



# City OF BETHLEHEM

BUREAU OF PLANNING AND ZONING

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January 3, 2020

Planning Commission Members  
City of Bethlehem  
10 E. Church Street  
Bethlehem, PA 18018

RE: (19-006 Site Plan Review and Landscaping Waiver Request) – 19120007 - Lehigh University Rauch Business School Expansion – 459 - 461 Webster Street – Ward 3, Zoned I, plan dated July 15, 2019.

Dear Planning Commission Members:

The above-referenced plan and attached cover letter from Lehigh University have been reviewed by the appropriate City offices. Per Zoning Ordinance Section 1322.02(a)(3), Site Plan Review, the Planning Commission may recommend conditions for approval that should be considered by the Zoning Hearing Board . . . because of the considerable impacts that these land uses may have upon the community. The plan review is intended to emphasize layout, traffic and neighborhood compatibility issues, as opposed to engineering details required under any later land development plan process

General review comments for consideration are as follows:

## **ENGINEERING**

### **Miscellaneous Engineering**

1. The City is requesting that both abutting streets be milled and overlaid:
  - a) Webster Street from Van Buren Street to East Packer Ave
  - b) East Packer Ave from Webster Street to Taylor Street
2. Four (4) ADA ramps at the intersection of East Packer Ave and Webster Street shall be installed, as well as an ADA ramp at the SW corner of Taylor Street and East Packer Ave.

### **Public Works – Landscaping**

1. The developer is requesting a landscaping waiver to SALDO Section 1349.08.f.3 regarding the amount of landscaping to be provided on a lot located in the Institutional District. Since the applicant is requesting a variance for excessive building coverage, the amount of landscaping proposed falls short by 5703 sf. Any waiver should be subject to providing an in lieu of financial contribution to the City for trees elsewhere in the City.

### **Public Works – Traffic Bureau**

1. As noted in the project engineer's cover letter, a traffic impact analysis will be provided with the full Land Development Submission.
2. The continuous loss of on street parking available for staff, students, and visitors remains a concern. The traffic impact analysis and the updated campus-wide parking analysis must include the overall parking and busing policies for the entire campus and is being reviewed carefully by the City and its traffic consultant.

3. Indicate if buses and large trucks can navigate westbound on Packer Ave and turn right (north) onto Webster Street without traveling in the opposing lane of travel on Webster Street. There is potential to improve the radius on the northeast corner of the intersection with this proposed project.

## ZONING

1. Zoning Relief Letter, Page 2 of 4, Required Relief Chart, Maximum Building Height Requirement, change from 35' to 60'. Also reflect this change on Sheet CS-1, under, "Relief Requested." Note: the building height may be the height of the ROW, in this scenario, Packer Avenue is 60'. The Variance needed is based upon Section 1306.02(c), which increases setback requirements for building heights in excess of 35'. All 3 front yards require a 28.53' setback.
2. Maximum building coverage permitted is 65% and proposed building coverage is 78%. Likewise, impervious coverage proposed is 90% and maximum permitted is 80%.
3. Sheet CS-1, Zoning Data Table, Minimum Rear Yard Setback, Proposed, change from 0' to 0-2.65'. Required setback is 28.53'.
4. 1319.01(a)(39) include a note referencing Campus-Wide Parking Zoning Ordinance Study and indicate the number of off-street parking spaces to be removed, and the number of off-street parking spaces required per ordinance.
5. 1319.02(o) indicate the number of bicycle parking spaces to be provided, and identify their location on the plan.

## GENERAL

1. The shortfall in landscaping provided on the current landscaping plan equals 5,703 sf, which is directly a result of the number of variances proposed, including excessive building coverage, excessive impervious surface coverage, and insufficient front, side and rear setbacks. If the applicant receives these variances, they will be unable to comply with the amount of landscaping required. We recommend granting the landscaping waiver **only** if the following condition is imposed: the applicant shall pay an in lieu of fee of \$500 per deficient tree (5703 sf/200 sf per tree = 28.5 deficient trees as stated in SALDO Section 1349.08.e and f). If the applicant pays \$500 per tree since the equivalent of 28 trees are deficient, \$14,000 will be required. The \$500 amount has been utilized in the tree replacement section of the Zoning Ordinance (Sec.1318.28) when applicants cannot replace the amount of trees that are being removed for development. We feel this is a fair request for the reasons stipulated in this paragraph.

In accordance with Article 1322.03.a.3, we recommend that these comments be forwarded to the Zoning Hearing Board along with Lehigh's Zoning Variance Appeal application.

Sincerely,



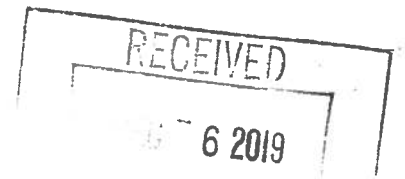
Tracy E. Samuelson  
Assistant Director of Planning and Zoning

Cc: M. Dorner  
Z. Sayegh  
T. Wells  
D. Shaffer  
C. Peiffer  
C. Hager, Langan Engineering  
B. Stringfellow, Lehigh University  
P. Terry, Benchmark Eng.

Enclosure

6 December, 2019

City of Bethlehem  
Bureau of Planning and Zoning  
10 East Church Street  
Bethlehem, PA 18018  
Attn: Ms. Tracy Samuelson



**Re: Site Plan Application  
Lehigh University Rauch Business Center Expansion  
City of Bethlehem, Northampton County, Pennsylvania  
Langan Project No.: 240045505**

Dear Ms. Samuelson:

On behalf of Lehigh University, enclosed please find the following as part of the Site Plan Application to be reviewed by the City of Bethlehem Planning Commission for the above referenced project:

- One (1) copy of the completed Site Plan Application for City Planning Commission;
- One (1) copy of the "Zoning Relief" Letter;
- One (1) copy of the Third Floor Usage Building letter, prepared by Fitzpatrick, Lentz & Bubba;
- A check in the amount of \$300, made payable to the "City of Bethlehem" for the Site Plan;
- A check in the amount of \$250, made payable to the "City of Bethlehem" for the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) waiver request fee;
- Eight (8) copies of the proposed Site Plan for review. Note that to provide clarity on various items required for review, the Site Plan set includes the follow drawings: Topographic Survey, Civil Demolition Plan, Civil Site Plan, and Landscape Plan and;
- CD with a digital copy of the materials.

### **Project Description**

Lehigh University is currently proposing to construct an approximately 18,500 SF Business School building to expand the current Rauch Business Center. The building, is proposed to be located at 461 Webster Street Bethlehem, Northampton County, Pennsylvania. This project area spans the current Lehigh Campus Facilities/Services Planning buildings, the Zoellner Administration building, and adjacent parking lot, which are proposed to be demolished to support the construction of the new business building.

Existing trees, sidewalk, relevant utilities and other associated features are to be removed and/or replaced in kind as indicated on the "Civil Demolition Plan" and the "Civil Site Plan". Proposed utilities are to be installed underground on site. Existing utility poles and overhead electric lines, owned by the City, located along Webster and Taylor Streets are to remain. Six street trees are currently located along Packer Avenue and six additional trees are located within site property.

To accommodate construction of the proposed building and sidewalk improvements, both on-site and street trees are proposed to be removed and replaced. As shown on the Site Plan, fire

truck access zone is proposed along Packer Avenue to service the building. After coordination with the City Forester, the street trees along Packer will be spaced at 30' center-to-center except the fire access area. Due to the overhead existing utilities along Taylor and Webster Streets, the City Forester instructed the use of specific tree species types to satisfy the Zoning requirement and not impact the existing utilities. Six on-site trees are proposed around the proposed building to offset the six existing trees that are proposed to be removed.

*not  
submitted*

Lehigh University has submitted an updated copy of its campus-wide parking analysis, which demonstrates how the campus-wide parking approach satisfies the city parking requirement for this project. Additionally, no traffic impact is anticipated for the project because no additional trips will be generated for the project because it will serve the current campus community. A Traffic Assessment Report, similar to what was provided for the Lehigh University Health Science Technology (HST) Building, will be provided as part of the Land Development submission to the city to document that there will be no adverse traffic flow impacts as a result to the proposed building.

### **Variance Relief**

Please see attached letter for the list of zoning relief requested, along with justification for granting of the relief. Additionally, a table summarizing the zoning relief for specific sections found in the City of Bethlehem Zoning Ordinance is provided on the Civil Site Plan.

### **Waiver Request**

In addition to the variance requests, a waiver request is required from Subdivision and Land Development (SALDO) Section 1349.08.f.3. This section states that, in an Institutional District, a minimum lot area equivalent to 1/3 (33.33%) of the gross ground floor area of all buildings shall be reserved for approved plantings. Because of the narrow lot dimensions and required size of the building, we are providing a planting area that equates to 16% of the proposed ground floor area on site.

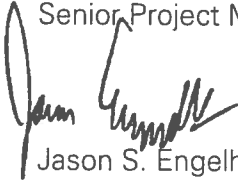
On behalf of Lehigh University and the rest of the project team, we thank you in advance for your consideration of this project and we look forward to your feedback. Please let us know if you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

**Langan Engineering and Environmental Services, Inc.**



Kyle MacGeorge  
Senior Project Manager



Jason S. Engelhardt, P.E., LEED AP  
Principal

KM:jk

cc: Melanie Fluck – Lehigh University  
Steve Boell – Fitzpatrick, Lentz & Bubba  
Sennah Loftus, Robert Douglass – VMA  
Chris Hager, Joseph Kertsmar - Langan