

# SITE ADDRESS: 124-128 W. Union Blud.; 114 Sprace St.

Appeal/Application to the City of Bethlehem Zoning Hearing Board is hereby made by the undersigned for: (check applicable item(s):  Appeal of the determination of the Zoning Officer  Appeal from an Enforcement Notice dated  Variance from the City of Bethlehem Zoning Ordinance  Special Exception permitted under the City Zoning Ordinance  Other:  SECTION 1  APPLICANT:  Name Matador Holding Constant Officer  Applicant Constant Officer  Phone:  Email:	PLACARD:  PLACARD:  PLACARD:  EEE:  CONING CLASSIFICATION:  LOT SIZE:  LOT SIZE:  LOT SIZE:  LOT SIZE:  LOT SIZE:  APPLICATION FOR APPEAL TO THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM ZONING HEARING BOARD, 10 E. CHURCH STREET, BETHLEHEM, PA 18018  1. Return one (1) original and seven (7) copies of this application and all supporting documentation to the Zoning Officer, along with the filing fee. Include site plans and/or floor plans as necessary.  2. THE APPLICATION IS DUE BY 4 PM THE LAST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH FOR THE NEXT MONTH'S ZONING HEARING BOARD MEETING. MEETINGS ARE GENERALLY THE FOURTH WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH. ONLY COMPLETE
---	---

Email:
Phone:
Address
Name T5D
ATTORNEY (if applicable):
Email:
Phone:
Address
Name
authorization from the owner of the property when this application is filed.
OWNER (if different from Applicant): Note. If Applicant is NOT the owner, attach written

# SECTION 2. INFORMATION REGARDING THE REAL ESTATE

- Attach a site plan, <u>drawn to scale</u>, of the real estate. Include existing and proposed natural and man-made features.

  If the real estate is presently under Agreement of Sale, attach a copy of the Agreement. If the real estate is presently leased, attached a copy of the present lease.

  If this real estate has been the object of a prior zoning hearing, attach a copy of the Decision.
- 4 2 4.

#### SECTION 3.

### THE RELIEF SOUGHT:

If the Applicant seeks a dimensional variance for any setback, lot coverage, distance between certain uses, etc., please state the following:

	1306,01.9.4	Section of Code
	1,500 g.ft. /un:+	Dimension Required by Code
	716 g.t. Mnit	Dimension Proposed by Applicant
	1,784 sp.ft. Camit	Variance Sought

Received by Date	Property owner's Signature  Property owner's Signature  Date	I hereby certify that the information contained in and attached to this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.  Applicant's Signature  Date	NARRATIVE  A brief statement reflecting why zoning relief is sought and should be granted must be submitted.	If the Applicant seeks an appeal from an interpretation of the Zoning Officer, state the remedy sought in accordance with Sec. 1325.11 (b):	If the Applicant seeks a Special Exception, please state the <b>specific section</b> (s) of Zoning Ordinance applicable:	Ordinance applicable and describe the variance sought.
	811	ion is true	ust be submitted.	te the remedy sought	f Zoning Ordinance	or the Forms

#### Matador Holding Co., LLC 2005 City Line Rd., Ste. 106 Bethlehem, PA 18017

April 25, 2018

# RE: 124-128 W. Union Blvd.; 114 Spruce St.- Zoning Application

Dear Ms. Borzak:

We are requesting a modification to the variances granted at the June 22, 2016 Zoning Hearing for this project. Due to a change in the height of the building as well as a reduction in the number of units, we no longer are required the setback variances granted. However, the lot area per dwelling unit has changed. All other variances granted will not be changed from the original request.

We are requesting a 716 sq.ft. lot area per dwelling unit instead of the required 2,500 sq.ft. per dwelling unit. We were granted a reduction to 499 sq.ft. per dwelling unit where 1,200 sq.ft. was required. We intend to honor the conditions of the June 22, 2016 hearing. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you.

Very truly yours

andon M. Benner, Esq.

iol.ogix.s	Benuer & Trovato 2005 City Line Rd Bethlehem, P.A. 1801.7 Deunis Benaer
	Pennsylvania Association of Realtors
COPYRIGHT PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION OF RI	Buyer Initials: 442
ASC Page 1 of 9 Seller Initials:	It applicable.
A Broker is a Dual Agent when a Broker represents both Buyer and Seller in the same transaction. A Licensee is a Dual Agent when a Broker represents both Buyer and Seller in the same transaction. All of Broker's licensees are also Dual Agents UNLESS there are separate Licensee represents Buyer and Seller in the same transaction. All of Broker's licensees are also Dual Agents UNLESS there are separate Designated Agents for Buyer and Seller. If the same Licensee is designated for Buyer and Seller, the Licensee is a Dual Agent Designing this Agreement, Buyer and Seller each acknowledge having been previously informed of, and consented to, dual agency.	DUAL AND/OK DESCRIPTION AND/OK DESCRIPTION AND/OK DESCRIPTION AND AND/OK DESCRIPTION AND AND AND AND AND AND AND AND AND AN
Transaction Licensee (Broker and Licensee(s) provide real estate services but do not represent server.)	☐ Transaction Licensee (Broker and Licensee(
Seller Agent with Designated Agency (only Licensee(s) named above represent Seller)    Dual Agent (See Dual and/or Designated Agent box below)	☐ Seller Agent (Broker represents Seller only) ☐ Dual Agent (See Dual and/or Designated Agent box below)
Liganies (s) is (check only one):  Liganies (s) is (check only one):  Liganies (s) is (check only one):	Company Fax Company Fax
Fax	Company Phone
Direct Phone(s)  Cell Phone(s)	Company Address
Licensee(s) (Name)	Rriver (Company)
broker)	SELLER'S RELATIONSHIP (Seller is not represented by a broker)
Transaction Licensec (Broker and Licensec(s) provider and Licensec(s) p	Transaction Licensec (Broker and Licensec)
above represent Buyer)  Dual Agent (See Dual and/or Designated Agent box below)  Dual estate services but do not represent Buyer)	Dual Agent (Sec Dual and/or Designated Agent box below)
Licensee(s) is (check only one):  [] Buyer Agent (all company licensees represent Buyer)	Company Fax  Broker is (check only one):  Broker is (check only one):
Fax	Company Phone
Ohrect Phone(s)  Cell Phone(s)	Company Address
Literison's France	Broker (Company)
BUYER'S RELATIONSHIP WITH PALACENSED PROTEST.  Uper is not represented by a broker)	BUYER'S RELATIONSHIP WITH BUYER'S RELATIONSHIP WITH BUYER'S RELATIONSHIP WITH
TOTAL DEOKER	Tax ID #(s):
Date): P6NW2B 9 1 0204 & P6NW2B 7 20 0204	ck; Deed Book, Page, Recording
is the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania	in the municipality of Bethlehem
- 1	- 1 1
114 Spruce Street	Thian Bouleva
PROPERTY	PRO
81749th TAD	
SELLER(S): Casilio IN et. al.	BUYER(S): Matador Holding Co., LLC or Assigns
	This form recommended and approved for, but not restricted to use by, incommenses or an PARTIES

	ASC Page 9 of 9	504
		503
	AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE	502
	Mailing Address Fax Email	500 501
	Ç,	3
	A H	400
4=	Mailing Address Email Email	497 498
	ļ	
	S	496
	Mailing Address Email	494 495
	SELLER (MALL) (MOON)	493
	shareholders pursuant to 15 P.S. §1311.	491 492
		489 490
	Seiler has received the Consumer Notice, where applicable, as adopted by the State Real Estate Commission at 49 ra- Seiler has received a statement of Seller's estimated closing costs before signing this Agreement.	487 488
	COMPANY	486
	AL	404
of loos comme		482 483
	BUYER DATE	481
<del>,,,,,</del>	Phone(s) Fax Eman	480
	Mailing Address	479
	BUYER DATE	478
	Phone(s) Fax Fax	476 477
	Matador Holding Co., IIC	#/0
		1
	Buyer has received the Doposit Money Notice (for cooperative sales when Broker for better is minute deposit money) before regarde this Agreement.	473 474
	Buyer has received a statement of Buyer's estimated closing costs before signing this Agreement.	472
	Code \$35.336.	471
	/ Buyer has received the Consumer Notice, where applicable, as adopted by the State Real Estate Commission at 49 Pa.	469
		467
****	CF 1/4/1/8	465 466
		2 4
		461
** ***********	8// e// h /m/D	459 460
1 trans ext-and to		456 457
	(B) Additional Terms:	454

ASC, Kage y ot y Produced with zipForm® by zipLogix, 18079 Filleen Mile Road, Fraser, Michigen 48026, <u>www.zipLogix.co</u>m

Matador-Casilio



ATTORNEYS AT LAW

FITZPATRICK LENTZ & BUBBA, P.C. 4001 SCHOOLHOUSE LANE PO BOX 219 CENTER VALLEY, PA 18034-0219
STABLER CORPORATE CENTER PHONE: 610-797-9000 FAX: 610-797-6663 WWW.FLBLAW.COM

eschock@fiblaw.com Direct Dial: 610-797-9000 ext 355

James G. Kellar 1927-2002

Douglas Panzer\* ≠ Of Counsel Intellectual Property Law

Albertina D. Lombardi\* Kathleen M. Mills Of Counsel

August 5, 2016

B-Land Co., LLC

Emil W. Kantra II

Timothy D. Charlesworth

Joseph A. Fitzpatrick, Jr.

Edward J. Lentz

Joseph A. Bubba

2005 City Line Road, Suite 106 Bethlehem, PA 18017

Michael R. Nesfeder

Joseph S. D'Amico, Jr.\*

Catherine E. N. Durso

Applicant

irich J. Schock 2005 City Line Road, Suite 106 Bethlehem, PA 18017 Dennis Benner, Esquire

lane P. Long

acob M. Sitman\* ames A. Bartholomew **Attorney for Applicant** 

oshua A. Gildea iteven T. Boell City of Bethlehem Zoning Hearing Board 124-128 W. Union Boulevard and 114 Spruce Street

unthony S. Rachuba, IV\* Gentlemen: Marie K. McConnell\*

'homas J. Schlegel\* matter. Enclosed please find a copy of the Notice and Decision of the Board in the above

Very truly yours,

Muk f. Schock

Erich J. Schock

enneth R. Charette\* /vlm

iretchen L Geisser\*

olin J. Keefet bigail M. Martin larbara Zichermant

/laraleen D. Shields

fallory J. Sweeney\* Enclosure

eronica M. DeAngelo Zoning Officer, City of Bethlehem (w/encl., via e-mail)

City of Bethlehem Zoning Hearing Board (w/encl., via e-mail)

Also admitted in New York \Iso admitted in New Jersey Registered Patent Attorney

# BEFORE 7 OF THE CITY

# Z

Applicant	Appeal & Application of B-Land Co., LLC,
$\cup$ $\cup$	$\bigcirc$ $\bigcirc$
Re:	Dated:
124-128 W. Union Blv 114 Spruce Street	August 5, 2016

# TON

You have the right to a under the Pennsylvania Mun Court of Common Pleas of the The City of Bethlehem is lo Lehigh County.

In order to properly fi Please note that neither the permitted to give you legal a

You must file your ap date of this Decision or your

# YOUR

Dated: August 5, 2016 ) Re: 124-128 W. Union Blvd, ) Re: 124-128 W. Union Blvd, ) Re: 114 Spruce Street  RIGHT OF APPEAL  RIEVED PARTY  this Decision if you are an "aggrieved party" ties Planning Code. You must appeal to the mty in which the subject property is situated. partly in Northampton County and partly in peal, you should seek the advice of a lawyer. g Officer nor the Zoning Board Solicitor is LEASE DO NOT CALL THIS OFFICE.  writing within thirty (30) calendar days of the such an appeal is lost.  AL PERIOD BEGINS  alling this Decision)	THE ZONING HEARING BOARD Y OF BETHLEHEM, PENNSYLVANIA
Dated: August 5, 2016 ) Re: 124-128 W. Union ) Re: 124-128 W. Union ) 114 Spruce Street  20 FRIGHT OF APPEAL AGGRIEVED PARTY  Peal this Decision if you are an "aggrieved cipalities Planning Code. You must appeal County in which the subject property is signed partly in Northampton County and parted parted partly in Northampton County and parted partly in Northampton County and parted partly in Northampton County and parted part	orthampton County Division
Re: 124-128 W. Union Blvd,  IICE OF RIGHT OF APPEAL OF AGGRIEVED PARTY  o appeal this Decision if you are an "aggrieved party" unicipalities Planning Code. You must appeal to the f the County in which the subject property is situated. located partly in Northampton County and partly in located partly in Northampton County and partly in e Zoning Officer nor the Zoning Board Solicitor is advice. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THIS OFFICE.  ppeal in writing within thirty (30) calendar days of the right to such an appeal is lost.  APPEAL PERIOD BEGINS  August 5, 2016 (Date of Mailing this Decision)	
OF AGGRIEVED PARTY  OF AGGRIEVED PARTY  OF AGGRIEVED PARTY  O appeal this Decision if you are an "aggrieved unicipalities Planning Code. You must appeal the County in which the subject property is silocated partly in Northampton County and pale Zoning Officer nor the Zoning Board Solicadvice. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THIS OFFICE advice. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THIS OFFICE peal in writing within thirty (30) calendar days right to such an appeal is lost.  APPEAL PERIOD BEGINS  August 5, 2016  (Date of Mailing this Decision)	
ppeal this Decision if you are an "aggrieve icipalities Planning Code. You must appea ne County in which the subject property is a cated partly in Northampton County and peal an appeal, you should seek the advice of a Zoning Officer nor the Zoning Board Solvice. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THIS OFFICe all in writing within thirty (30) calendar day ght to such an appeal is lost.  PPEAL PERIOD BEGINS  August 5, 2016  the of Mailing this Decision)	E OF RIGHT OF APPEAL AGGRIEVED PARTY
e an appeal, you should seek the advice of a Zoning Officer nor the Zoning Board Soli vice. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THIS OFFIC real in writing within thirty (30) calendar dayight to such an appeal is lost.  **PPEAL PERIOD BEGINS**  August 5, 2016  ate of Mailing this Decision)	appeal this Decision if you are an "aggrieved icipalities Planning Code. You must appeal he County in which the subject property is socated partly in Northampton County and property is social property.
ppeal in writing within thirty (30) calendar days of the right to such an appeal is lost.  APPEAL PERIOD BEGINS  August 5, 2016 (Date of Mailing this Decision)	file an appeal, you should seek the advice of a lawyer. the Zoning Officer nor the Zoning Board Solicitor is advice. PLEASE DO NOT CALL THIS OFFICE.
APPEAL PERIOD BEGINS  August 5, 2016  ate of Mailing this Decision)	eal in writing within thirty (30) calendar days ight to such an appeal is lost.
August 5, 2016 (Date of Mailing this Decision)	PPEAL PERIOD BEGINS
	August 5, 2016 ate of Mailing this Decision)

# BEFORE THE ZONING HEARING BOARD OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM, PENNSYLVANIA

## Northampton County Division

Applicant	Appeal & Application of B-Land Co., LLC,
<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Re:	Dated:
124-128 W. Union Blvd, 114 Spruce Street	Dated: August 5, 2016

### DECISION

## I. Preliminary Matters

A public hearing was held on June 22, 2016, at 6:00 PM before the Zoning Hearing Board of the City of Bethlehem regarding Applicant's request for a special exception and/or a variance.

#### A. <u>Parties.</u>

- 1. Applicants: B-Land Co., LLC appeared and had standing as the owners of the subject property. Dennis E. Benner, Esquire, represented Applicant.
- 2. Zoning Hearing Board: The Board comprised Gus Loupos (Chairman), William Fitzpatrick and James H. Schantz. (Linda Shay Gardner and Michael Santanasto recused themselves.) The Zoning Officer was Suzanne Borzak. Erich J. Schock of Fitzpatrick Lentz & Bubba, P.C., represented the Zoning Hearing Board as its Solicitor.
- 3. Protestant(s) / Interested Parties: The Old Brewery Tavern, the owner of the adjacent property, appeared at the public hearing, through its counsel, Christopher T. Spadoni Esquire.

#### B. Notice

Notice of the hearing was given by public advertisement, posting of the Property and regular mail to neighboring property owners pursuant to the applicable provisions of the

Blvd, ring Board variance.	variance.	), William	to recused k Lentz &		or of the	r of the Spadoni,	ner of the Spadoni,
----------------------------	-----------	------------	----------------------	--	-----------	-------------------	---------------------

and the rules of the Board.3 Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Bethlehem<sup>2</sup>

#### 0 Property

The subject property consists of contiguous two (2) parcels of land located at 124-128 W.

Union Boulevard and 114 Spruce Street, located in the Northampton County portion of the

City of Bethlehem (collectively, the "Property").

#### II. Applicable Law

applicable reported decisions of the appellate courts in Pennsylvania: The Board considered the case under the following statutory authority, as well as under

- The Codified Zoning Ordinance of the City of Bethlehem, Ordinance No. 2210,
- effective September 25, 1970, as amended (hereinafter, the "Zoning Ordinance").
- reenacted 1988, Dec 21. P.L. 1329, No 170, §2 (hereinafter, the "MPC") 2 The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, 53 P.S. § 10101, et seq., as

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> MPC § 10908(1) provides that "[p]ublic notice shall be given and written notice shall be given to the applicant, the zoning officer, such other persons as the governing body shall designate by ordinance and to any person who has by ordinance or, in the absence of ordinance provisions, by rules of the board. In addition to the written notice made timely request for same. Written notices shall be given at such time and in such manner as shall be prescribed week prior to the hearing." provided herein, written notice of said hearing shall be conspicuously posted on the affected tract of land at least one

Code. (2) The City shall give written notice to the applicant and persons who have made a timely request for notice of such hearing. In addition, notice shall be provided to those persons whose properties adjoin the property in question, and to the City Planning Commission. Such notice should be sent at least 7 days prior to the hearing. appeal, provided that a good faith effort was made to provide such notice. matter involved in a newspaper of general circulation in the City in conformance with the Municipalities Planning (1) The City shall publish a public notice describing the location of the building or lot and the general nature of the <sup>2</sup> Article 1325.04(a) Notice of Hearings.
(a) Upon filing with the Board for an application for a special exception, variance or other appeal under this dwelling unit or its accessory structure. Failure of a person(s) to receive such notice shall not be grounds for an the subject lot, unless the application only involves a dimensional variance on an owner occupied single family Ordinance, the Board shall determine a place and a reasonable time, and the City shall give notice as follows: (3) The City shall provide written notice to the last known address of the primary owner of lots within 300 feet of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The custom and practice in the City of Bethlehem is for the Zoning Officer to place the notice in the newspaper post the property with the sign giving notice of the particulars of the hearing at least seven (7) days prior to the and to send written notice to interested parties by regular mail. The Applicant is given a fluorescent sign by the Zoning Officer at the time the Application is filed and the fee paid, and the Applicant is instructed to conspicuously

#### III. Nature of Relief Sought

Applicant sought the following relief:

- Zoning District must be above a first-floor commercial use; (a) a variance from §1305.01(a) requiring that multi-family dwellings in the CL
- lot area per unit dwellings where 1,200 SF is required; <u>B</u> a dimensional variance from §1306.01(b)(2) / §1306.01(a)(4) to have 499 SF of
- existing, non-conforming 2-story building, which is an increase of over 50%; and <u>O</u> a dimensional variance from §1323.04 to construct three additional stories onto an
- setback line to keep the setbacks of the addition identical to the setbacks of the existing building. (d) a dimensional variance from §1306.01(b)(2) / §1306.01(a)(4) to the side and rear

### IV. Evidence Received by the Board

and the Zoning Officer, the Board admitted the following Exhibits: In addition to testimonial evidence received by the Board from Applicant, the neighbor

Application and its attachments.

Exhibit A-1: Aerial/map

Exhibit A-2: Exhibit A-3: Photographs

Exhibit A-4: Site Plan Additional Plan and Letter of Support

#### ٧. Findings of Fact

The Property consists of 16,466 SF and is located in the CL-Commercial Zoning

#### District.

- ? The owner of the Property is B-Land Co., LLC.
- ယ The Property currently contains a two-story building used as a warehouse/storage

#### facility.

4. The existing structure is in disrepair. To the extent the warehouse use is being

conducted on the Property, it is an existing lawful nonconformity.

- 5. Applicant proposes to redevelop the Property and construct a 33-unit multi-family dwelling that would set atop a two-level parking structure.
- 6. The footprint of the building is 11,134 SF, and each of the five floors will have that same floor area.
- 7. Based upon 33 units, the project will have only 499 SF per dwelling unit.
- 8. The Zoning Ordinance requires 1,200 SF of land per dwelling unit.
- 9. To be compliant, there could only be a maximum of 13 units.
- 10. Renovating for 13 reasonably-sized units is infeasible, and due to the grades results in a limited addition without windows for nearly half of the units.
- 11. By providing 33 units, Applicant creates a project that feasibly supports construction of the parking structure at the base.
- 12. The project will provide all required parking on site.
- 13. The project incorporates the existing structure in its design by creating access to the parking from West Union Boulevard for one level and from Spruce Street for the other.
- 14. The building will observe the maximum height permitted in the CL Zoning District.
- 15. The project enables the developer to rehabilitate the Property and re-use the building.
- 16. Adjacent to the Property is The Old Brewery Tavern ("OBT") to the east and an abandoned 5-story factory to the north. Nearby are a multi-family residential structure and a mix of attached and detached residences.
- 17. The project received the support of the Downtown Bethlehem.

- 18. There is no prior commercial use of the Property.
- 19. There is a limited need for the first floor commercial use in this location. There is a viable market for residential apartments in this area.
- 20. The building is nonconforming as to its setbacks. To meet the setbacks would require razing the structure.
- 21. Using the same setbacks for the addition is structurally appropriate.
- 22. Renovations for the project will exceed \$5.5M.
- 23. Most units will have balconies but none will directly abut the OBT.
- 24. The building has been substantially vacant for ten (10) years.

### VI. Analysis of Law

Applicant is the owner of the Property, known as 124-128 W. Union Boulevard and 114 Spruce Street in the City of Bethlehem, Northampton County, Pennsylvania. The Property currently contains a two-story building used for industrial warehousing/storage. Applicant proposes to use the Property as a 33-unit multi-family dwelling. The Property is located in the CL-Commercial Zoning District, where the business use is not allowed.

Applicant requested several variances from the Zoning Ordinance, primarily dimensional, although the variance from §1305.01(a) is unique. It is not a true use variance, since multi-family residential use is permitted in the CL Zoning District but instead Applicant asks relief to not create the required commercial use on the first floor.

The grant of a variance is pursuant to §1302.96 of the Zoning Ordinance

#### 1302.96 Variance

A modification of the regulations of this Ordinance, granted on grounds of exceptional difficulties or unnecessary hardship, not self-imposed, pursuant to the provisions of Article 1325 of this Zoning Ordinance, and the laws of the State of Pennsylvania.

The Zoning Ordinance provides specific criteria that the Zoning Hearing Board must

address in relation to the approval or denial of a variance request:

# 1325.06 Powers and Duties - Variances

- (a) Upon appeal from a decision by the Zoning Officer, the Zoning Hearing Board shall have the power to vary or adapt the strict application of any of the requirements of this Ordinance in the case of exceptionally irregular, narrow, shallow, or steep lots, or other exceptional physical conditions whereby such strict application would result in practical difficulty and unnecessary hardship depriving the owner of the reasonable use of land or building involved, but in no other case.
- (b) In general, the power to authorize a variance from the terms of this Ordinance shall be sparingly exercised and only under peculiar and exceptional circumstances.
- (c) No variance in the strict application of the provisions of this Ordinance shall be granted by the Board unless the Board finds that all the below requirements and standards are satisfied. The applicant must prove that the variance will not be contrary to the public interest and that practical difficulty and unnecessary hardship will result if it is not granted. In particular, the applicant shall establish and substantiate his appeal to prove that the appeal for the variance is in conformance with the requirements and standards listed below:
- (1) That the granting of the variance shall be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of this Ordinance, and shall not be injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare.
- (2) That the granting of the variance will not permit the establishment within a District of any use which is not permitted in that District.
- (3) There must be proof of unique circumstances: There are special circumstances or conditions, fully described in the findings, applying to the land or building for which the variance is sought, which circumstances or conditions are peculiar to such land or buildings and do not apply generally to land or buildings in the neighborhood, and that said circumstances or conditions are such that the strict application of the provisions of this Ordinance would deprive the applicant of the reasonable use of such land or building.

- (4) There must be proof of unnecessary hardship: If the hardship is general, that is, shared by neighboring property, relief can be properly obtained only by legislative action or by court review of an attack on the validity of the Ordinance.
- (5) That the granting of the variance is necessary for the reasonable use of the land or building and that the variance as granted by the Board is the minimum variance that will accomplish this purpose. It is not sufficient proof of hardship to show that greater profit would result if the variance were awarded.

Furthermore, hardship complained of cannot be self-created; it cannot be claimed by one who purchased with or without knowledge of restrictions, it must result from the application of the Ordinance; it must be suffered directly by the property in question; and evidence of variance granted under similar circumstances shall not be considered.

There is a multitude of decisions of the various courts in the Commonwealth dealing with the grant of a variance. It is a general principle of Pennsylvania law that variances should be granted only sparingly and only under exceptional circumstances. Botula v. Zoning Hearing Board of Adjustment of the City of Pittsburgh, 450 A.2d 637 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 1982); Schaefer v. Zoning Hearing Board of Adjustment of the City of Pittsburgh, 435 A.2d 289 (Pa. Commw. Ct. 1981). A variance applicant must show that unnecessary hardship will result if the variance is denied and that the proposed use is not contrary to the public interest. Allegheny West Civic Counsel, Inc. v. Zoning Bd. of Adjustment of the City of Pittsburgh, 689 A.2d 225 (Pa. 1997).

The Board believes that Applicant met its burden of proof for the variances. The Property contains an outdated, undersized warehouse building. Applicant is a residential developer, which is asking to expand and convert the building on the Property to a multi-family use. That use is permitted but only in conjunction with a first-floor commercial use. Applicant offered testimony concerning the physical hardships of the Property that inhibit use of the Property in conformity with the Zoning Ordinance.

- The Property is only 16,466 SF in area, which would be atypically small for a modern warehouse.
- There is little outdoor space to create the appropriate warehouse design.
- The building on the Property is in need of significant renovation irrespective of whether the use is industrial, commercial or residential in nature.
- The use for a warehouse is not a permitted use in the CL District.
- To meet the required setbacks, it would be necessary to raze the building.
- The Property is uniquely situated. It is proximate to the City's vibrant downtown, but in an area in flux. The Property abuts an abandoned manufacturing building, is near the highway and railroad trucks and is on the edge of the revitalized area.
- The Property is located in an area that is mixed in character, various residential uses, a restaurant/bar, the abandoned structure, and a vacant lot.

Regarding the specific variances requested, the Board concluded the following

- o Section 1305.01(a): Multi-family residential use, even without the first floor commercial use, is more consistent with the Zoning Ordinance than warehousing, which is only allowed in the CL District as accessory to a permitted use and not as a principal use. Further, unlike the downtown proper, where residential over top of a business is the norm, here that type of use is in the minority. The Property is not in an area of heavy foot traffic. The evidence, in conjunction with the Board's knowledge of the neighborhoods in the City, leads it to agree that the commercial first floor should not be required.
- o Section 1306.01(b)(2) / 1306.01(a)(4): With the expansion of the building, the land area per unit falls short of the requirement. Applicant presented sufficient evidence why the required area is unnecessary, in particular its ability to provide on lot the parking needed under the Zoning Ordinance. The permission to have additional units (which drives down the lot area per unit) makes the project viable.
- o Section 1323.04: The building is nonconforming. Even if that condition would have allowed a 50% expansion of its floor area, the expansion exceeds that. However, the expansion allows for off-street parking on the first floor. Further, the area of the expansion is the same footprint as the nonconforming structure and is an expansion upward not creating more lot coverage.
- o Section 1306.01(b)(2) / 1306.01(a)(4): Since the expansion is up, not out, the expansion does not increase the nonconformity of the setbacks. The Board agrees with Applicant that using the same footprint is appropriate.

The neighboring property owner appeared at the hearing and raised the concern that a significant residential presence might conflict with its restaurant/bar use next door, in particular

its outdoor patio. Applicant testified that in a city, such a combination of uses is typical. Further,

none of the balconies directly abut the outdoor patio and all are well above it in elevation. However, as will be noted in its decision, the Board did believe that safeguards in the form of conditions to the approval (which the law permits when granting a variance) are appropriate.

## VII. Conclusions of Law

- 1. Applicant demonstrated that the Property is subject to unique circumstances.
- 2. Applicant demonstrated that physical conditions of the Property inhibit its use in conformance with the Zoning Ordinance.
- 3. Applicant demonstrates that the relief will cause no harm to the public welfare.
- 4. Applicant demonstrated the relief is the minimum requested.

## VIII. Decision of the Board

Based upon the foregoing, by a 3-0 vote, the Zoning Hearing Board granted variances to §1305.01(a), §1306.01(b)(2) / 1306.01(a)(4) and §1323.04 of the Zoning Ordinance, <u>SUBJECT TO</u> the following conditions:

- the building from the outdoor seating area on the adjacent property. To the fullest extent possible, a buffer of plantings and/or a fence shall separate
- side of the apartment adjacent to the neighboring property. (Alternatively, windows that are corner of each of Floors Two through Four) neighboring property shall have no window on the inoperable, i.e., do not open, can be used.) The apartments nearest to the outdoor area of the 2 bedroom unit in the southeast
- seating and musical entertainment. The statement shall list the current restaurant hours. lease, acknowledges it is aware the apartment building abuts a restaurant/bar that utilizes outdoor Applicant shall include in its lease a statement that the tenant, by signing the

THE BOARD:

Voting to Grant the Use Variance:

/s/ Gus Loupos GUS LOUPOS

Chairman

/s/ William Fitzpatrick
WILLIAM FITZPATRICK

Member

Zoning Officer

SUZANNE BORZAK,

/s/ Suzanne Borzak

Solicitor

/s/ James Schantz

JAMES SCHANTZ Member

recused themselves.) (Linda Shay Gardner and Michael Santanasto

DATE OF WRITTEN DECISION: August 5, 2016 DATE(S) OF HEARING: June 22, 2016

10

# B BEFORE THE ZONING HEARING BOARD OF THE CITY OF BETHLEHEM, PENNSYLVANIA

## **Northampton County Division**

Applicant	Appeal & Application of B-Land Co., LLC,
$\sim$	$\bigcirc$
Re:	Dated
Re: 124-128 W. Union Blvd 114 Spruce Street	Dated: August 5, 2016

### Certificate of Service

I, Erich J. Schock, Solicitor, do herby certify that I sent a true and correct copy of the forgoing Decision to the Applicant and its counsel by regular U.S. Mail sent first class to the addresses and on the date set forth below:

B-Land Co., LLC 2005 City Line Road, Suite 106 Bethlehem, PA 18017 Applicant

Dennis Benner, Esquire 2005 City Line Road, Suite 106 Bethlehem, PA 18017

Attorney for Applicant

FITZPATENOK LENTZ & BUBBA, P.C.

BY: ERIC

Date:

August 5, 2016

ERICH J. SCHOCK, ESQUIRE
Atty. Id. No.65475
4001 Schoolhouse Lane, P.O. Box 219
Center Valley, PA 18034-0219
Attorney for Zoning Hearing Board
Of the City of Bethlehem

