

# **“We are very much trying to provoke conversation” about the Christmas lights (5)**

The Bethlehem Gadfly Christmas, Fun Stuff May 31, 2019

*(5th in a series of posts on Christmas lights)*

*See this [lehighlive.com](http://lehighlive.com) article for a series of pictures of the proposed lighting scheme!*



*Kurt Bresswein, “Rethinking Bethlehem’s Christmas lights: Check out the proposals from a city consultant.” [lehighvalleylive.com](http://lehighvalleylive.com), May 30, 2019.*

- None of the changes are set in stone, and nothing is changing for this coming season. The earliest the new decor may appear would be in Christmas 2020, with a five-year phase-in, said Allyson Lehr, city housing and community development planner. “Major, major fundraising” with community partners will be needed to make the proposals into reality, Lehr said. “This is about feedback,” said Alicia Miller Karner, city director of community and economic development. “We are very much trying to provoke conversation.”
- The city in January hired New York City-based David Weiner Design for \$35,000 to brainstorm ways to freshen up the Christmas City’s holiday look. Weiner said he drew inspiration from the city’s holiday icons, like the Bethlehem star and Moravian candles. Moravians named their settlement that would become Bethlehem after Jesus’ birthplace, on Christmas Eve 1741. And during the Great Depression, city business leaders tried to cash in on that holiday heritage and began marketing Bethlehem as the Christmas City in 1937. “The idea was to create something both unifying from an iconography perspective but could be modulated in a way that could be unique to each neighborhood,” Weiner said Thursday.
- Lots of questions remain, like whether to go with a singular unifying look using all Bethlehem stars or mix in Moravian stars on the city’s north side; Bethlehem stars have a longer tail, while Moravian stars are more symmetrical. Another unresolved point is whether to go with all white lights, or continue South Side’s tradition of colored lights. The city will be soliciting additional feedback on [its website](#) and through its social media channels.
- One idea shared Thursday is to use projectors to turn building facades, such as Moravian College’s Comenius Hall, into light shows for people to view at scheduled times.

- John Halleman, Sandra's husband, said he thought the designs were well presented to residents. "It was nice we had a little bit of voice into it, as citizens," he said.