

# Lack of discussion by the BPA before voting

The Bethlehem Gadfly Parking, Serious Issues August 29, 2019

*(114th in a series of posts on parking)*

*Audio from the August 28 Bethlehem Parking Authority meeting:*

**AUDIO RECORDINGS UNAVAILABLE IN THIS ARCHIVE**

*City of Bethlehem ad hoc committee report: [BPA Proposal Analysis](#)*



*[\(FINAL\)\\_1](#)*



Pertinent attendees:

The City ad hoc committee: Alicia Karner, Eric Evans, Paige Van Wirt

City Councilman: Bryan Callahan (liaison to BPA)

BPA Exec Director: Kevin Livingston

BPA Board: Joseph Hoffmeier, Dino Cantelmi, Billy Kounoupis, Lynn Cunningham, Eugene Gonzalez

The BPA financial guys

Nova representatives

Desman consultant

Reporters

Your Gadfly

Several others Gadfly didn't know

The BPA Board was to decide between two proposals for retail/residential development associated with the Polk Street Garage: Nova and Peron.

Board members were sent the proposals and the City ad hoc committee report the previous week.

This section of the meeting was opened by an objective description of both proposals by the BPA consultant from Desman. He made no recommendation but refreshed people on the comparative proposals.

If you know anything about Gadfly, you know he values conversation: "Good conversation builds community."

Gadfly expected discussion before a motion. Gadfly is not all that conversant (good SAT word) with parliamentary procedure, and he is used to more collegial decision-making, so he was surprised at the immediate motion supporting Peron.

Gadfly has attended many other “hot-button” City ABCs where after discussion by the Board, the floor is opened to the public.

Gadfly feels something like that should have happened here.

The City had been asked to participate, asked to make a recommendation, and three committee members were present prepared to discuss their report.

The City report gave several reasons for their conclusion and, perhaps anticipating that the Board might immediately favor the highest bidder, counseled that the finances were more complex than represented and would require more investigation and evaluation.

No investigation or evaluation of the financial matters had been performed.

And the City committee members were not invited to speak.

Nova was not invited to speak. (Gadfly is not sure if Peron representatives were there, but one of the newspaper articles seemed to imply that Peron’s Rob DeBeer was there.)

There was really no interaction among Board members either, no chance to determine how conversant (worked it in twice!) they were with the various documents and the issues.

There was no sense that the Board members weighed issues involved in the decision.

In fact, Gadfly has never seen substantive discussion in any Board meeting he attended nor seen such recorded in any past minutes he has consulted.

The usual procedure in Gadfly's experience is exactly what happened here, a motion quickly followed by a unanimous voice vote.

Let's come back and chew on the issues — was there nothing in the ad hoc report worth discussing? — but as far as process and procedure is concerned, Gadfly feels the BPA failed completely.