

Gadfly floats a solution

The Bethlehem Gadfly 548 N. New St., Neighborhoods, Northside, Serious Issues September 14, 2019

(5th in a series of posts about 548 N. New St.)

Who's in charge of beauty in Bethlehem?

Gadfly

*"How do you justify changing the streetscape there,
the historic streetscape, so dramatically?"*

Bill Scheier

*"I just ask, does this building fit into the character
of that neighborhood?"*

Kim Carrell-Smith

In this next installment of "The Making of the 548," Gadfly lept to his feet and commanded the podium-less microphone stage-left so that he was virtually speaking into what he thought were the inactive right brains of the City Planners.

Gadfly can't figure out how to do a video-selfie, so you'll have to settle for this still photo to go along with the audio, taken during the undercover phase of his gadfly training.

AUDIO RECORDINGS UNAVAILABLE IN THIS ARCHIVE



- “I’d like to hearken back to Mr. Stellato’s question about design.”
- “I don’t think the Benners answered that question well.”
- “You see the building without its context, without what’s on the left, without what’s on the right.”
- “I think we have to think about how the building fits in to the neighborhood better.”
- “What I would like to see the developers answer specifically is how does your architect, how do you see this building blending in with this neighborhood?”
- “We can’t just look at the individual property.”
- “I would actually like to see a form in whatever comes to you guys to start this process, a form that gives a space where the developer has to answer the question ‘How do you see the property blending in with its neighborhood,’ and I’d like to see a paragraph, or a page, or two pages in which the architect explains that to us.”
- “The answer that you got, Mr. Stellato, has to do with the people who will be in the building, or this is the way that architecture is going for apartments — that’s off-point.”
- “How does this design fit into the neighborhood — not historic district, but still I think we need an answer to that question.”
- “I look at it . . . and I can’t see it blending in, but I’m an English prof, but an architect would say, ‘Hey, Gallagher, this is the way I see it fitting in, this is why I’m doing what I’m doing.’”
- “That’s the kind of answer I think we need.”

Gadfly hopes you enjoyed his three minutes in the spotlight.

But he wants to be sure you note two things that we will return to later:

- he adopted the verb “blend” from his followers (in a comment to a recent post, Dana Grubb suggested “compatible” would be a good choice too)
- he moves toward a possible solution to a (the?) problem in situations like this by requiring a statement from the architect

Gadfly resists the appellation (good SAT word) CAVE (a citizen against virtually everything). His natural instinct is to move toward solutions not just whimper and whine. You will note his “[modest proposals](#)” every once in a while.

But even Gadfly has to laugh at himself. His solution is so . . .
“academic.” Write me (us) an essay, he says.

Chew on this.

to be continued . . .