

Porch thoughts

The Bethlehem Gadfly Affordable Housing, City government, Serious Issues August 11, 2019

(Latest post in the series on City Government and affordable housing)

It is a stunningly beautiful day on the porch in Gadfly's backyard.

Preternaturally quiet.

Next-door neighbors gone for the week. Student renters gone for the weekend.

Just Gadfly. And the birds. And the butterflies. And an occasional lantern fly.

So quiet he can hear the wasps (is that what they are?) drinking from the birdbath.

Great thinking time.

Two thoughts came to mind:

1) A memory of Seth Moglen enunciating a call to action from the newly formed Bethlehem Residents for Responsible Development in front of the Mayor and City Council a few weeks ago that included a kind of threat: we aren't going away, we are paying attention, *we will vote*.

2) At this very moment the Bethlehem City Democratic Committee is hosting their annual picnic in Bethlehem Township (have they sucked all the noise out of town? is that why it is so quiet?).

Those two thoughts led to two others:

3) Nobody's vulnerable to an election defeat in the near future.

4) Where are the Bethlehem Republicans when we need them?

These 4 thoughts arc'd in Gadfly's mind, leading to a sobering conclusion.

Nothing might get done about the “[existential threat](#)” Seth dramatically articulated because the threat about voting the Mayor and Council out of office was empty.

The Mayor cannot run again, and, in any event, the next mayoral election is basically two years away. An eternity. The Mayor isn't worried.

There is a Council election in November, but it is a meaningless mid-term, turnout will be low, and — worst of all — there is no opposition for the primary winners at this time. Does any Council member fear defeat?

So Gadfly started thinking about what a shame it is in this instance that we don't have an opposing party in town that might take up now before the November general election the “cause” that the BRRD and others have generated and spur the active leadership in regard to affordable housing and neighborhood property-value security that comes when your office is on the line.

Will the Mayor and Council — partying right now in the wilds of Memorial Park — be complacent?

Who will step up?

Is it still possible for an Independent to challenge in the general election and shake things up a bit?