordinates as applicable. The hard copy of the record drawings shall be in the form of a Mylar copy. The engineer of record shall certify (i.e. P.E. stamped and signed) that the record drawings comply substantially with the approved plan and that they conform to industry standards. All digital files shall reside on USB flash drive containing the digital representation of the final plan as presented on the twenty-four (24) inch by thirty-six (36) inch sheets. The digital map shall be AutoCAD compatible. All layers included in the digital maps shall be the standardized layers prepared and utilized by the City of Bethlehem to ensure compatibility with the City's existing CAD standards and as described in Appendix A of the City's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.
  - c. Prior to any work within the Right-of-Way, permits must be obtained from City Engineering Office.
8. This sketch plan lacks much of the information necessary for a thorough engineering evaluation and has been reviewed only for general conformance to City of Bethlehem standards to the extent permitted by the limited detail provided. Additional comments will be provided when a more detailed plan is submitted for review.

#### **Sanitary Engineering**

1. In accordance with Ordinance No. 4342, at the time of a request for a building permit or at the execution of the developer's agreement, a sanitary sewer tapping fee of \$2,527 per EDU will need to be paid. The total amount will be determined when a sanitary sewer facilities planning module application is submitted. A cover letter, describing the project, and a utility plan shall be included in the planning module submittal. Please note that building permits cannot be issued until the Planning Module is reviewed and approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

#### **Traffic**

1. At the submission of the Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan, provide traffic counts, as per the 9<sup>th</sup> Edition of the ITE Trip Generation Manual, in compliance with Section 1347.14 of the SALDO.
2. At the submission of the Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan, if a traffic study is required, then provide an escrow fee in the amount of \$2,500; Ref. Resolution No. 14,589, adopted April 5, 2005.

## **Forestry**

1. Please submit a landscape plan for review.

## **RECYCLING**

1. Plan submitted does not provide any details on how property owner will maintain trash and recycling services for facilities. Property owner should provide specific details such as:
  - a. Plan should illustrate exact location of where trash and recycling materials will be stored and/or collected. Specific type of container(s), number of containers & service frequency for both trash and recycling materials should be provided.

## **FIRE**

The City of Bethlehem Fire Department currently enforces the 2018 Edition of the International Fire Code in its entirety including Appendices, with local amendments, as adopted in Article 1501 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Bethlehem, Ordinance 2022-15.

A condensed version of Article 1501/Ordinance 2022-15 listing the common items that affect Land Development Projects is attached at the end of this document for reference. For a copy of the full ordinance please visit <https://www.bethlehem-pa.gov/CityOfBethlehem/media/BFDMedia/Fire-Code.pdf>

1. The architect/engineer must confirm Fire Department vehicles have the required turning space to access all areas. (Please contact us for turning radius information for our vehicles) Submit a turning plan drawing.
2. A Knox Box for City of Bethlehem Fire Department access must be installed. (Please add note to plans and location TBD)
3. Indicate if the building is planned to be sprinklered. If the building is to be sprinklered please indicate the proposed location of all Fire Department Connections (FDC). Fire department connections shall be located on the street side of buildings, fully visible and recognizable from the street or nearest point of fire department vehicle access or as otherwise *approved* by the Fire Marshal. Please add note to the plan stating: "Any change in the location of the Fire Department Connection must be approved by the City of Bethlehem Fire Department."
4. All 'Fire Lanes' or "Fire Department Access Roads" must be identified and properly marked. (Refer to International Fire Code, 2018 ed., Section 503 and Appendix D for additional information. Locations for signs and markings can be determined as the project progresses.)
5. Dead end fire access roadways may have a maximum length of 150' without a turnaround. (Refer to International Fire Code, 2018 ed., Section 503 and Appendix D for additional information.)
6. Indicate the proposed building height. All buildings less than 30 feet in height must have 20 foot wide, minimum, access road(s). All buildings 30 feet or greater in height must have 26 foot wide, minimum, access road(s) and must accommodate a fire apparatus weighing 84,000lbs. (Refer to International Fire Code, 2018 ed., Section 503 and Appendix D for additional information.) At least one of the required access roads meeting this condition shall be located within a minimum of 15 feet (4572 mm) and a maximum of 30 feet (9144 mm) from the building, and shall be positioned parallel to one entire side of the building. (Refer to International Fire Code, 2018 ed., Section 503 and Appendix D for additional information.)
7. The architect/engineer must confirm Fire Department apparatus will be able to drive on all road surfaces without contacting the driving surface. Check angles of approach and departure to confirm the front or rear apparatus bumpers will not contact the driving surface. Also confirm the middle of the truck will not contact the driving surface of humps or crowns such as on speed bumps. (Refer to International Fire Code, 2018 ed., Section 503 and Appendix D for additional information. Contact us for detailed vehicle information.)
8. If the project has fire hydrants located on the property as part of its fire protection, there must be a note added to the plan that states: "An approved water supply for fire protection, either temporary or permanent, shall be made available as soon as combustible material arrives on the site." Contact the

Office of the Fire Marshal for approval of proposed water supply. (Reference International Fire Code 2018 ed. Section 3312)

9. Add note to plan acknowledging that Chapter 33 of the IFC “Fire Safety During Construction and Demolition” will be enforced for the duration of the construction project.
10. The following drawings are required to be submitted for Fire Department Review of Land Development Plans:
  - a. Utility plan including water supply showing fire hydrants on or near property.
  - b. Turning Plan.
  - c. Site Plan.
  - d. Grading Plan.
  - e. Elevation Plan (or other documentation indicating proposed building height).
  - f. Additional drawings may be required based on the individual project.

Contact the City of Bethlehem Fire Department office at 610-865-7143 and request Fire Marshal Craig Baer, [cbaer@bethlehem-pa.gov](mailto:cbaer@bethlehem-pa.gov), or Fire Chief Michael Reich, [mreich@bethlehem-pa.gov](mailto:mreich@bethlehem-pa.gov), with any questions or to obtain any documents required to complete the submittal for review.

### **ZONING**

1. Electric and telephone lines shall be underground where practical. Any utility installations remaining above ground shall be located so as to have a harmonious relation to neighboring properties and the site. Provide location of said utilities on the Site Plan per 1322.02(d)(4).
2. Indicate the location(s) for refuse collection, and if applicable, provide construction details for dumpster enclosures per 1318.26(a).
3. Provide a photometrics plan for the parking lot and other exterior lighting per 1318.25.
4. Provide a note on the record plan, “The current landowner shall be responsible to ensure that the hitch, rack or locker continues to be available and is well maintained and is replaced if damaged or removed. If the hitch, rack or locker is within a street Right of Way, a City encroachment permit shall be required.”.
5. Provide a landscaping plan and landscaping chart reflecting Zoning Section 1318.23 Buffer Yards and 1319.02(j) Street Trees and Parking Lot Trees and SALDO Section 1349.08 Plantings.

### **GENERAL**

1. A recreation fee will be required at the time of execution of the developer’s agreement.
2. The final land development submission shall also include a separate sheet for subdivision into two parcels.
3. Environment Advisory Council (EAC) comments will be included at the time of submission of Preliminary/Final Land Development Plans.
4. Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANTA) comments will be included at the time of submission of Preliminary/Final Land Development Plans.
5. The project should generally comply with the goals and objectives of the City’s Climate Action Plan for new development, including energy efficient construction, provisions for safe walking and biking, green development and other various provisions.
6. The project is on a parcel currently designated as eligible for Enterprise Zone (EZ) Tax Credit benefits. Eligible program activities include rehabilitation, expansion, improvement to a building(s), improvement to land, engineering, architecture, and acquisition. To discuss whether the project would qualify for a tax credit, please contact the Dept. of Community & Economic Development, 610.865.7085.

ARTICLE 1322  
ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIFIC USES

1322.01 Purposes

This Article lists additional requirements for certain uses that are either permitted by right or special exception uses.

1322.02 Procedure for Uses Required to Undergo Planning Commission Site Plan Review

- (a) Applicability.
  - (1) A Site Plan shall be submitted to the Planning and Zoning Bureau for review by City Staff. The plan may be forwarded to the City Planning Commission where the matter involves one or more of the following:
    - (i) Another section of this Ordinance requires a City Planning Commission site plan review.
    - (ii) The project will involve a special exception application or use variance for a new principal non-residential or multi-family building.
    - (iii) The project will involve the addition of 10 or more off-street parking spaces.
    - (iv) The project will involve 10,000 square feet or greater of new principal non-residential building space.
    - (v) Other projects that the Planning Bureau Staff determine may have significant impacts upon an adjacent neighborhood.
  - (2) Such site plan shall be submitted to the Zoning Officer at the same time as an application is made to the Zoning Hearing Board for such matter. Whenever feasible, such review should occur prior to a Zoning Hearing Board hearing on such matter.
  - (3) The City Planning Commission may then forward its review to the Zoning Officer, including comments for use in preparing any Zoning Hearing Board notice. The Planning Commission may recommend conditions for approval that should be considered by the Zoning Hearing Board and/or may recommend disapproval. This provision is set forth because of the considerable impacts that these land uses may have upon the community. The plan review is intended to emphasize layout, traffic and neighborhood compatibility issues, as opposed to the engineering details required under any later subdivision or land development plan process. This process enables both the City and applicant to uncover any matters which may impact feasibility.
- (b) The applicant shall submit an accurate site plan showing existing and proposed development for review by the City Staff and the City Planning Commission. This review process should occur prior to formal review of a subdivision and land development plan.
- (c) Procedure.
  - (1) Site plans are not required at this stage to be a fully engineered land development plan. Site Plans shall include the following information:
    - (i) A statement as to the proposed use of the building or land.

- (ii) A site layout drawn to a scale of not less than one inch equals 50 feet showing the location, dimensions, and height of proposed buildings, structures, or uses and any existing buildings in relation to property and street lines. If the application relates to property which is scheduled to be developed in successive stages, such plans shall show the relationship of the portion scheduled for initial development to the proposed layout of the entire property.
  - (iii) Proposed parking areas, aisles and vehicle access points onto streets.
- (d) Plan Review Criteria. The City Planning Commission shall use the following criteria when reviewing all sketch-type plans:
  - (1) Preservation of Natural Features. Insofar as practical, natural features on the site shall be preserved. See Articles 1316, 1317 and other natural feature provisions.
  - (2) Building Arrangement. Elements of the site plan shall be harmoniously and efficiently organized in relation to existing desirable trees, topography, views within and beyond the site, the size and shape of the site, the character of adjoining property and the size of the buildings.
  - (3) Access, Parking and Circulation. With respect to vehicular and pedestrian circulation, special attention shall be given to location and number of access points to public streets, width of interior drives and access points, on-site circulation, separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and arrangement and location of parking areas. The need for adequate signalization, channelization, and other traffic control measures shall be given consideration.
  - (4) Utilities. Electric and telephone lines shall be underground where practical. Any utility installations remaining above ground shall be located so as to have a harmonious relation to neighboring properties and the site.
  - (5) Special Features. Setbacks, buffer yard and other screening methods shall be carefully considered to minimize the visual effect of exposed storage area, exposed machinery installations, service areas, truck loading area, utility buildings and structures, and similar accessory areas and structures.