

A pause for reflection (95)

The Bethlehem Gadfly Parking, Serious Issues July 22, 2019

(95th in a series of posts on parking)

This kind of number stuff is not Gadfly's cup o' tea.

(More cliches from the English prof.)

Gonna take a break and do some yard work.

Gotta assess damage from the storm.

Think of this as a pause to reflect.

Are some of you saying "who cares whether there's a Polk Street Garage or not?"

"Who cares what the parking costs in the downtowns?"

"It doesn't affect me or my neighborhood."

Gadfly gets it. He's old. Amazon and PeaPod are members of the family. His backyard is all he needs. He doesn't go "downtown" all that much. The increased parking meter rate startled him into rooting around in the car for more change, but it didn't raise his blood pressure. So Gadfly gets it. A parking garage on 3rd Street can feel like a distant concern.

But you know I've been reading urban walking guru Jeff Speck, not only *Walkable City* (2012) and *Walkable City Rules* (2018) but also the report

he did for Bethlehem: *The City Livable Modest Proposals for a More Walkable Downtown* (2009).

In the Bethlehem report he says an important and relevant thing:

Other neighborhoods may be in greater need of assistance. But it is important to remember that a city's downtown is its one neighborhood that really belongs to every resident, wherever they may live.

In addition, the condition of a city's downtown plays a disproportionate role in the city's reputation and thus its future success.

Make a residential neighborhood better, and its residents benefit. Make the downtown better, and the entire city benefits.

Gadfly will see you again on the other side of some yard work.

Be thinking.