



CITY OF BETHLEHEM

10 East Church Street, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18018-6025

BUREAU OF PLANNING AND ZONING

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March 8, 2024

David Ronca

RE: **(24-001 Site Plan Review) – 24020001 – 1800 & 1804 CALYPSO AVENUE – SITE PLAN REVIEW – Ward 13, Zoned RS, plan dated February 12, 2024.**

Dear Sir:

The purpose of this letter is to provide overall planning and guidance to the applicant. The Applicant proposes to consolidate both parcels and construct a three-story structure containing 12 Multi-Family Dwellings (apartments), with off-street parking for 21 vehicles and other site appurtenances. The consolidated parcel measures 180' along Calypso Avenue by 140' in depth and totals 0.5785 Acres or 25,200 SF.

Comments regarding the Site Plan Review requirements specified in Article 1322.01 and 1322.02 of the Zoning Ordinance (attached) and the Sketch Plan requirements found in Section 1345.03 of the SALDO are as follows:

SITE PLAN REVIEW

1. Zoning Relief. The Applicant shall submit an Appeal Application for the following relief:
 - a. A Use Variance to permit Multi-Family Dwellings (apartments); whereas only Single-Family Detached Dwellings are permitted, Ref. Section 1304.01(b)(1).
 - b. A Dimensional Variance to exceed the Maximum Height/Maximum Stories, 2.5 permitted, 3 proposed, Ref. Section 1306.01(a)(2).
 - c. A Dimensional Variance for minimum separation distance between parking spaces and multi-family dwellings, 15' required, 10' proposed, Ref. 1322.03(11)(5)(i).
2. Provide an elevation drawing of the Calypso Avenue façade and label proposed façade materials prior to the Site Plan meeting. The submission shall include eight paper copies and one e-copy.
 - a. The neighbor context includes predominantly brick or a combination of brick and siding facades. The Applicant should consider a brick base at the first floor and brick details on the upper floors.
3. Provide on the site plan the building footprints for adjacent structures to the north, west and south (east has been provided).
4. Indicate overall building height as measured from grade at the front entrance to the roof ridge.
5. 1322.02(c)(1)(i), Modify the Statement of Intent to include Twelve 2-bedroom units; the number of off-street parking spaces (21) and a brief description of site amenities.
6. 1322.02(d)(1), Preservation of Natural Features.
 - a. Provide a grading plan that differentiates existing site contours from proposed site contours.
 - b. Provide Landscaping Plans; Ref. Zoning Comment #3.
7. 1322.02(d)(2), Building Arrangement.
 - a. Analysis.
 - i. The existing neighborhood context includes, to the west and north, two-story structures with gable roofs containing multi-family dwellings, n/f Oak Hollow Apartments and located within the RT District; to the south, two-story structures with gable roofs containing single-family attached

- dwellings and located within the RS District and to the east a one-story structure with a gable roof containing a single-family detached dwelling and located within the RS District.
- ii. The existing topography for the site slopes from west to east (side lot line to side lot line) along Calypso Avenue approximately eight feet (Contour 319 to 311) and from south to north (curb to rear lot line) at approximately midpoint on the consolidated parcel or near centerline with the proposed structure approximately 12 feet (Contour 315 to 327). Contours indicate a change of grade from Calypso Avenue to the proposed front entrance of approximately five feet and from the front entrance to the rear façade of approximately five feet.
- b. Recommendations.
 - i. In order to minimize the visual impact of the proposed three-story structure with a gable roof, the applicant should consider modifying the grade from the front of the lot to the rear of the lot and depress the building footprint partially below grade, i.e., create garden apartments, or step the foundation so that the ground floor finished floor elevations mimic that of the natural exterior finished grade. The applicant shall also consider modifying the roof form to lower its height.
8. 1322.02(d)(3), Access, Parking and Circulation.
 - a. In order to minimize parking located between the front lot line and the front façade it is recommended that parking spaces #1 and #21 are relocated to the rear of the parking lot.
 9. 1322.02(d)(4), Utilities.
 - a. Provide a utility plan.
 10. 1322.02(d)(5), Special Features. Buffer yards and other screening methods for accessory areas.
 - a. In order to screen the parking lot and refuse collection area it is recommended that the existing adjacent buffer yard along the western lot line be supplemented with additional landscaping and a buffer strip be provided along the northern edge of the parking and around the dumpster enclosure. Any fencing shall be located outside of the minimum buffer yard to ensure adequate width for plantings.
 11. The Planning & Zoning Bureau supports denser residential development at this site for the following reasons:
 - a. The subject parcel is adjacent to the RT – High Density Residential Zoning District with no separation between district boundaries;
 - b. The adjacent parcel to the north and west contains multi-family dwelling units and to the south single-family attached dwelling units; both of which are developed at a high density than what is permitted within the RS District.
 12. The Planning & Zoning Bureau does not support the proposed building height for the following reasons:
 - a. A three-story structure with a gable roof creates the equivalent of a four-story or greater building height.
 - b. The adjacent structures are one story and two-story and with low slope gable roofs.

Planning Bureau support of the use variance is based upon all aforementioned recommendations and specifically related to building mass and form. The Applicant shall either modify finished grade or step the foundation to reflect existing grade and modify the building form in order to create a visually appropriate transition from one-story single-family uses to multi-story multi-family uses.

Per Zoning Ordinance Sections 1322.02.a.1 and 3 (Site Plan Review for projects determined to have a significant impact upon an adjacent neighborhood), the Planning Commission may recommend conditions of approval that should be considered by the Zoning Hearing Board. 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, neighborhood compatibility issues, vehicle/pedestrian circulation, and special features such as buffer yards and the preservation of natural features, as opposed to engineering details required under any later land development plan process.

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

This plan will be placed on the March 8, 2024 Planning Commission agenda. Please let us know who will be attending in person. As a Sketch plan submission, no formal action is required from the Planning Commission, but since this plan qualifies for Site Plan review, then they 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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|----|---------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| C. | Basel Yandem | Greg Cryder | Robert Hoppes, Jr., PE, PLS |
| | Adam Herbold | Michael Halbfoerster | HOP-PES, Engineering & Surveying |
| | Michael Reich | Robert Taylor | |
| | Olivia Teel | Emanuel Machado | |

Enclosures

Additional Comments Related to the Overall Land Development

A Sketch Plan lacks much of the information necessary for a thorough 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. At this point we offer the following comments:

PUBLIC WORKS

Engineering

1. Existing and proposed features, including, but not limited to, utilities and trees, shall be shown on separate plans.
2. Existing and proposed lot monuments/iron pins shall be shown.
3. Existing and proposed impervious coverage areas shall be shown. A stormwater fee may be charged for increase in impervious area.
4. A stormwater management report shall be submitted to the City and LVPC, as the existing conditions are mostly pervious there will be greater than 10,000 SF of new impervious coverage. Submit a copy of the LVPC review letter.
5. A Legal description of the newly consolidated lot and a copy of the Lehigh County Recorder of Deeds Receipt will be required upon completion of the lot consolidation.
6. The City will require the installation of curb and sidewalk along the full frontage of parcels owned by or under agreement of sale to Macada Partners 1800 Calypso, LLC, 1708 through 1804 Calypso Avenue.
7. After a building permit is obtained, the applicant will be required to obtain permits from the Engineering Department for the construction of the driveway, sidewalk, curbing, and utility connections. A warrant of survey shall also be required to set the proposed curblin.
8. The applicant shall provide floorplans to the City Engineering Bureau for use in assigning unit addresses to the proposed building. A street address will also be assigned at this time
9. In accordance with Ordinance No. 4342, at the time of 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.
10. A 10' drainage and utility easement is required along the sides and rear of the property. The following note shall be added to the plans:

The drainage easement provides for the flow of storm water across lots, and may not be altered without the written permission of the City Engineer. No obstructions such as planting berms or fences may be installed in the drainage easements areas without sufficient provision for the passage of storm water, and any such proposed provision shall be approved in writing by the City Engineer.
11. 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. In order to maintain continuity between plan revisions, any changes to a previous plan submission shall be flagged with a triangle. Any changes not flagged may be considered not approved. Flagged changes shall be referenced to the appropriate revision date in the revision block.
 - c. 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 PC compatible CD Rom 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.

- d. Prior to any work within the Right-of-Way, permits must be obtained from City Engineering Office.

Traffic

1. At the submission of the Preliminary/Final Land Development Plan, provide traffic counts, as per the 9th Edition of the ITE Trip Generation Manual.
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.
3. Public Works may require a crosswalk(s) at the intersection of Calypso Avenue and Mount Airy Avenue, to be determined at the time of submission of Preliminary/Final Land Development Plans.

Forestry

1. Submit a proposed landscape plan with calculations for comment/review; Ref. Zoning Comment #3.

Electrical

1. Provide a lighting plan for the proposed parking lot. Indicate fixture locations and provide fixture specifications. Provide photometrics and verify that there will be no light trespass onto adjacent properties.
2. The proposed parking lot location is adjacent to existing dwellings and will be at a higher elevation than the existing dwellings. There is concern of vehicle headlights shining directly onto these dwellings. The lighting plan and landscaping plan shall address this concern.

ZONING

1. Provide fence details and indicate fence height(s), Ref. 1318.16 and 1318.17.
2. Indicate on the plan the clear sight triangles/distances, Ref. 1318.06.
3. Provide an existing, existing to be removed and proposed landscaping plan in compliance with 1318.23 Buffer Yards, 1318.28 Tree Conservation, 1319.02(j) Street Trees and Parking Lot Trees and 1349.08 Planting, and specifically reference the following:
 - a. Buffer yards shall be designed in accordance with 1318.23(f) and 1349.08(c). Account for the required plantings on the landscaping plan.
 - b. Per 1349.08(f)(1), Landscaped off-street parking and loading areas shall have a minimum of ten (10%) percent of the area represented by approved plantings. *These plantings shall be in addition to any buffer plantings which may be necessary.*
 - c. Per 1349.08(f)(2), Multi-Family, Townhouse, and PUD Developments shall have a minimum of ten (10%) percent of the area represented by approved plantings *in addition to front and side foundation shrubs and any buffer planting which may be necessary to screen garbage collection or parking areas.*
4. Provide a photometrics plan in compliance with 1318.25.
5. Provide dumpster enclosure details, Ref. 1318.26(a).
6. Relocate the bicycle rack to be in compliance with 1319.02(o)(1); whereas bicycle parking shall be within 30' of the building entrance. It is also recommended that bicycle parking be protected from the elements.
7. Indicate on the plan two-way traffic arrows.
8. Sketch Plan, Site Data, correct the chart as follows:
 - a. 9. Setbacks, Required, change 8' to 25' (Ref. Other Allowed Uses).
 - b. 9. Setbacks, Proposed, change each yard to reflect actual, e.g., Front = ~25'-6", Side = 72' / ~26'-6", and Rear = ~41'-6".
 - c. 17. Parking Spaces, Required, change 1.5 / Unit (RT Dist 18EA) to 2 / SFDD.
 - d. 18. Lot Area / DU, Required, correct 1200 SF (RT Dist) to N/A.
9. Sketch Plan indicates an 8' buffer yard along the full length of the front lot line; whereas a 15' buffer yard is required along the eastern lot line and an 8' buffer yard is required between the parking lot and public street, Ref. 1318.23(i)(2) and 1318.23(l).

10. Indicate on the plan the Zoning District Boundary between the RS – Single-Family Residential District and the RT – High Density Residential District.

GENERAL

1. A recreation fee of \$18,000 will be required at the time of execution of the Developer's Agreement.
2. Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) comments will be included at the time of submission of Preliminary/Final Land Development Plans.
3. Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANTA) comments will be included at the time of submission of Preliminary/Final Land Development Plans.
4. The final land development submission shall also include a separate sheet for subdivision (Lot consolidation) and zoning data for each parcel and the consolidated parcel.