

LETTER: Historic preservation guidelines have little weight in South Bethlehem

Express-Times Letters to the Editor By **Express-Times Letters to the Editor**

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Another **building in South Bethlehem will soon be up for approval** on the corner of New and Third streets. The mayor is in favor of it. The historic board and city council will no doubt approve it, as they did with a building at Fourth and Vine streets -- over **legitimate objections of members of the South Bethlehem Historic Conservation District**, whose job it is to make sure that any new development will fit in with existing buildings. Both buildings are to be several floors higher than the buildings around them.

All of this makes me scratch my head: Why have a committee to look out for historic integrity and then ignore it or pay it lip service? At the same time, some other committee makes people jump through historical hoops about the color of a door or putting a storm door on a house.

I think South Bethlehem can and should be revitalized. I think that can be achieved in a way that will be in keeping with the existing buildings on Third and Fourth streets, some of which are very nice to look at. High-rise style buildings are the easy way out. History is worth more than that. Or so we are always told by the powers that be.

Jeff Horning

Bethlehem

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