

Martin Tower addendum

[The Bethlehem Gadfly](#) [Martin Tower](#) March 4, 2021

🌀 *Latest in a series of posts on Martin Tower* 🌀

Martin Tower: Planning Commission, March 11, 5PM

Martin Tower hearing: City Council April 20

Martin Tower petition

Sara has more and better info than I had in yesterday's post.

ref: **[The Martin Tower site — almost two years later](#)**

selections from Sara k. Satullo, "We've got our 1st glimpse at Martin Tower plans in 2 years. Check them out." [lehighvalleylive.com](#), March 3, 2021.

The owners of the 53-acre Martin Tower property have submitted updated plans for the massive redevelopment project for the first time in nearly two years.

The developers want to tweak the city zoning rules governing the redevelopment of the former Bethlehem Steel Corp. world headquarters to allow for more parking near proposed medical buildings.

The original master plan shows eight buildings plus the apartment complex. The new submitted plans show 10 buildings, although not all of them are labeled.

The developer proposes two large three-story medical office buildings and a grocery store along the Eighth Avenue property frontage and a professional office building fronting on Eaton Avenue, Ronca writes in his Feb. 15 letter.

The plans show a one-story retail building along Eighth — presumably the grocery store — along with two three-story medical buildings and a three-story office building along Eaton. There is now a one-story office building next to the one-story 130-room hotel and two restaurants where one is proposed in the master plan. The gas station and convenience store remain as well as another building.

Ronca is asking to tweak the property's zoning to put more parking in front of buildings fronting on Eighth and Eaton avenues. To minimize parking lots alongside the major roads, zoning limits development on the property to one driving aisle and one row of parking spaces between a commercial building and the curb line of an arterial street.

Ronca argues in his letter the current zoning rules creates poor vehicle circulation around the medical office buildings and poor accessibility to the drop-off entrance facing the main streets. The majority of the medical office building patrons are elderly and they'd be forced to park behind the buildings and walk a long distance to enter, Ronca writes. And it will require losing parking spaces around the grocery store, including handicapped spots.

Ronca also proposes adding an entrance to the property off of Eighth Avenue for direct access to the proposed medical buildings. The developer wants to make the three-way signalized intersection at Plaza Drive — where the CVS and St. Luke's medical buildings sit — a four-way signalized intersection. The developer notes his parking tweaks are in-line with existing developed properties in the area.

The developer also proposes developing the existing three-way signalized intersection on Eighth Avenue to create a four-way traffic light, which would provide direct access from Eighth Avenue to the medical office building.

Ronca is also seeking relief from the 30-foot minimum rear yard setbacks to 20