

Why keep our own little machine politics system? (66)

The Bethlehem Gadfly Candidates for election, Serious Issues May 21, 2019

(66th in a series of posts on candidates for election)

Local citizen of West Bethlehem, Sarah Andrew.

I love Bethlehem, and being from Bethlehem, and living in west Bethlehem, and all things Bethlehem. I was born and raised here with a few years' hiatus in D.C. and Chicago, and could not wait to move back to raise my family. I consider myself middle class and come from a working/middle class background and that is important to my identity and values.

That said, it's not a skill to be "from Bethlehem." We have our own little machine politics system, and I don't see why it benefits us to keep it that way. If we love Bethlehem, don't we want to open our arms to other folks who see what we see in it, and welcome their views and opinions? Is everyone who moved from out of town an "elitist." (Ugh, that word. What does it even mean?)

Every candidate from Bethlehem has been acting like whoever loves it the most deserves to be on City Council. We get it, you love it here. Hey, so do we! That doesn't, by itself, qualify anyone for the job. A council position is not and should never be a birthright. As campaign financing goes, I do take issue with a totally self-funded campaign. But sharing funds among candidates is also distasteful at best — council members should be accountable to the public, not in debt to each other.

Sarah