

“strongly opposed to the rate hike” (21)

The Bethlehem Gadfly Parking, Serious Issues September 29, 2018
(21st in a series of posts on parking)

Dear Gadfly:

I am writing to object to the proposed increase of parking meter rates from \$1 per hour to \$1.50. I am strongly opposed to the rate hike for two reasons.

First of all, I'm afraid the action will make shopping in Bethlehem even less attractive than it already is. I, for one, used to enjoy leisurely browsing through the little shops in Bethlehem, but because I have to pay \$1 per hour to be there, I now only run into a shop for a specific item I want. Window shopping is no fun and not relaxing when you have to keep one eye on your watch. Consequently, I now do most of my shopping in the Lehigh Valley or Promenade Malls, where I can proceed at my own pace because I don't have to pay ANYTHING to park! And, as a result, that's also where I do most of my purchasing too!

I think the City needs to think very carefully about what consumer behavior they are encouraging by creating a rate increase. If the City really wants to attract shoppers, finding a way to DECREASE parking fees would be a better idea.

Secondly, I am angered by the fact that our local officials make big decisions without sufficiently taking into consideration the wishes of the taxpayers of their community. I don't remember hearing anything lately about a parking meter increase, and now I am also being told about a possible second parking deck on Southside that may be built with our tax money. I'd like to think our officials could find other more appropriate financial support rather than charging me for a parking deck I will never use. (This also applies to the one that appeared on 3rd and New Streets.)

Bethlehem is filled with conscientious people who love our town's history and desire to protect the unique community we all love. Among these are many individuals who, if consulted, can provide creative solutions to the problems we face. I hope the City gives some consideration to these good people — ask for their opinions and listen.

Thank you.
Vivien Steele