

# The 2 W. Market beat goes on

The Bethlehem Gadfly 2 W. Market St., Neighborhoods, Northside, Serious Issues November 18, 2019

✂ 88th in a series of posts on 2 W. Market St ✂

Gadfly has lost count. But there was another 4hr meeting of the Zoning Hearing Board last week on the challenge to the validity of a text amendment to the “storefront” ordinance originally intended to apply to properties like the one on the left but benefiting 2 W. Market on the right — an ordinance passed by a Council, in Gadfly’s opinion, not in its best hour.



This is the 88th post on the long history over the controversy of the zoning on 2 W. Market, and followers can refresh themselves on that history by clicking [the link on the Gadfly sidebar](#).

Gadfly loves examples of citizen participation, of which there were several at this meeting, and he invites you here to both learn about the issues surrounding 2 W. Market and to enjoy a model of good citizenship through the testimony of Paige Van Wirt.

*How does this zoning amendment impair or impede the residential character of the neighborhood? (3 mins.)*

- “There’s no families in this business to watch little kids on the street, there’s nobody to see that somebody fell down on the corner.”

**AUDIO FILES NOT AVAILABLE IN THIS ARCHIVE**

*What are your concerns given that this property is on the edge of a commercial district? (1 min.)*

- “Now this neighborhood is struggling to come back and have a full residential character to it. Any conversion . . . of a

previously healthy residential home . . . is going to erode the fabric of my neighborhood.”

*Do you have concerns about commercial creep? (1 min.)*

- “This does give a signal that our neighborhood’s zoning is not a wall.”

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*Will this amendment erode the reliability of the zoning ordinance? (1 min.)*

- “As a homeowner . . . I would be much less inclined to buy a property on this block if I felt there were going to be more commercial/residential flips.”

<https://youtu.be/72bHiPiFkJU>

*Describe the importance of drafting the memo to the City Planning Director asking for more data? (2 mins.)*

- “My concern was that there was no impact study done by the City. . . . that we were asked at City Council to adopt an ordinance where there had been no data and research done.”

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*Does the amendment support the general health, safety, and welfare of the residents of Bethlehem? (1 min.)*

- “I understand why this is in the best interests of Quadrant, I get it, they did a great job on the building, but it doesn’t pass the litmus test of being in the best interest of the City, and that’s fundamentally what City Council is here as a representative body of the citizens of Bethlehem to do.”



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*Interesting material came out as Van Wirt parried with one of the attorneys under cross-examination. (9 mins.)*

- “This is a border neighborhood. . . . You’re not going to go six blocks in to the middle of Wall St. to try to set up a business there.”

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*Are you familiar with uses of the properties on your block? (1 min.)*

- “If this amendment could be so broadly applied that it would affect my own home, it made me understand the potential impact this would have on the rest of the City.”

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*Why did you wait so long before requesting data from the City? (2 mins.)*

- “Call me naive, but I never thought it would get that far. Once it was apparent that there was enough people on Council considering voting for it, that’s when I said, O, my God, I’ve got to show them, I’ve got to prove to Council why this is not in the best interest of the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Bethlehem. . . . That’s my job”

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The hearing board will convene again December 11 to continue consideration of this case.