

# Time to read that May 22 South Bethlehem Historical Society letter again

The Bethlehem Gadfly Affordable Housing, Neighborhoods, Serious Issues, Southside July 28, 2019

*(The latest in a series of posts on the Southside and Neighborhoods  
and Affordable Housing)*

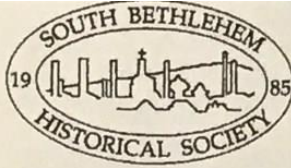
This letter started a chain of Gadfly thinking that you have seen reflected in the blog, as well as a series of significant responses, the latest of which is Gadfly Antalics' recent letter to the *Morning Call*.

This letter should not be forgotten, should not be dusted over. Gadfly is thinking about reposting it periodically.

Lest we forget.

*"We ask you honorable Mayor and City Council members to consider that history is being destroyed in the name of progress."*

*"The economic impact of such progress is making it difficult for some to find affordable housing."*



P.O. Box 5106 ~ Bethlehem PA 18015

Mayor Robert Donchez and Bethlehem City Council  
City of Bethlehem  
10 East Church St.  
Bethlehem, PA 18018

May 22, 2019

Mayor Donchez & Members of City Council:

Over the last several years Bethlehem has experienced much growth. With the construction of the Sands Casino and the entertainment venue of Steel Stacks, particularly, South Bethlehem has become a destination spot for many of our own citizens and those from out of the area and even the state. This has enabled the name and history of Bethlehem and Bethlehem Steel to be preserved for future generations and as a reminder of our small part in the building of this country, our participation in two world wars.

More recently the many construction projects along 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, the expansion of Lehigh University, the closing of many churches, the closing and changes to streets, as well as the demolition of many historic homes, businesses and neighborhoods is changing the historic character of the Southside. The building of luxury apartments and condominiums is also having its effect on the residents of the Southside as the economic impact of this progress is making it difficult for some to find affordable housing.

The purpose of the South Bethlehem Historical Society is to preserve and make known the Second Chapter of Bethlehem's History (1850 – on) by focusing on the individuals, ethnic groups and material evidence which helped make possible the industrialization of South Bethlehem.

The Board of the South Bethlehem Historical Society writes not to stand in the way of progress, but to remind you of the History of South Bethlehem. We write to implore you to consider the economic impacts progress has on the residents of South Bethlehem and the changes to the character of the neighborhoods, which are still as vibrant and diverse as they were when many of our parents, grandparents and great grandparents made their homes here. A developer said once at a council meeting "...in 10 years you will not recognize South Bethlehem..." This statement is rapidly becoming the reality.

We ask you honorable Mayor and City and Council Members, to consider the history that is being destroyed in the name of progress. Consider the economic impact progress is having on residents of the Southside and also to consider the construction projects that have taken place and will continue. Ask yourselves about the history of the architecture that is being demolished and if the new plans reflect the importance and beauty of what South Bethlehem was and continues to be.

Respectfully,

Louis James, President

and Board of South Bethlehem Historical Society