

A first step toward a map of Bethlehem neighborhoods

The Bethlehem Gadfly Gadfly's posts, Neighborhoods, Serious Issues December 31, 2018
(the latest in a series of posts on Neighborhoods)

A tip o' the hat and a wave o' the wings to Julia Maserjian for contacting Karen Pooley after Gadfly's December 29 post [Reminding myself about a neighborhood map](#).

Read on — doesn't this sound exciting!

Karen,

Just read your comments on Gadfly and think your idea of a neighborhood map(s) is a good one. When the [Still Looking for You](#) project was developed it was with the goal of residents being able to contribute “memories” about their city. With the exception of “[The Lost Neighborhood](#),” this did not happen. People want something about place to latch onto, and the issue of urban renewal in a particular neighborhood was the thing. Let's talk more about how we can engage in a map-making project.

Julia

Julia,

Thank you so much for reaching out.

What we've found in city after city is that people are most connected to their neighborhood and their block — and the bigger the geography you're talking about (whether the “west side” or the city as a whole), the more likely people are to have negative impressions of it even when they love their immediate surroundings (because you're talking about somewhere else that they don't associate with their immediate surroundings). Geneva (NY) was a case in point of this — people were uniformly down on the city of Geneva but loved the block they lived on and the adjacent blocks. We actually helped them define 11 different neighborhoods (Geneva has roughly 13,500 residents — roughly the same as the South Side), and it completely transformed how people thought of their hometown.

Happy to work on a mapping project! The market value analysis TRF recently completed for the city is likely a good place to start.

Karen