

Where are we?

[The Bethlehem Gadfly](#) [George Floyd killing](#) July 13, 2020

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

*We have an opportunity to do something truly momentous.
Anna Smith*

Where are we?

Gadfly's not sure.

After just spending a half-dozen posts or so on last week's City Council meeting, Gadfly's not sure.

When Gadfly was 20, he was an impatient man — time was so expansive, he didn't want to waste any.

Now that Gadfly is 80, he is still an impatient man — time is so short he doesn't want to waste any.

Councilman Reynolds forthrightly and forcefully argued that the rationale for the Community Engagement Initiative is “to start the conversation,” “to create public pressure,” “to create change within the city and within our police department,” “to create a permanent [organic] structure that will change the face of the conversation going forward.”

At 80 your mind skips a beat. Gadfly doesn't get this. The resolution that passed urges *the City* to set up this structure. There is no guarantee that it will happen. And the Mayor has already set up a Community Advisory Board with the NAACP. So what will happen to the Council resolution? It's fate seems out of their hands.

(At Council Councilwoman Van Wirt took note of the multiplicity of committees: “When I thought about all these different committees, it seemed like we were a bunch of brooms trying to do a good job of cleaning up and kicking stuff around and not really organizing enough to sweep it up.”)

Well, there was always the promise of a Council Public Safety Committee meeting. But COVID has shot that to hell. Listen, if you will, to this almost 20 minutes of conversation at the July 7 Council meeting about why there can't be a Public Safety Committee meeting. It can't be held in Town Hall. It can't be held at Liberty. It can't be held in Liberty stadium. It can't be held online.

Audio Player not available in this archive

So where are we?

From the news I'm listening to, I wouldn't be confident that COVID restrictions are going to let up any time soon.

So where are we?

Here's what it feels like to me. Which happened on my street about 10:30. A car alarm went off. Terrible clanging. Never ending. Soon neighbors gathered around the car looking stupidly at it and each other as if our wishes would make the terrible sound go away. Our wishes would not make the terrible sound — a sound that made any other thought impossible — go away.

That's what Council feels like to me. Ringing an alarmed car, impotent to act. Nobody with a key.

Time is not particularly on our side.

Are there any suggestions from Gadfly followers as to what Council should do to advance the conversation that is so needed and so desired?

We have an opportunity to do something truly momentous.

If only we could figure out how to meet.