

Pausing on Peter's posts

The Bethlehem Gadfly Serious Issues, Uncategorized, Wind Creek Casino

 *Latest post in a series about Wind Creek Casino* 

Peter Crownfield made two comments on posts recently that are easily missed because of the WordPress format for comments — and I'd like to foreground them here.

Peter: Is this [the newly proposed Wind Creek hotel and etcetera] to be a climate-neutral (net zero) building? Is it to be fossil-fuel free? If it doesn't meet these basics, they should not be allowed to go forward.

We don't have a *real* Climate Action Plan in place yet.

But Gadfly thinks we should be thinking that we have a *figurative* one in place and acting as if it were real.

That is, that every new building now should be held to the rigorous standards of the plan that we will have.

For instance, I'm afraid that the Polk Street Garage will get through without the kind of thinking about solar power that the Environmental Advisory Council folk prompted the Parking Authority about.

The BPA response to the EAC was, to me, far too vague.

For instance, Gadfly is not sure at Planning Commission meetings etc that he hears questions about energy saving design and so forth.

We should be thinking that way even though rules aren't in place, shouldn't we?

If Wind Creek doesn't pass the kind of scrutiny Peter suggests, they should be stopped. No reason why, with their resources, they are not a model of energy efficiency, even without being forced to be.

Gadfly might feel good about Wind Creek's plans to make Bethlehem the no. 1 destination in the Northeast for a water park if at least their campus was a model in this respect.

Peter: I have not analyzed the TIFs in question, nor have I seen any comprehensive analysis by the city. I have seen quite a few comprehensive studies of TIFs (and similar tax incentive programs) in other areas, and most of them indicate a net loss to the municipalities, even after the TIF ends. I thought Bethlehem was going to start analyzing all these incentive programs in terms of financial results, jobs added, and other predicted benefits.

Yeah.

I would very much like to see a comprehensive analysis of the first 10 years of the Sands, for instance.

These incentive programs come with a lot of promises, a lot of hype — have those things been delivered? I almost feel that such an analysis has to be done by an independent body.

So we're seeing hype surrounding the recent announcement of Wind Creek's first major phase.

But what's our experience with such forecasts? Can we trust?