



December
2009

Bates Hendricks Neighborhood Association

Bates Hendricks Newsletter

Alabama Street Transformation Begins

In November, the Bates Hendricks Neighborhood Association and SEND received a grant for \$22,500 to begin the transformation of the 1400 and 1500 blocks of Alabama Street. This grant will pay for the installation of historic lighting, public art, and dollars to help neighbors fix up their homes. In addition, we expect to hear soon about another grant to fund the transformation of the esplanade.

This work will begin next spring and be completed by next September. Though plans are still being developed, we hope to see two houses on Alabama street rehabbed by SEND, eight to ten homes given facelifts and external improvements, historic lighting, planting and new trees on the esplanade, and some type of plaza with public art created on the south end of the esplanade.

As with New Jersey Street, this work will require lots of volunteer assistance from within and outside the neighborhood. In the spring, we'll be announcing a schedule of work days and seeking volunteers. Why not ask your company or business if they'd like to give a day as volunteers? For more information, contact Jim Mulholland at 636-5096.

A Good Year for Bates Hendricks

2009 was a good year for the Bates Hendricks Neighborhood. Here are just a handful of the good things that have happened to us over the past year.

- The Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center awarded Bates Hendricks a \$1,150 grant to address abandoned housing in 2009. This helped BHNA start our Abandoned Housing focus and the Dirty Thirty list.

- On Saturday, April 25, 500 volunteers descended on Bates Hendricks to offer their skills, sweat and assistance to over twenty residents. Rebuilding Together, a national one day home improvement program, chose Bates Hendricks as their 2009 target neighborhood and spent six months preparing for the one day blitz.

- On May 20, hundreds of volunteers gathered at School 31 at 307 Lincoln Street. Their goal was to build, in one day, a KaBOOM! playground. They did, congratulations!

- On Thursday, June 4th, Shaun Donovan, the United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, toured New Jersey Street to see the work federal dollars are doing in Indianapolis. Apparently, he asked to visit a site of recent improvement during his whistle stop in Indianapolis and the Mayor's office selected us.

- On October 13, BHNA received the Collaborative Spirit Award from the Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center for the best Indianapolis neighborhood project in 2008 – the New Jersey Street transformation. This award came with a \$250 cash award and a nomination for a national award.

- On October 16, BHNA received the Inspiring Places Award at the Neighbor Power Conference for our work in 2009 on abandoned housing. The hand crafted award also came with a cash award of \$1,000. Our efforts in abandoned housing were showcased at the conference as an example of what residents can do. One city official said, "Your neighborhood is better organized on abandoned housing than the city is."

- On October 21, BHNA received word that our work on the New Jersey Street esplanade received the National Keep America Beautiful Award as the best neighborhood beautification project of 2008.

- Over the summer it was exciting to see the new sidewalks and pavement on East Street, and the improvements to the intersections at Morris and Prospect Streets.

December Meeting Includes Dinner and Entertainment

On Monday, December 7th, at 6:30 p.m. the Bates Hendricks Neighborhood Association will meet at the Immanuel United Church of Christ at the corner of East and Prospect. The Association will provide sandwiches, chips, and drinks. **Please bring a small dessert to share.** After dinner, we'll have a short meeting and musical entertainment.

This newsletter is sponsored by:

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From the President:

Last month, I irritated a slum landlord.

Over the past few months, I've been representing our neighborhood at the Health and Hospital hearings on abandoned housing. Twice a month, a judge hears cases on neglected and abandoned houses. He orders repairs and fines those who do not show up in court or make the repairs. Since last January, many of these properties have been houses the Abandoned Housing Task Force has reported. Indeed, the judge and I are almost on a first name basis.



Usually, when they call a case by address, the inspector and I are the only persons present. The judge asks what I want. I tell him to fine them. He fines them \$2500 and we move onto the next case. (The judge can fine properties up to \$7500 and these penalties are attached as liens.) It's quick and I'm out of court in an hour.

However, in November, I was surprised to see another man stand and come to the table as well. He introduced himself as a developer (apparently a new name for slum landlord) from Chicago and wasn't happy to be in court. He was even less happy to see me. He demanded to know what right I had to sit at the table. The judge explained that I lived in the neighborhood and had every right to remonstrate. After several more complaints, the judge simply told him to stop talking. In the end, the man agreed to make the repairs on his house and stalked out of the meeting, glaring at me the whole time.

The next day I walked by his property and watched workmen repairing a very nasty double. As of today, it is much improved.

Like many, I often think of what I wished I had said after the conversation is long over. I know what I wish I had said when that man asked what right I had to sit at the table. I wish I had said, "What right do you have to buy property in my neighborhood that you don't intend to improve or maintain? If you're a developer, I wish you'd develop a conscience."

Of course, I didn't say that. I kept my mouth shut and that was probably the right thing to do. I held my ground without attacking him personally. I was gracious even as I defended our neighborhood. I'm proud of that and, if that irritated him, so be it. Maybe Bates Hendricks will gain a reputation as an irritant to slum landlords and they'll decide to buy elsewhere. That would make me happy.

Jim Mulholland

Report from Economic Redevelopment Committee for East Street

From: Greg Allen

The Committee is using the South New Jersey Project completed in 2008 as a working example to follow as they approach the redevelopment of East Street. Keep Indianapolis Beautiful and a local landscape architect are working with the committee to develop a plan to make East street more beautiful. These plans include a possible landscaped median in front of the Speedway Gas Station and the possibility of planting flowering trees down the street. The Department of Public Works is helping by making the street safer and easier to travel with improved markings and traffic patterns. The goal being to make the neighborhood safer, more attractive for neighbors and businesses, and increase the traffic count to local businesses. Improved lighting and additional banners are also being discussed. DPW is also helping us connect the existing bike lane, that currently stops at Prospect, to Garfield Park and the extensive Pleasant Run Bikeway with the goal of connecting at a later date to the Monon Bike Trail making this one of the largest bike paths systems in the Mid-west.



Health and Hospital is cracking down on those neighbors that dump, litter, don't maintain their properties, or negatively impact their neighbors with illegal activity. The neighborhood has identified properties that have a higher than normal number of police runs. And the Police Department is having heart to heart conversations with those neighbors that seem to generate those police runs. The Neighborhood is watching the Village Pantry to see if they take a more active role in reducing the number of runs their property is generating. If they do not take some significant action like hiring additional security to be on site 24 hours a day, the neighborhood may oppose the renewal of their liquor license or require they limit their hours of operation.

The Department of Zoning enforcement, the Indianapolis' senior planner and Indianapolis city architect are taking a look at every business on East Street, what it does, and whether it is zoned correctly. The Department of Metropolitan Development is providing guidance to the committee. The neighborhood association is talking to landlords whose properties have a high number of police runs. The Committee will ask HUD to enforce the 1937 law that evicts anyone living in Section 8 housing in this neighborhood or any other that is involved with a pattern of criminal conduct.

SEND is exploring the purchase of some key abandoned properties that could change the entire dynamic on East Street. All in all there is a great deal happening to be excited about that promises to bring a much more positive future for East Street as a destination, Bates-Hendricks as a neighborhood, and neighborhood businesses as a whole.



Bates Hendricks Neighborhood Association

The Bates Hendricks Neighborhood Association will work to improve the quality of life of those living in the neighborhood through efforts to assure safety, to maintain or improve the living environment and to enhance the spirit of cooperation and neighborliness among all residents.

We meet monthly on the first Monday of the month at the Immanuel United Church of Christ at the corner of East and Prospect at 6:30 p.m. Annual dues are \$3 for individuals, \$5 for families, and \$25 for businesses. Please mail dues to Emily Vanest, 720 Sanders, Indpls. 46203.

December Calendar

December 7 – Bates Hendricks Neighborhood Association Meeting, 6:30 p.m. Immanuel United Church of Christ. The Association will provide sandwiches, chips, and drinks. Please bring a small dessert to share

December 10 – Book Discussion: "Light on Snow" by Anita Shreve, 1:30 p.m. Fountain Square Library. Registration required, call 275-4390 for more information.

December 12 - Christmas at Garfield, 11am-1pm, Oh what fun it is to visit the Conservatory to meet Santa and see Conservatory Crossing, the holiday train and poinsettia show. Jingle all the way to the Arts Center to make toys with Santa's elves. You can also dash through the snow to the Burrello Family Center where Mrs. Claus will have some tasty treats. You'll be laughing all the way! All ages. FREE.

December 12 - Need a Job? Interviewing, 2:00 pm, Fountain Square Library. Adults and teens are invited for an overview of the job interview process and to learn how to best present oneself in an interview, including tips on wardrobe, grooming and communicating. This program will be presented by Danielle L. Smith, a fashion journalist and stylist. Registration Required, call 275-4390 for more information.

December 18 - Candlelight Crossing, 6-8pm, Enjoy the holiday train and poinsettia show during an evening reception with holiday treats. Take time from the hustle and bustle to relax with a cup of cocoa and enjoy the warmth and beauty of our tropical Conservatory alive with the twinkle of lights! Registration required. All ages. \$5/person or \$15/family.

December 25 – Merry Christmas from the Bates Hendricks Neighborhood Association!

