

A pedestrian bridge: re-inventing the public sphere (14)

The Bethlehem Gadfly Gadfly's posts, Serious Issues, Walkability and Bikeability March 23, 2019
(14th in a series of posts on Walkability and Bikeability)

Spring has sprung.

The sun is out pretty good as Gadfly writes this Saturday morning.

The 5k's are gearing up.

The whoosh of bike tire pumps fills garages.

And the pedestrian bridge is budding.

The PB is among a list of things that might be funded through the Casino Transfer Tax when the Sands sale is finalized.

Says so right in the [2019 City budget](#) p. 278

And Tuesday night City Council approved grant applications for funds for a feasibility study.

Increased walkability and bikeability are City goals.

A PB would firm up a corridor from Illick's Mill across the river to the Greenway and on to the Saucon Trail, which now goes down toward Center Valley, where there are plans for even more connections southward.

A PB also would be an important nexus for the Delaware and Lehigh Trail along the Lehigh River from Jim Thorpe to Easton — and thenceforward to Philly. We could be tempting those bikers to stop off in Bethlehem. Connecting corridors are a big thing these days in the walking and biking world.

They are happening all around us, to everybody's social and economic benefit.

Gadfly didn't think he could be roused any higher about the possibility of a PB in Bethlehem.

But Doug Roysdon brought an emotional ratchet to Tuesday's City Council meeting.

Eschewing (good SAT word) familiar arguments for a PB like parking, safety, bridge success in other towns, Doug took a series of such new tacks as

- the PB would turn Bethlehem into a “completely different destination”
- it would provide “the nicest night-time walk in all the Lehigh Valley”
- it would provide the rather unique opportunity of a historic tour by bike
- if you lived in one side of the river and worked on the other, you could live a life walking to work, enjoying the benefits of better health and saving car expense money
- it would help “create a young town”

Doug saw a PB as “reinventing the public sphere.”

Watch Doug on [YouTube](#).

He took “the road not taken” in effectively giving us more to think about regarding the value of a pedestrian bridge.