

# Critiquing the votes (65)

The Bethlehem Gadfly 2 W. Market St., Gadfly's posts, Serious Issues December 17, 2018

*(65th in a series of posts on 2 W. Market St.)*

*3rd quarter of the Eagles game. Are you serious? Pray for Merrill Reese.*

At first reading on Dec 4, Council voted 4-3 to approve the text amendment for 2 W. Market.

Gadfly's looking right now at the story about that meeting in the [Bethlehem Press](#). There we learn only who voted which way. Nothing more.

Gadfly's trying to give us something more by enabling you to listen to our Council members and by analyzing the reasons they gave for their votes.

Gadfly has said he wants to be able to vote in a more informed way next time.

And analyzing thought processes is a good way to help do that.

What do our Council members sound like? How do they think? Are they intelligent, thoughtful, fair, objective, articulate – and whatever other traits we value in our elected officials?

So here goes.

Gadfly is not happy with the reasons a majority of the votes were cast.

See what you think.

👍 CW Negron “No” ([see post 47](#))

ON bases her no vote on a negative chain of events caused by a minor zoning change designed to accommodate a business interest that has actually happened on the Southside, a negative chain of events that is in her opinion likely to be repeated by this text amendment. She argues by analogy, one of the commonest and most reliable forms of human thinking and action. Gadfly agrees that the analogy is strong.

👍 CM Colon “No” ([see post 48](#))

MC bases his no vote on the fact that this case has traveled through our legal system and been denied by the highest court in the state. It is an eminently reasonable position to take. Gadfly believes that the alternative “Local knows better” approach defies hundreds if not thousands of years of cultural wisdom, invites exactly the kind of random subjectivity that causes people to feel City Hall is for sale, and leads to chaos.



CM Callahan “Yes” ([see post 49](#))

BC bases his yes belief in a blatant, defiant disregard for the zoning code and a blatant regard for the petitioner and the class he represents. Gadfly believes that there are such grave dangers to the trust in and stability of city government in such a position and attitude that if BC’s vote here is representative of his general subjective approach to city issues, he doesn’t believe that he could ever vote for him or recommend that others do so.



CM Martell “Yes” ([see post 56](#))

SM bases his yes vote on the quality of the renovated house, even though it is not clear that those renovations were performed during an authorized time frame. In doing so SM seems not to precisely understand the nature of the opposition. Gadfly also finds that the specific flaws that SM sees in the mode of opposition argument are themselves severely flawed. And the very fact of this long-standing suit would belie his view of a net-positive in the neighborhood.



CW Van Wirt “No” ([see post 59](#))

PVW bases her no decision on “hard” objective realities like the Court decision, the Comprehensive Plan, the zoning code (the function of borders as a “red line”), and the undeniable truth that “precedent is profound,” as well as significant examples on the ground of demonstrated commercial creep. Gadfly sees PVW providing the most comprehensive view of the controversy expressed in Council statements.



CM Reynolds “Yes” ([see post 61](#))

JWR seemingly (Gadfly is not totally sure) bases his yes decision on a belief that the opposers to the text amendment should be willing to accept commercial presences in their zoned-residential neighborhood, even to suggesting that they move out of their zoned-residential neighborhood if they are not so willing. Gadfly finds that attitude totally unacceptable as well the petulance and impatience JWR shows at his necessary involvement in the controversy



CM Waldron “Yes” ([see post 62](#))

AW does not identify the base of his yes decision. There is no way to judge his thought process. The swing vote in a dead-heat contest by the President of City Council is unsupported. That’s disappointing, that’s insulting – that’s

unconscionable! Gadfly keeps hoping that there is some political strategy at work here that he as a novice doesn't understand. But for now AW's yes vote is — without a rationale — a “novote” and should not be respected but ignored.

Now after the game, we should talk about what this means.  
Do you have some comments on Gadfly's views?