



# CITY OF BETHLEHEM

BUREAU OF PLANNING & ZONING

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VIA EMAIL TO JAMESPRESTON@BROUGHAL-DEVITO.COM

James F. Preston, Esquire  
Broughal & DeVito, LLP  
38 West Market Street  
Bethlehem, PA 18018

April 21, 2025

Re: 312 Hanover Street Sketch Plan  
Lot Area Requirements

Dear Attorney Preston:

Revisiting the 312 Hanover Street Sketch Plan, you will recall that when the Law Bureau was made aware of and reviewed the ZO definition of 'Townhouse' as it relates to this project, the Law Bureau agreed with your interpretation that the currently proposed dwellings met the 'Townhouse' definition and should be regulated as such. The result was that the Zoning Office communicated that your Zoning Hearing Board application focused on the lot width issue was unnecessary.

Now, as the City has further reviewed the Sketch Plan and fully considered the dimensional requirements for the Townhouse use, the separate issue of lot area must be viewed in context of Zoning Ordinance §1318.02, which states:

Lot Area or Yard Required. The lot area and yards required for any new building or use shall not include any part of a lot that is required by any other building or use to comply with the requirements of this Ordinance. No required lot shall include any property, the ownership of which has been transferred subsequent to the effective date of this Ordinance, if such property was a part of the area required for compliance with the dimensional requirements applicable to the lot from which such transfer was made.

Townhouses in the RT district require a minimum tract size of 9,000 square feet, regardless of the number of townhouses proposed. *See* ZO § 1306.01(a)(4). As you know, there is an existing two-family detached dwelling on the property. Under ZO §1306.01(a)(4), a two-family detached dwelling in the RT district requires a minimum tract size of 6,000 square feet. Section 1302.01(a)(5) of the Zoning Ordinance provides that the term "lot" includes the term "tract". Because the proposed development concerns a single lot, the lot area and tract size of the subject property are the same.

Accordingly, while the lot area of the subject property is 13,409 square feet, 6,000 of those square feet are unavailable, pursuant to ZO §1318.02, to satisfy the 9,000 square foot minimum tract size for the proposed Townhouses because they are needed to satisfy the minimum tract size for the existing two-family detached dwelling. Excluding those 6,000 square feet, there are only 7,409 square feet available to satisfy the minimum tract size for the proposed Townhouses, which is insufficient under Section 1306.01(a)(4) of the Zoning Ordinance.



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Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Assistant City Solicitor Matt Deschler.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David W. Taylor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

David W. Taylor  
City of Bethlehem Zoning Officer

cc: Laura Collins, Director, DCED (via e-mail)  
Craig Peiffer, Deputy Director, Planning and Zoning (via e-mail)  
Matt Deschler, Assistant City Solicitor (via e-mail)