
MEETING MINUTES
PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD
July 10, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT

Robert Melosky, Chairman
Matthew Malozi, Vice Chairman
Joy Cohen

VISITORS PRESENT

Karen Andrews, BDA Architects
Cody Callahan P.E., Barry Issett and Associates
James Preston, Esq., Broughal and DeVito
David Hitzel, HH Evans, LLC
Joseph Ingaglio P.E., Bustamante Engineers, Inc.
Victor Scomillio, Esq., Holzinger, Harak & Scomillio
D. Martin Zaworski
Lou Rock, Lehigh Engineering
Kirsten Mondillo, 244 9th Avenue
Glen Geinesky, 253 8th Avenue
Ariel Hatfield, 236 9th Avenue
John Bonick, 243 8th Avenue
Nicole Bonick, 243 8th Avenue
Brian Petresky, 228 8th Avenue

MEMBERS ABSENT

Eddie Burgos

STAFF PRESENT

Matthew Deschler, Esquire
Cathy Fletcher, Bureau of Planning and Zoning
Craig Peiffer, Bureau of Planning & Zoning
Basel Yandem, Bureau of Public Works
Stephany Sebesta, Secretary

The July 10, 2025, meeting of Planning Commission held at the City of Bethlehem Town Hall, was called to order by Chairperson, Robert Melosky at 5:00 PM.

AGENDA ITEM #1: APPROVAL OF MINUTES May 8, 2025

No motion was made due to no quorum. This has been postponed until August 14, 2025 Planning Commission meeting.

AGENDA ITEM #2: LAND DEVELOPMENT AND SUBDIVISION

Property Location: 1223 West Broad Street

Property Owner: Juan Carlos Paredes-Gomez

Developer/Engineer: Cody Callahan, Barry Issett & Associates

Proposed Work: Representing the property was Karen Andrews, BDA Architects and Cody Callahan, Barry Issett and Associates. The applicant proposes to remove the former drive-thru and construct a two-story elevated addition containing six (6) multi-

family dwellings (4 two-bedroom and 2 two-bedroom units). Additional modifications to the parking lot will provide for a total of 29 off-street spaces. The project scope no longer includes the rooftop 40-seat Seasonal Dining area above the one-story existing structure. The parcel measures 165' along West Broad Street and 150' along 12th Avenue, and totals 0.568 acres, or 24,750 Square Feet.

Discussion: Ms. Andrews gave a brief overview of the proposed plan. The structure will contain six dwelling units with the unit on the 1st floor being ADA accessible. The Applicant has met all the parking requirements, and no variances are needed from the Zoning Hearing Board currently. Ms. Andrews spoke of the City's letter dated July 3, 2025, and stated that the Applicant is willing to comply with all comments in the letter. The Applicant understands there is a sewer tapping fee they will pay and will provide a stormwater escrow as well. Mr. Melosky asked if they Applicant is willing to comply with all comments, Ms. Andrews stated that was correct.

Mr. Peiffer spoke about LVPCs' and the EACs' letters. Mr. Malozi stated that this plan is being proposed in the right place.

There were no comments from the public.

Motion #1 Waiver: Mr. Malozi made a motion to approve the requested waiver from Section 1343.02(g)(2)(A), to permit a drawing scale of 1:20, whereas 1:40 or 1:50 scale is required.

Second: Mr. Melosky

Result of Vote: The Motion carried 3-0.

Motion #1: Mr. Malozi made a motion to approve the Land Development plan contingent upon meeting all the conditions in the City letter dated July 3, 2025.

Second: Ms. Cohen

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0.

AGENDA ITEM #3: LAND DEVELOPMENT AND SUBDIVISION

Property Location: 934-946 & 1004 Evans Street

Property Owner: David Hitzel (HH Evans Street, LLC)

Developer/Engineer: Joseph Ingaglio Bustamante Engineers, Inc.

Proposed Work: Representing the property was Attorney James Preston, Esq., David Hitzel and Joseph Ingaglio. Lot 1, 934-946 Evans Street, is a vacant lot (formerly the Casa Blanca Club). The site is comprised of three parcels. The Applicant proposes to consolidate the parcels and construct a four-story structure containing 37 Multi-Family Dwellings (apartments), ten off-street parking spaces, with ingress from Ridge Street and egress onto State Street, and other site appurtenances. The consolidated parcel is irregular in shape, measures 151.63' along Evans Street and totals 0.456 Acres or 19,711 Square Feet.

Lot 2, 1004 Evans Street contains a two-story structure. The Applicant proposes to demolish the structure and construct a 40-car parking lot with ingress and egress from

Evans Street. The parking would serve the residences at 934-946 Evans Street. The parcel is irregular in shape, measures 114.40' along Evans Street and totals 0.290 Acres or 12,628 Square Feet.

The Applicant also requests a waiver from Sections 1349.08(c) buffer yards and 1349.08(f)(2) 10% area of approved plantings and foundation plantings.

Discussion: Attorney Preston first spoke briefly on the history of the plan. Mr. Inagaglio spoke of the subject of the two waivers requested by the Applicant for buffer yards and 10% area of approved planting and foundation plantings. The Applicant has received variances from the Zoning Hearing Board for side yard setbacks. The landscaping at 1004 Evans Street falls short of the 10% planting requirement due to the layout of the parking spaces.

Mr. Melosky asked Mr. Peiffer if the City had anything to say. Mr. Peiffer stated the City would be amendable to the waivers for both requested items. Mr. Melosky stated that the review letter from the City is extensive, and asked Mr. Peiffer if there was anything the City would like to make note of. Mr. Peiffer spoke on the Engineering, Forestry, Fire, Zoning and general comments in the review letter. Comments from the EAC and LANTA were also mentioned to the Planning Commission.

Mr. Melosky asked for more detail on the façade. Mr. Hitzel stated they are proposing a combination of plank or board depending on the location and the color would be darker gray with black accents. Mr. Hitzel commented they want the building to tie-in to the existing neighborhood. It was also explained that due to the grading of the land the fourth story will not be visible from the road. Mr. Melosky asked the Applicant if the comments from the May 21, 2025 review letter will be complied with. Attorney Preston affirmed this was true. Mr. Hitzel agreed and stated they will comply with all comments. There have been conversations with the Fire Marshall and we will comply with the fire comments; however, the FD2 ladder truck will not have turn radius unless parking is eliminated on the street or the truck would drive down to State Street and come up from there. Mr. Melosky asked if the City has a response to that. Mr. Inagaglio answered that he has been in conversation with the Fire Marshall and was asked by the Fire Marshall to show they are working to get turning access for the ladder truck. Mr. Hitzel spoke of the last general comment for Affordable Housing and he stated that it is not feasible in the project.

Ms. Cohen asked about the lot consolidation and how the properties are legally connected and the parking lot will remain with the building. Mr. Hitzel answered it will be a single lot permanently deeded as part of the subdivision. Attorney Preston commented there will be a covenant recorded with the deed to the parking lot which connects it to the building. Ms. Cohen asked if the Planning Commission were to vote on the Land Development, Lot Consolidation and the recorded covenant of the deed on the adjacent lot of 1004 Evans Street. Attorney Preston stated that was correct. Mr. Melosky stated if voted they will make note. Mr. Malozi asked if the covenant was referenced in the review letter. Mr. Peiffer responded that it is stated in the Zoning Hearing Board decision.

Attorney Deschler asked Mr. Peiffer if the Applicant had the buffer yard waived. Mr. Peiffer responded that the Zoning Hearing Board waived their requirement for multi-family dwellings adjacent to single-family dwellings. Attorney Deschler asked for clarification if the entirety of the buffer yards were waived. Mr. Peiffer affirmed that was correct. Attorney Deschler asked the Applicant for more clarification in the waiver requests presented. It was explained that the waiver request is for lot 1004 Evans Street because 934-946 Evans Street meets the 10% planting requirement.

Mr. Malozi asked about access to the parking lot. Mr. Hitzel explained the parking lot access for 1004 Evans Street will enter and exit via Evans Street. The parking in the rear of 934-946 Evans Street would be accessible from Ridge Street and exit onto State Street. Mr. Malozi asked if they are replacing sidewalk around the area. Mr. Hitzel answered they are planning to redo all of the sidewalk around the properties.

Mr. Melsoky asked Attorney Deschler how the order of votes shall go. Attorney Deschler responded that the Commission should vote on the waiver requests first.

Motion #2: Mr. Malozi made a motion to approve the requested waivers from Sections 1349.08(c) buffer yards and 1349.08(f)(2) 10% area of approved plantings and foundation plantings along with 1349.08(f)(1).

Second: Ms. Cohen

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0.

Motion #3: Mr. Malozi made a motion to approve the Land Development application including the lot consolidation for 934-646 and 1004 Evans Street contingent upon meeting all the conditions set forth in the May 21, 2025 City review letter including a covenant acceptable to the City memorializing the use of 1004 Evans Street serving the purposes of 934-946 Evans Street.

Second: Ms. Cohen

Result of Vote: The motion carried 3-0

AGENDA ITEM #4: LAND DEVELOPMENT AND SUBDIVISION

Property Location: 241 8th Avenue

Property Owner: Martin Zaworski

Developer/Engineer: Lou Rock, Lehigh Engineering

Proposed Work: Representing the applicant was Victor Scomillio, Esq., Martin Zaworski, Lou Roch, Lehigh Engineering. The applicant proposes to demolish the structure and construct a three-story structure with gable roof, containing six multi-family dwellings (apartments). Other site improvements include surface off-street parking for eleven vehicles, with ingress and egress from Carter Street; retaining walls; dumpster enclosure; on-site stormwater management facilities and landscaping.

Discussion: Attorney Scomillio gave a brief overview of the proposed plan. The Applicant will be going in front of the Zoning Hearing Board in the future. Mr. Zaworski spoke of the renderings of the proposed building. Mr. Melosky asked about the material of the siding. Mr. Zaworski stated it will be stone around the exposed foundation and in between the stories and vinyl for the siding.

Mr. Melosky asked for details for their parking. Mr. Zaworski explained the parking access will be in the rear alley as required, however, the parking will encroach upon the side yard buffer. Mr. Melsoky asked Attorney Scomillio if this is a request going in front of the Zoning Hearing Board, Attorney Scomillio affirmed. Mr. Zaworski stated they are seeking relief for the distance from the property line to the edge of the parking buffer yard and the width lot, where 90' is required and 80' is existing.

Mr. Melosky asked for the size of each unit. The units will be approximately 1,300sqft with two bedrooms each. Mr. Zaworski also stated there were suggestions of staggering the roof height but stated that would not work due to the 50ft width of the proposed building.

Mr. Melosky asked if Mr. Peiffer would like to highlight a few points from the review letter. Mr. Peiffer reminded that no action is required on a Sketch Plan but the Planning Commission can make a recommendation to the Zoning Hearing Board. Mr. Peiffer spoke about the City's review letter and commented the City believes the Applicant should consider stepping the foundation and that the southside of the building is one-story lower than the northside of the building. Mr. Zaworski stated that there are dwelling in the surrounding neighbors are three-story high or having third floor living quarters. Mr. Peiffer responded by explaining that in the Zoning Ordinance it details the difference between a three-story and two and a half story structure. Mr. Zaworski stated he is willing to lower the floor heights from 9ft to 8ft and change the roofing from a gable roof to a hip roof. Mr. Melosky asked Mr. Zaworski if he is willing to comply with comments. Mr. Zaworski is willing to work with the City and have open communication. Mr. Peiffer gave an overview of the City's review letter. Mr. Peiffer noted the Forester's comments in the letter that there is a 34-inch diameter willow tree and recommends the Applicant try and preserve the willow tree.

Attorney Scomillio explained the tree will not be disturbed in construction and is not on the Applicant's property and with the additional parking that is being proposed it alleviates street parking. Mr. Zaworski stated that the extra parking will improve the neighborhood. Mr. Melsoky asked how many spots are proposed. Mr. Peiffer answered 11 when 9 are required.

Ms. Cohen stated that if this comes back in front of the Commission that the renderings show the slope of the land to see the proper elevations of the buildings. Ms. Cohen also stated that she believes the hip roof is a better option for the area. Ms. Cohen appreciates the stone on the front façade and asked if the siding was vinyl. Mr. Zaworski answered he was looking at vinyl.

Mr. Malozi asked if the willow tree mentioned in the Forester's comments was on the Applicant's property. Mr. Zaworski replied that it was not though it does overhang on to his property. He stated he spoke with the homeowner of the tree and told them he is willing to cut it down or clean it up.

Public Comment: Kirsten Mondillo, 244 9th Avenue, stated she opposes this plan. The alley in the rear of the property is heavily used by the residents in the neighborhood. Ms.

Mondillo stated the area is not zoned for multi-family and does not fit the neighborhood. The rear alley is narrow and will not support a garbage truck or fire truck. Lastly, Ms. Mondillo stated development of this project will negatively impact the neighborhood.

Glenn Geinesky, 253 8th Avenue, stated that when the land surveyor for Mr. Zaworski stuck a land marker right on the tree indicating part of the tree is on his property. The alley that has access to the parking lot is one-way and privately owned. Mr. Geinesky stated that the land that they live on top of is moving and is concerned that land may slide if a large structure is built on the land.

Ariel Hatfield, 236 9th Avenue, stated she owns part of the alley and does keep it open for the neighborhood. The alley is narrow and does not get plowed in the winter, she has witnessed the garbage truck get stuck there in the past. Ms. Hatfield is worried heavier traffic in the neighborhood endangers those who use it every day. Parking in the area is already limited, with the addition of this proposed project Ms. Hatfield is concerned parking will become even harder to find.

John Bonick, 243 8th Avenue, spoke of the willow tree and explained that it has been there for 100 years. The proposed retaining wall is concerning near the tree as well. Mr. Bonick stated the willow tree is large and the parking lot close to it can be dangerous. Mr. Bonick does not believe the building belongs there.

Nicole Bonick, 243 8th Avenue, does not think there are any hardships and this project does not work. Mrs. Bonick stated the variances sought by the Applicant from the Zoning Hearing Board are hardships he created. There is also worry in garbage pickup as the alley is narrow and is not plowed in the winter creating hazards.

Mr. Melosky asked Mr. Peiffer if any comments were made in the letter in regard to garbage. Mr. Peiffer stated there were comments from Recycling and Zoning about garbage location and pickup. Mr. Melosky asked Mr. Zaworski if he is willing to keep open dialogue with the City. Mr. Zaworski answered he is willing.

Brian Petresky, 228 8th Avenue, questioned Mr. Zaworski why he chose to build a multi-family in this location. Mr. Zaworski stated it is by-right and he wants to help the housing crisis. Mr. Petresky is concerned with the parking because of the other development being done down the street.

It was explained by Mr. Peiffer the plan mentioned by Mr. Kresky has not happened. Relief for the project that was needed and has since expired. If they same plan were proposed it would have to go in front of the Zoning Hearing Board.

Mr. Melosky stated there was good dialogue for this project. Mr. Zaworski stated the retaining wall by the tree will be barely visible, and a majority of it will be underground. Mr. Melosky commented he believes the big take away from this discussion is the alleyway. Mr. Melosky suggested parking in another location. Attorney Scomillio stated that the parking would look better in the back but parking would be in front if approved through Zoning.

Mr. Malozi appreciates the public comments and understands the concerns of the public. Comments that were mentioned should be taken into consideration by the Applicant. This project is by-right and the Commission votes in that way.

AGENDA ITEM #5: DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mr. Peiffer reviewed the upcoming Agenda items.

There being no further business, upon a Motion by Robert Melosky, a Second by Matthew Malozi, and a unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM.

ATTEST:

Craig D. Peiffer, Commission Secretary