

# Update on parking and the garages

The Bethlehem Gadfly Parking November 2, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts on parking* 

The BPA attended the City Council meeting October 20 to give an update on the pandemic finances and the status of plans for both the Polk Street Garage and the Walnut Street Garage.

**Audio Player not available in this archive**

The BPA revenues are 24% under budget

- There was a 20% payroll reduction
- Debt service paid for 2020, not sure about 2021
- Contract for proposed Polk Street garage has been canceled, and that project will continue to be evaluated
- Estimated \$23.75m needed for major repairs to maintain the Walnut Street garage over the next 20 years
- So a feasibility study for a new garage has been commissioned

Highlights of subsequent discussion include:

- Councilman Callahan spoke in favor of moving forward right now on a new Walnut Street Garage
- Mixed use (retail) still planned for Walnut Street
- Councilman Callahan questioned the moving of CRIZ off Walnut Street to the Hotel Bethlehem
- Possibility of accelerated meter increases? — too early to tell
- Councilwoman Van Wirt asked about costs of the various studies of Walnut Street without getting answers.
- At least 5-6 contracts with Desman consultant over the last 6-7.
- PVW “uncomfortable” with Authority having a close relationship with consultant when the consultant stands to make a profit from construction

- PVW looks for analysis of new garage independent of consultant who stands to make a profit
- The BPA defended its relationship with Desman consultant as of great value
- Councilman Reynolds: feasibility study of Walnut Street coming at a good time, wait, make no decisions now — uncertainty ahead in the economy
- JWR also in favor of retail with Walnut Street — generating some action/energy in that corridor
- JWR: should have a conversation on the CRIZ
- Life expectancy of new garage 50-75 years