

The Garrison St. neighbors respond (1)

The Bethlehem Gadfly 11 and 15 West Garrison St., Neighborhoods, Northside, Serious Issues
September 19, 2019

Festival UnBound

Ten days of original theatre, dance, music, art and conversation designed to celebrate and imagine our future together!

October 4-13

(3rd in a series of posts about 11 and 15 W. Garrison St.)

Five Garrison St. neighbors affected by the zoning change proposal testified against it. Let's look at the first two here: Lauren Miller and Mark Wood.

Gadfly hopes you will take full advantage of the video and not just browse the excerpts. You know Gadfly loves and respects the way Bethlehem residents comport themselves in these situations. Good examples here.

Lauren is emotional and speaks to ideals. Mark is straightforward and practical.

Put yourself in the position of the Councilmembers receiving this testimony. We always must remember that the developer has rights too. He doesn't act or sound like a devil with horns. Tough decision. That's why they get the big money (joke, remember Council is a part-time job and not especially well paid given the time and responsibility).

Think about what you would do. And why.

But wait a couple posts till you hear all the testimony. That's the Gadfly way.

Lauren Miller (11 W. Garrison): <https://youtu.be/UhGRm1CkeVE>

Lauren had a written text ([Miller Re-Zoning Council Meeting](#)), but she spoke forcefully and extemporaneously as well. Gadfly's excerpts below come from both her prepared and extemporaneous words. There are several potential t-shirt slogans here! https://youtu.be/oGO9_u2yV5s

- I'm here for the best thing for our community.
- If I would get what I wanted, I would say no to the changing of the zoning of my house.
- I don't want to live for what I want, I want to live for what is best for everybody.
- Beautiful brick homes — just to build something new, I'm against that. I'm against tearing down something old to make something new for economical prosperity.
- The house that I live in has beautiful windows that will probably never be made again in our time.
- The brick building next to me . . . there's a hidden door for when servants . . . used to take care of the household . . . a historical beautiful building.
- My heart is to preserve what is old and to take care of it.
- LOVE has been a part of transforming our block. Loving your neighbor as yourself transforms a block. It doesn't matter what

you build on a corner, if love isn't there. It doesn't matter how many businesses come in that raises the economy growth.

- Loving one neighbor at a time will change our community, America and the world.
- I don't know what is best for our town and our growth in regards to what we decide to build.
- The second leading cause of death in America is suicide, and it's the highest in our teens. The neighborhood kids come over to my house, and I help them with their homework. Can we be a community that does that for our neighbors.
- I know that when I live in the City in Philadelphia and there was a big building, nobody had time for each other, people just went from left to right, and no one had time just to have dinner with each other. This community has been starting to do that. And I hope to grow it more.
- I want to live there, and I want to be a part of building this to be a family community.
- Something special is happening on Garrison St. It's just the beginning of something beautiful.
- The community on Garrison St. is a family community. It's a place where we have time to sit on our front porches and see how our neighbors are doing. That is something worth preserving. That is something worth caring about.
- Great things are happening in this neighborhood, and bringing forth more housing to overpopulate this neighborhood will change the culture completely.
- If you visit our community on Garrison St., you will find that it's a place like the show 'Cheers.' It's a place where everyone knows your name and sadly that's a rare thing to find anymore.
- Building a huge apartment complex on this corner will completely change what this community is about.

- My question for this City is what matters most to them? Does the community and the people that reside here matter, or does ‘economical prosperity’ matter more?

Mark Wood (14 W. Garrison)

- You’re looking at 120ft. as opposed to regular 2-story houses.
- And the other problem I have is parking.
- [The building is] not going to fit in that neighborhood. It’s going to look out of place.
- If there’s a way that you can guarantee that the parking won’t suffer . . .

So chew on these testimonies. We’ll listen to several more neighbors next.

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