Approval of 9-story building spurs Bethlehem lawsuit

City Council gave the project a green light last month

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Published: Dec 03 2014 04:35:13 PM EST  |  Updated On: Dec 04 2014 09:15:45 AM EST

BETHLEHEM, Pa.- The South Bethlehem Historical Society has filed a lawsuit against the city to stop construction of a nine-story building on South Fourth Street.

The suit was filed Tuesday in Northampton County Court.

On Nov. 5, Bethlehem City Council voted 4-2 to approve a "certificate of appropriateness" for the proposed 37-unit apartment high-rise to be built on the southeast corner of Fourth and Vine streets.

The suit contends that City Council failed to provide reasons for the action it took in writing, as it legally is required to do by state law.

It also maintains City Council failed to consider the impact construction of the building will have on that south Bethlehem historic district.

Historical society president Stephen Barron said he wants the city to abide by its own ordinances.

He said the size and scale of the project doesn't fit the south Bethlehem neighborhood.

Barron said the foundation for the proposed building will go down 20 feet, deeper than the foundations of neighboring buildings, and not enough research has been done to determine how
that will impact those other structures.

He also wants research done into how much traffic the new apartment building will generate.

He said the city should have a proper hearing on the building, which is proposed to have a restaurant on its street level.

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