

# Regrouping on Airbnb (8)

The Bethlehem Gadfly Airbnb, Gadfly's posts, Serious Issues November 3, 2018

*(8th in a series of posts on Airbnb)*

Gadfly would like to regroup here, both for himself and for new followers.

There are two somewhat related issues going on concerning the Northside Historical District. Gadfly got in on both late, tends to confuse them, and thus the two discussion threads are a bit helter-skelter.

The two threads are “Airbnb” and “2 W. Market St.”

The fear that neighbors in the Northside Historical District share in these two cases is, as resident Al Wurth tagged it, “creeping commercialization.” And the desire that unites all of us in spirit with the NHDers is, as Council President Waldron, put it, control of our neighborhoods.

In fact, it was these two cases that caused Gadfly to start the broad continuing thread on Neighborhoods here on the blog.

There’s a lot of Neighborhood activity: some are under assault, some attempting comprehensive revival, some engaged in focused planning. Let’s focus just on Airbnb. Aka “short-term rentals” (STR). Aka “home sharing.”

On the Airbnb issue, Gadfly wants to fill in some old info, add some new info, and bounce off this case to a general point about his followers.

So, since Gadfly’s presentation has been a bit helter-skelter and since new people are listening in, here’s a bit of recap.

And then there will be 2-3 posts in fairly quick succession while I fill in, add, and bounce.

Jay Brew and Mary Ellen Williams are renting three properties – 258 E. Market, 265 E. Market, and 4 W. Church St. — in the Northside Historical District through Airbnb.

The neighbors complained.

City Council passed an Ordinance regulating STR. (December)

The City cited the home owners.

The homeowners challenged the validity of the Ordinance in County Court. (June)

Renting continued.

There was significant resident complaint and discussion at City Council. (Sept 4)

The Mayor stepped up enforcement. (Sept 19)

District Judge Manwaring found the owners guilty of some specific violations of the Ordinance. (Oct 5)

The case in County Court about the validity of the Ordinance continues. So there's the background up to the new development Gadfly can add in the next post.