



January 25, 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 Steam Academy at 1838 Center 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.

Furthermore, we strongly recommend that the developer perform a solar assessment, and if feasible, include a rooftop solar energy systems. At a minimum the buildings could be constructed with adequate structural rooftop capacity and electrical rough-ins so that solar could easily be added at a later date. Note that there are currently tax credits for new solar energy systems.

In addition, 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.

Runoff from the site is a concern with the Monocacy Creek, classified as a Trophy Trout Stream, located downgradient. This makes stormwater management and landscaping

critically important. The inclusion of native trees and vegetative buffers should be coordinated with the City Forester, just the developer will work with the City on the stormwater management plan.

We recommend the inclusion of secure bicycle racks/parking spaces. The CAP recommends the inclusion of "easily-accessible, secure, sheltered bicycle parking" (Transportation Strategies T1.2 and T1.9). Additionally, we suggest evaluating the inclusion of electrical vehicle charging stations.

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