

Democracy in Action (42)

The Bethlehem Gadfly 2 W. Market St., Gadfly's posts, Serious Issues December 5, 2018

(42nd in a series of posts on 2 W. Market St.)

Nicole Radzievich, "In a Nail-Biter, Council Backs Quadrant Staying in Historic Bethlehem. Morning Call, December 5, 2018.

Sara K. Satullo, "Why Neighbors Aren't Excited about This Business Invested \$1.3M in a Historic Home in Their Neighborhood."

lehighvalleylive.com, December 5, 2018.

Jacob Kise, "Bethlehem Council Approves Amendment Allowing Historic House to be Converted to Office." WFMZ-TV, December 5, 2018.

Gadfly left you at the end of his last post urging those of you who were not involved in the 2 W. Market issue to come to the meeting to witness "democracy in action."

Gadfly knew it was a "can't miss" for those involved.

But for the rest of Gadfly followers it should have been a "can't miss" as well.

It was indeed democracy in action, Gadfly's Norman Rockwell small-town fantasy come alive.

Maybe 30 speakers on this the third night of testimony totaling over 10 hrs. total.

When Gadfly spoke he couldn't help calling attention to the vigorous contrasting comments that preceded him by Mr. Fitzpatrick "for" and Mr. Diamond "against" — the high quality passionate presentations that Gadfly has always admired by our residents.

Mr. Rij, patriarch of the petitioners, made a dramatic climactic appearance.

The Mayor spoke.

And then the voting. Tension high.

CW Negrón "no."

CM Colon "no."

Gasp: 0-2.

CM Callahan, long, long, and then "yes."

CM Martell "yes."

O, god, 2-2.

CW Van Wirt "no."

CM Reynolds "yes."

Be still my heart, 3-3.

President Waldron, making us die a thousand deaths as he suspensefully wrung us to conclusion:

*“This is going to be a 4-3 vote [**yes, yes, we get it, but which way?**], which is a rare thing on this Council. More often than not it’s 7-0 because there are clear answers and clear solutions to problems [**yes, yes, history later, which side? which side?**]. This is one where it’s a little bit trickier for sure. Last night we had our 4th budget meeting in which we were discussing a \$78m budget for our city including a tax increase of 3% [**tonight, damn it, tonight, how are you voting?**]. We ended the meeting with one person from the public who was here to be part of that meeting [**There were 2 for most of the meeting, but Gadfly was called away for a meeting with his therapist**]. This goes to show you where a \$78m budget lines up with how people passionately feel about their neighborhood. I think that shows the level of engagement in a both positive and negative way, depending on how you want to look at it [**if you wait any longer, I’m urging impeachment**]. I think it ultimately comes down to the point of what Dr. Van Wirt said [**you, you, President Adam Waldron, you, what are you saying?**], is this a net positive for the neighborhood and the city. And I come down clearly on the side that yes, it is. So I will be supporting the amendment this evening [**Gadfly fainted**].*

4-3 in favor of the petition.

Gadfly, remember, had his wing on denial.

Second reading (and voting) on December 18. So don’t go away.

And stay tuned for some analysis of the evening’s proceedings.