



10 East Church Street  
Bethlehem, Pa. 18018  
[www.bethlehemeac.org](http://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

July 21, 2021

Dear Ms. Heller and Ms. Samuelson,

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed development at 4<sup>th</sup> and Vine Streets. Our recommendations are in support of Bethlehem City's Climate Action Plan, 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 the business' energy costs, while 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. A 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.

Northampton County adopted the Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) program. C-PACE is an innovative financial tool that allows financing for solar, increased energy efficiency and water conservation projects to be attached to the property instead of the owner. This can free up developers' finances by placing the assessment on the property and structuring repayment through property taxes.

Whenever possible, existing trees should be preserved. Landscaping is important and we recommend coordinating with the City Forester in the selection of native species for both tree replacement and landscaping, particularly species that draw pollinators. Increased greenery along the entry to the street will also soften the building's impact and make it more inviting.

We support the collaboration with the City's Department of Public Works in the approval of the stormwater management plan. In addition to meeting with the traffic bureau to discuss how construction will take place (see Project Notes), the impact of additional vehicles resulting from twenty-five new residential units should be addressed with the City Traffic Engineer.

Due to the height of the building and what appear to be large windows on all sides, 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.

Another recommendation is the inclusion of electric vehicle charging stations and bicycle racks. Both would likely be an attraction to residents.

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