



May 1, 2023

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

Dear Ms. Heller and Mr. Peiffer,

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed development of LVIP VII Lot 23B (1620 E. Fourth 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 utilize sustainable building materials and 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. In addition, a green roof would contribute to lessening the heat island effect, help lower the temperature inside the building and aid in stormwater management.

Furthermore, we strongly recommend that the developer perform a solar assessment, and if feasible, include a rooftop solar system. At a minimum the building could be constructed 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.

Stormwater control, to be coordinated with the City Department of Public Works, is especially crucial with this project given its proximity to a discharge point to East Branch Saucon Creek and the Lehigh River, which was just named the seventh most endangered

river in the U.S. by American Rivers. Green infrastructure, such as vegetated swales and rain gardens, could be incorporated to aid in stormwater management. In addition to slowing stormwater and allowing sediments to settle, green infrastructure aids in the filtration of pollutants. Landscaping is important and we recommend consulting with the City Forester in the selection of native species for trees and bushes around the building that will best tolerate the increasing heat and precipitation resulting from climate change.

In order to make the site more conducive to bicyclists, we suggest the inclusion of bicycle parking. The CAP recommends the inclusion of "easily-accessible, secure, sheltered bicycle parking" (Transportation Strategies T1.2 and T1.9). In addition, consideration may be given to EV charging stations in several of the parking spaces.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lynn Rothman

Lynn Rothman, Chair

On behalf of the Bethlehem EAC:

Ben Felzer, Vice Chair

Ben Guthrie, Secretary

Vibhur Kumar

Mandy Tolino

Mike Topping

Katie Trembler

cc: Bethlehem City Council

Mayor J. William Reynolds