

# Lehigh students: University action “blindsided the Lehigh and Bethlehem community” (11)

The Bethlehem Gadfly Gadfly's posts, Lehigh University, Serious Issues November 4, 2018

*(11th in a series of posts on Lehigh University)*

Remember that what Lehigh does on its own campus is its own business. That is not Gadfly's concern. But this thread began with Lehigh's need to secure (way) off campus parking as a result of its major expansion plans.

Gadfly has been asking for transparency about how that off-campus parking affects lower-paid employees, some of whom will be Bethlehem residents and tax payers. There may be no issue, but, then again, at this time there is not enough information to tell.

This on-campus brouhaha about housing shows Lehigh suffering from bumpy planning.

And intensifies the need to hear further from them before more City decisions are made affecting the surrounding and wider Bethlehem community.

Gadfly would expect that the pious sentiments about listening, and sharing, and including, and “transparencying” expressed in the “Dear Lehigh Student” letter linked below would also apply to the class of people perhaps affected by the parking decision.

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Use these articles for a recap of the Lehigh housing flap:

[Jessica Hicks and Musa Jamshed, “Trembley demolition eliminates on-campus housing for upperclassmen next academic year.” \*Brown and White\*, October 29, 2018.](#)

Housing Services says “no on-campus living options for juniors and seniors during the 2019-2020 academic year.” “The email presents SouthSide Commons, a private apartment complex partnered with Lehigh, as an alternative to on-campus living.” Students would pay more at Southside Commons. “It is unclear at this time if Lehigh will offer students forced to live off-campus additional financial assistance.”

[Madison Hoff, “Student Senate demands response from President's Office regarding housing issue.” \*Brown and White\*, October 30, 2018.](#)

Student Senate sends resolution to Administration demanding more information: “The resolution said the email sent out ‘blindsided the Lehigh and Bethlehem community’ It also expressed concerns for lower income and

international students, pricing of off-campus residences and overcapacity of Greek houses, among other issues.” The Senate sent surveys to students and parents. “This resolution encompasses the voice of the entire student body.”

“Dear Lehigh Students,” memo from John Simon, President, and Patrick Farrell, Provost, October 31, 2018.

Apologizes for the Housing Services memo. Indicates Administration has heard the “thoughtful and legitimate concerns,” heard the “individual and collective voices,” pledges “an open dialogue and transparent process which engages students,” incorporation of “student input.” “All voices are important and have been greatly appreciated.”

Sarah Epstein, Alexis McGowan, Jordan Wolman and Jessica Hicks, “Trembley Park remains open for upperclassmen through 2020.” *Brown and White*, October 31, 2018.

President’s office sends email to students reversing the Housing Services email. No change in process for student housing in Trembley. Not clear on whether there will be changes for other residences. Other offices unaware of President’s email, causing confusion on campus. Residence Hall monitors told not to talk with the press, “or their positions may be affected.” Greystar, the real estate company that runs Southside Commons (the new complex on Brodhead Ave.) was not aware of the original Housing Services email, pleads ignorance. Housing in Southside Commons would be \$2400/yr. more.