

January 21, 2026

Andrew Miller, Executive Vice President

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Re: 321-327 S. New Street, Bethlehem, PA - 25191-0408**

Dear Andrew:

We visited the existing building on Wednesday, January 14, 2026 to review the condition of the exterior wall, most specifically, the wall of 321-323 S. New Street.

The existing building is a three-story retail and residential structure. Although vacant, the building originally included retail space on the ground floor and residential apartments on the second and third floors. There appears to be basement access in the rear of the building, but this was not accessible at the time of our visit.

The building structure appears to be wood frame construction spanning parallel with the front face of the building, supported by wall or beam members between the building units. The front wall of the buildings are a mix of various materials but the building at 321-323 S. New Street includes a front wall constructed of brick at the second and third floors. The wall appears to be 8" (double-wythe) brick at these floors. The ground floor is open glass storefront as well as door access to the units above. There appears to be a beam above the ground floor, along the entire length of the facade to support the brick above, supported by posts at the ends and middle of the beam length. The second-floor beam appears to be approximately 12 feet above the existing retail floors.

The brick wall has a considerable number of cracks, particularly at the third-floor level, although many of these cracks are not obvious because of the paint and sealant installed on the face of the brick. In addition, there appears to be a slight bulge in the brick wall between the second and third floor windows. There are four face plates on the face of the brick, presumably tying the brick back to the floor structure, at the third-floor level as well. There are also two face plates at the brick, level with the second floor windows. The second-floor plates are likely anchoring the brick facade to a return wall between the existing residential units. The third-floor anchors appear to be approximately 25'-26' above the ground floor retail floors.

We understand there is a desire by some parties to maintain the front brick facade of the 321-323 S. New Street building, while the remainder of the building behind and adjacent to this facade is demolished to accommodate redevelopment of the site. We believe this will be very challenging to accomplish and may compromise the integrity of the wall or the market success of the proposed redevelopment. The temporary bracing necessary to maintain the wall will have considerable temporary site impact and will likely impact the nature of the proposed development. Temporary bracing for a wall such as this must be designed to support windward and leeward forces on the wall and must be installed prior to the demolition of the remainder of the adjacent structures.

The bracing will remain in place until such time that the wall can be connected to the new building structure to provide permanent lateral support.

The temporary supports for the wall will have to be installed above and/or below the third-floor level, which does not align with the existing lateral anchors at the third floor. In addition to compromising the location of the existing lateral bracing and integrity of the existing cracked brick wall, the bracing configuration would likely compromise the integrity of the proposed building windows at the second and third floors. The elevations of the necessary supports would not correspond with new floor elevations that will accommodate the market conditions for the ground level and upper-level structures.

In addition to the lateral anchors at the third floor, as noted above, there are also two lateral anchors to the existing return walls at the 2nd floor window height. The location of these anchors would have to be maintained while demolishing the existing building structures, to maintain the integrity of the wall.

Lateral bracing on the outside of the building exterior face would necessitate additional foundations and structural members, which may have to extend beyond the limits of the existing sidewalk. The design and installation of these members would require close coordination with existing utilities that may exist below grade in the sidewalk and street. If the location of utilities is unknown or uncertain, there will be risks associated with installation of the bracing elements.

There are distinct challenges associated with maintaining the integrity of the existing wall – which is currently exhibiting signs of distress. Even with bracing installed on the exterior face and extreme care taken during the process, the demolition process could result in additional distress to the wall. The integrity of the existing wall and the impact of temporary bracing are significant and may compromise the success of efforts to maintain the wall. Efforts to brace the existing building brick wall will be very extensive and will burden the project with functional deficiencies and additional construction-related costs that would not be necessary if elements of the existing facade were removed and incorporated into the proposed building elevations.

Please let us know if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

DCI Engineers



Steven T. Krumenacker, PE  
Principal