



10 East Church Street
Bethlehem, Pa. 18018
eacbethlehempa@gmail.com

January 15, 2021

Dear Honorable Members of Council,

In an exemplary manner, Bethlehem resident Jennie Gilrain brought together organizations, including the Sierra Club and the Audubon Society, Bethlehem City representatives and staff, residents, professors and developers with the goal of saving the habitat of the Chimney Swift. Unlike most birds, Chimney Swifts cannot perch and use vertical structures, such as chimneys, to roost and nest during migration. More recently, the practice of capping chimneys has reduced their habitat. A favored spot for the Swifts is the chimney at the former Bethlehem Masonic Lodge on Wyandotte Street, which is slated for demolition.

Owner and developer of the site John Noble and his family deserve credit for their dedication to environmental preservation. In a laudable action, Mr. Noble is taking pains to save the chimney while the building around it is demolished. Should this not be successful, he plans to construct another vertical structure near the original chimney.

The Audubon Society is working to raise funds to contribute to this project and to educate the public about the birds. The group of volunteers is also advocating to name the Chimney Swift as the official bird of Bethlehem City.

In 2013, the City of Allentown constructed a tower mimicking a chimney in a public park for the Chimney Swifts. Providing habitat for the Swifts also benefits humans in the form of pest control because Chimney Swifts eat flying insects, including mosquitoes.

The members of the EAC applaud and support the effort to save the chimney at the Masonic Lodge and encourage efforts to educate the public as well as to preserve and create additional habitat throughout the City. We also support the move to designate the Chimney Swift as the city bird of Bethlehem.

Respectfully yours,

Lynn Rothman

Lynn Rothman, Chair

On behalf of the Bethlehem EAC:

Mike Topping, Vice Chair	Elisabeth Cichonski
Ben Guthrie, Secretary	Ben Felzer
Beth Behrend	Brian Nicas

cc: Mayor Donchez