

Should the Banana Factory be (mostly) demolished? (2)

Ed Gallagher The Bethlehem Gadfly Banana Factory Expansion, Gadfly's posts, Serious Issues September 18, 2018

(2nd in a series of posts on Banana Factory Expansion)

Nicole Radzievich, “Here’s what could replace the Banana Factory in Bethlehem.” *Morning Call*, September 17, 2018.

<http://www.mcall.com/news/local/bethlehem/mc-nws-bethlehem-banana-factory-historic-review-20180916-story.html>

The ArtsQuest proposal

Nicole tees up the Banana Factory question for us: “Should the Banana Factory, an arts and education center stitched out of old industrial buildings, be demolished to make way for a \$16 million community cultural center that would provide arts-based pre-school, more classes for senior citizens, a black box theater and more? Or are those buildings, which evoke industrial memories of the D. Theodoredis Wholesale Banana Co., important to keep as the architectural backdrop for south Bethlehem?”

Nicole provides a sketch of the proposed structure (and see the link above for the entire ArtsQuest proposal) and a review of the way both “sides” see the existing buildings: fiscally unreasonable to repair, compromised structural integrity, and lost historical appearance on the one hand versus concern for the survival of the 1920s-era “banana warehouse” and a 2 ½ story 19th century residence on the other. For commission members, “the warehouse echoes the city’s industrial roots — an emblem of the company built by a Greek immigrant who launched his business in Easton in 1921 and moved into Bethlehem by the 1940s.”

There you have it, my good Gadfly followers. ArtsQuest CEO Kassie Hilgert “welcomed the feedback as ArtsQuest continues to work on the design and concept to make sure it honors the past and builds a future as

an anchor of the South Side Arts District.” Great words. Let’s make feedback our business.