



10 East Church Street
Bethlehem, Pa. 18018
www.bethlehemeac.org

Darlene L. Heller, Director of Planning and Zoning
Tracy Samuelson, Assistant Director of Planning and Zoning
City of Bethlehem
10 E. Church Street
Bethlehem, PA 18018

November 23, 2021

Dear Ms. Heller and Ms. Samuelson,

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed development at 117 E. 4th Street. Our recommendations are in support of Bethlehem City's Climate Action Plan (CAP), which aims to reduce our carbon footprint, increase sustainability and utilize alternative energy sources.

New construction projects provide opportunities to employ energy saving strategies that will lower energy costs and at the same time reduce pollution from traditional energy sources. Therefore, we strongly recommend that the developer explore energy efficiency measures beyond the building code, such as passive solar design features, advanced lighting controls, high efficiency HVAC equipment, increased insulation and advanced air sealing techniques to reduce infiltration. We commend the vegetated green space on the third floor roof tops on each side of the building. A fully green roof would contribute to lessening the heat island effect, which is of great concern on the Southside of Bethlehem, especially as the climate continues to warm. Green roofs also help lower the heat inside the building and aid in stormwater management.

Furthermore, we encourage the developer to evaluate the inclusion of solar panels or at least constructing the building with adequate structural rooftop capacity and electrical rough-ins so that solar could easily be added at a later date. Financing options are available for solar, increased energy efficiency and water conservation projects. The Sustainable Energy Fund (<https://www.theseef.org>) may be a good resource in this regard. In addition, the federal government offers renewable energy tax credits.

Landscaping is important and we recommend coordinating with the City Forester in the selection of native species for landscaping and trees along the front and back of the building.

Another recommendation is the inclusion of "easily-accessible, secure, sheltered bicycle parking" as recommended in the CAP (Transportation Strategies T1.2 and T1.9). A secure

indoor bike parking room for residents and visitors alike would be ideal, especially since it can be difficult to store a bike in an apartment if there isn't dedicated space. This site is on the Greenway, a great amenity providing trail access for cyclists and walkers.

Due to the height of the building and what appear to be large windows on the top floor, we note the potential for bird impacts. We suggest that the design, location and lighting of the building be evaluated for potential collision risk. It is possible to purchase glass made specifically to reduce bird flight impacts and bird kills, known as bird friendly glass. The following links to brief educational videos, made in collaboration with Muhlenberg College, speak to this issue and how and how it can be addressed for this and future projects.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AHNWS9fxLuQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=txyqmFiOabE>

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lynn Rothman

Lynn Rothman, Chair

On behalf of the Bethlehem EAC:

Elizabeth Behrend

Ben Guthrie

Elisabeth Cichonski

Brian Nicas

Ben Felzer

Mike Topping

cc: Bethlehem City Council

Mayor Donchez