

# Billboard news with the backstory I've been fearing

The Bethlehem Gadfly Uncategorized February 26, 2019

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Gadfly:

As you probably remember, my big concern with the billboard is the cost to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for the value it would have had when it's removed for the renovation/replacement of the Hill-to-Hill Bridge. We've discussed this in the past, and there is no way that a new billboard on the east side of the bridge can remain during a multi-year construction project. So we'll have the visual pollution quite quickly, followed in a few years by PennDOT writing a big check to Adams for their loss of use because of construction. I took a couple of photos of the approach to the bridge from Cathedral Church of the Nativity on my way home today. You'll see that the only way they can build either a temporary bridge or a second span is to the east of the existing bridge. They can't mess with either the Sayre Mansion or the Wilbur Mansion properties on the west.

I'm also concerned about the triangle of Petrucci property above the Perkins now designated as a habitat. That's got to be part of the new bridge approach as well. This is no time to give away the store only to have to buy it back in a couple of years at inflated prices.

The solution is to get PennDOT's engineering team (supposedly the same team who did the Fahy reconstruction and who took office space in Allentown and who have been part of the \$11 million already expended on engineering plans) to tell us what the heck is going on.

Why does this matter so much to me? I'm in the Conestoga Court Condominiums on the north side of the river where the two spans are going to have to tie back into one another. Is our parking lot safe? Is our building safe? Will I be negotiating my own eminent domain agreement with the state before construction starts?

Please check the [Transportation Improvement Program](#) for the Lehigh Valley to review the terms ("rehabilitation/replacement") and dollar amounts I've cited. I've been stonewalled by the city and have not received Right to Know

responses from PennDOT. Senator Boscola's office was able to get nothing for me either.

I do have (and anyone can get from Lehigh's digital archives) a handsome PDF of the original Hill-to-Hill Bridge dedication brochure from 1924 if there's interest.



I think you see what I mean. The natural direction takes us to east of current span, not west.

John

*After being denied locally, Adams Outdoor Advertising is suing for the right to construct a digital sign on the east side of the Hill-to-Hill bridge.*