

An abundance of community engagement committees?

The Bethlehem Gadfly George Floyd killing July 9, 2020 1 Minute

🌸 Latest in a series of posts responding to the George Floyd killing 🌸



photo WLVR-FM

Stephen Jiwanmall, “City of Bethlehem Creates Community Advisory Board.” WLVR FM, July 7, 2020.

At the June 17 City Council meeting the Mayor announced he was approached by Esther Lee of the NAACP and that plans were aborning to form a kind of community engagement group to tackle all things African American in the wake of the George Floyd murder.

Gadfly was puzzled by that. Wasn't it clear that the Mayor was about to be “urged” by Council to take on a Community Engagement Initiative? How did the NAACP committee relate to the Council's idea of a CEI.

At Tuesday's Council meeting, Mr. Evans, speaking for the Mayor, indicated the plans for the NAACP group were far along. Listen. Then read the article linked above. Doesn't it sound like the same mission as the Reynolds/Crampsie Smith proposal?

Audio Player not available in this archive

Gadfly is confused. Ha! Not an unusual occurrence.

The Mayor knew the Council proposal was coming.

The group is a “Community Advisory Board,” not the *African American* Community Advisory Board.

Membership is large — 21 — and the purview a sweepingly comprehensive one.

And they are meeting already.

Are we to have two “community” committees?

At first glance, that feels like either an embarrassment of riches or needless duplication?

Why didn't the Mayor merge the two committees?

And, to harken back to a question that's been on Gadfly's mind and just **surfaced the other day** — where is a Latino community advisory board?

Latinos make up around 30% of our population, African Americans less than 10%, and the same issues face both communities.

Actually there is a Latino community advisory board already. Look **here**.

Will it be mobilized similarly?

But kept on separate tracks, never the twain shall meet?

And where does Council's “urged” Community Engagement Initiative fit it?

Does that mean we may have three community groups?

Yes, Gadfly is confused.