

The old Bethlehem Steel east annex on 3rd St. has “potential to be the most modern and forward and unique business or office space in all the Lehigh Valley”

The Bethlehem Gadfly Development April 21, 2021

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selections from [Sara K. Satullo](#), “[A look at what’s envisioned for the Bethlehem Steel General Office annex.](#)” [lehighvalleylive.com](#), April 15, 2021.

Developers envision linking the storied Bethlehem Steel General Office building with the adjacent east annex via a glass atrium and transforming the annex into a modern office building for 600 people, who work on a campus that includes a roof deck with views of the blast furnaces.

current east annex, photo Sara Satullo



Peron Development offered the public a first glimpse into its vision for the 120,000-square-foot building at East Third Street and Founders Way in Southside Bethlehem, during a Thursday afternoon meeting of the Bethlehem Revitalization and Improvement Authority.

Peron principal Michael Perrucci, who owns the five-story annex and the 13-story general office building, sees the smaller annex as the perfect way to launch a phased redevelopment of the site. But first he must environmentally remediate the annex to attract tenants.

Peron’s director of development, former Bethlehem Mayor John Callahan, told the authority redeveloping the Steel General Office building property has long been his own white whale. This property is

the lynchpin and tipping point for Peron's ambitious plans to reimagine the Third Street corridor into a live, work, play, knowledge community, Callahan said. This requires bringing more employees into the neighborhood via office space.

"We're certainly looking and attempting to try to restore the entire complex back to its grandeur," he said.

Early concepts call for reorienting the entrance of the annex onto East Second Street and creating a sprawling plaza fronting the campus that Peron hopes is a selling point to companies. The building could feature a roof deck and open concept office spaces.

"I think this building has the potential to be the most modern and forward and unique business or office space in all the Lehigh Valley," Callahan said.

Fully redeveloping the entire Steel General Office complex will be a massive undertaking and require an unprecedented public-private partnership, Callahan said. Applying for the state remediation grant is just the first step.

The massive 115-year-old SGO building was headquarters for Bethlehem Steel Corp. until it moved its executives to Martin Tower in 1972. It has sat vacant since the mid-1990s.

Across from the annex, Peron is in the midst of a three-phase urban infill redevelopment on former Steel parking lots on East Third Street. Five10 Flats features 95 luxury apartments anchored by a first floor Starbucks, the Mexican eatery El Jefe and the future home of Mister Lee's Noodle's second location. Back in February 2020, Peron shifted its plans for Six10 Flats from office space to another 74 apartments with ground floor retail, and the developer plans more office space in a third Flats building at East Third and Fillmore streets.

The Bethlehem Parking Authority also selected Peron and J.G. Petrucci Co.'s plan for a mixed use development fronting the planned Polk Street parking garage at East Third and Polk streets. Plans call for a five-story building with 32 luxury apartments on the upper four floors and a unique first floor retail user. Before the coronavirus pandemic struck,

Polk Street was ready to break ground, but financial uncertainty paired with unexpected emergency repairs at the Walnut Street Parking garage have stalled the deck. The city is awaiting a parking garage condition study to determine its next steps.

Even with the coronavirus drastically upending traditional working environments, Peron still believes the Steel annex is best suited for office space, Callahan said.

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