

# Competition for the Tasteless Architecture Award

The Bethlehem Gadfly 548 N. New St., Neighborhoods, Northside, Serious Issues December 10, 2019

 *Latest in a series of posts about neighborhoods* 

*“But the city has no jurisdiction over architectural style.”*

*Dan Church*

“Whoever you are, I have always depended on the kindness of strangers,” laments Vivien Leigh as Blanche DuBois in the classic *A Streetcar Named Desire* film.

Jerry reminds us that we depend a lot of times on the kindness of developers.

And sometimes the developer is not a stranger. The owner of 548 lives right there.

*Jerry DiGiulio, “Bethlehem buildings don’t fit historic neighborhood.” Morning Call, December 9, 2019.*

I thought the Skyline West project in Bethlehem had the Tasteless Architecture Award wrapped up, but incredibly a late entry at 548 N. New St. may win. Both are by the same developer/design team. Apparently their aesthetic was greatly influenced by early episodes of “The Jetsons.”

These proposed buildings are in or adjacent to the Historic District of Bethlehem. In researching how it is possible that these buildings could be approved, I found that City Council, the Planning Board and the

Zoning Commission have no say over design, unless the building is in the Historic District.

Not to pick on Bethlehem, the same group has a [like building proposed for Easton](#), also in a historic area. Looks like an alien structure giving birth, waiting for the mother ship to call them home. Neighborhood residents appearing before Easton's Historic District Commission opposed the project. Hopefully, Easton will listen to them.

I hope the people of Bethlehem will Google these buildings, their locations and voice their concerns to the city.

“Neighborhoods are worth fighting for,” Gadfly always says — we must keep making our ideas known.