

Think Christmas

The Bethlehem Gadfly Fun Stuff, Local Color March 31, 2019

Nicole Radzievich, "Bethlehem weighs holiday makeover to fit 'Christmas City' nickname." Morning Call, March 26, 2019.

There was a decently charged discussion during the budget hearings in December over whether Payrow Plaza should have a real or an artificial Christmas tree.

It's the kind of subject that heats up quickly. Gadfly followers may recognize it across their own dining room tables.
(*Who hasn't put away the Christmas decorations yet? 'Fess up.*)

Need for a change:

"The current decorations and lighting the city uses during the season is dated and the overall decoration program needs updating," Mayor Robert Donchez said. "As technology changes, so do the options we have in employing new and exciting decorations and experiences for our residents and visitors."

Opportunity for input:

The design team hired by the City solicits public feedback from 5-7 p.m. this Tuesday, April 2, at the Crayola Gallery at Banana Factory.

A good sign:

"The consultant has already begun researching the city's history, sifting through records — including historic Bethlehem postcards uncovered in a Boston library — and wants to understand what the community wants Bethlehem to look like during the holidays."

A mayoral mine field:

"Some changes have triggered backlash. In 1976, after visiting Disney World, then Mayor Gordon Mowrer decided to string the Mayor's Tree in the Plaza Mall with multicolored lights. In his autobiography, Mowrer recalled people asked the newspaper whether the mayor was Mickey Mouse or Donald Duck."

Bethlehem Christmas Moments (tip o' the hat to Nicole) :

- “Christmas City” begins 1937
- with “sparkle and glitz”
- with “the star” and the “big tree”
- 1960s, the white lights
- South side goes multi-colored
- large Advent candles
- some artificial trees replacing real ones on light posts
- last year, lighted stars on Fahy Bridge and Broad St.
- Tuesday, expect Gadfly #1 Mr. Antalics to light up (just kidding, just kidding)

5-7 Tuesday, you have time to pitch your ideas and get across the bridge to attend Council (you're already out!) or home to watch it on tv at 7. Do you remember that Council meetings are now live-streamed as well as available for watching later?