

A plea for affordable housing (1)

The Bethlehem Gadfly Affordable Housing, Gadfly's posts, Neighborhoods, Southside June 12, 2019

(The latest in a series of posts on the Southside and Neighborhoods)

The scene:

Remember the long night meeting on the Martin Tower demolition at Nitschmann?

30-some speakers. Some very animated.

Things wound down.

Discussion fatigue enveloping the hall.

The Mayor made concluding remarks, thanking all concerned.

There was generous applause.

There was the rustle of exiters.

It was over.

We were done.

When an elderly gentleman — oblivious to the fact that last call had been given and the lights were going out — approached the stage-left mic.

To make a plea for affordable housing.

And received the loudest applause of the night.

AUDIO RECORDING UNAVAILABLE IN THIS ARCHIVE

- I've been here in the Valley since 1965.
- It's getting to the point that we can't afford it.
- We can't afford what the new housing costs.
- I would like to see at least a portion of this property [Martin Tower] be put into something that elderly people who don't have the strength . . . the money . . .
- We could move . . . but then we have our doctors here. We can't afford to drive back and forth.
- You talk about luxury apartments . . .

One minute and ten seconds. But unforgettable to Gadfly.

The sun was setting on his life.

The sun was setting on the meeting.

But the audience was roused from Tower torpor, mightily aroused.

Gadfly wanted to run for office so we could act on that plea.

Let's keep that muffled elderly voice and the vigorous chorus of audience support in mind as we think about what the City can do to remedy the lack of affordable housing.

There is a problem, and "we" know in our guts something has to be done about it.