

A Crownfield medley on the BPA Polk Street Garage presentation (86)

The Bethlehem Gadfly Parking, Serious Issues July 9, 2019

(86th in a series of posts on parking)

Peter Crownfield is officially retired but spends most of his time working with students in his role as internship coordinator for the Alliance for Sustainable Communities–Lehigh Valley.

Gadfly is always worried that, because of the WordPress design, “comments” to posts might get overlooked, so sometimes he moves these comments to top-level.

Here are several from Peter on the discussion of the BPA presentation on Polk Street Garage July 2 that Gadfly didn’t want to get lost.

July 5

Essentially [BPA] bought land from Sands-Bethworks, and a good part of the demand comes from the ‘510 Flats’ building taking over what used to be a large parking area for NCC and for future development of the land that used to be Sands-Bethworks.

Why aren’t the developers required to provide parking under the buildings — or to pay the full rate for every space? The full rate should be based on the total cost per space to build the structure and repay the debt within 20 years. (\approx \$150/month/space)

I do think NCC should pay less than the full rate, because all its costs are all paid either by taxpayers or by low-income students. (The ‘full’ rate could be increased to cover the subsidy.)

July 8

From BPA’s perspective, doing the Polk Street garage first may make sense, because the debt will be added before the Walnut Street project (which will not be challenged as much).

July 8

So often, the city council and/or city administration take positions that might have been progressive 40 years ago, but fail to take into account the changes in such things as driving habits. (Driving by teens and young adults has declined dramatically during that period, and many young adults now want to live in a city and not own a car at all.)

As PVW said, parking in most areas should be provided by the developers/businesses/institutions, and any city-or BPA-owned parking structures should charge a rate that at least covers the cost. (Here, that would be \$125–\$150 / mo.)

Also the city apparently does not realize that encouraging more people to drive in the city conflicts with the goal to have a city that’s more friendly to bicyclists and pedestrians — and it probably will create additional challenges for a successful Climate Action & Adaptation Plan.

Peter