

HISTORIC URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS OF INDIANAPOLIS (HUNI)
THIRD QUARTER MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, August 4, 2016, 5:30 p.m.
Indiana Landmarks, 1201 Central Avenue

Attendees: Chris Carlson, Broad Ripple; Glenn Blackwood, Fletcher Place; Jim Lingenfelter, Fletcher Place; Jim Garrettson, Forest Hills and Meridian-Kessler; Jim Simmons, Garfield Park; Darrell Unsworth, Garfield Park; Marjorie Kienle, Lockerbie Square; Lorraine Vavul, Meridian Park; Jordan Ryan, North Square; Paula Brooks, Ransom Place; Bonnie Ramion, Old Speedway City; Julia Pratt, Old Speedway City; Gary Chilluffo, St. Joseph; Kent Schwob, Watson Park; Jake Miller, Woodruff Place; Sharon Butsch Freeland, Individual Member; Chad Lethig, Indiana Landmarks Staff; and Jess LaNore, Guest.

President Garry Chilluffo called the meeting to order at 5:54 p.m. The meeting got a late start because the guest speaker, who was scheduled to make her presentation early on the agenda, had not arrived. After about twenty minutes of unsuccessfully trying to reach the speaker by phone, email, and Facebook, it was decided that the meeting should proceed.

Garry asked everyone to introduce himself / herself and to be sure to sign the sign-in sheet. During the introductions, Jim Lingenfelter announced that Fletcher Place had received the Grand Prize as “2016 National Neighborhood of the Year” by Neighborhoods, USA. Founded in 1975, NUSA is a nonprofit organization committed to building and strengthening neighborhood organizations around the country.

Lorraine Vavul reported on behalf of the HUNI Editorial Board. She highlighted a few statistics from Google Analytics provided by our webmaster, Jay van Santen. The HUNI website receives an average of 5 new visitors per day, and the average time a visitor spends on the website is 5 minutes. 397 visitors came from direct searches by visitors using their browsers; 152 visitors came from a link provided on Downtown Indy’s website; and 118 visitors came from a link provided on Historic Indianapolis’ website.

The thought behind our having a HUNI website was that people who love historic aspects of one neighborhood probably also love them in other historic neighborhoods. Member neighborhoods have been asked to provide a link to HUNI on their websites. As of June 2nd, seven neighborhoods have done so. Lorraine showed the home pages of Herron-Morton Place and Old Speedway, where there are clear links to the HUNI website. The Editorial Board hopes that all HUNI member neighborhoods will provide similar prominent links to the HUNI site. Lorraine noted that besides the HUNI website, the Editorial Board also promotes HUNI member events via its Facebook page and its Twitter account.

Garry commented on how much the website has grown in content and usefulness since its inception. It’s grown so much that we may need to redesign it at some point. He encouraged all HUNI neighborhoods to use this resource, not only to advertise individual events but also to promote living in historic neighborhoods. Please forward information to your neighborhood’s Editorial Board member.

Marjorie Kienle pointed out that Lorraine has spent an extraordinary amount of time in developing the website. During the billboard fight, Lorraine was updating the site at 10:00 at night with the latest information.

Marjorie then reported on the mixed-use development on Mass Ave between New Jersey and East Streets. Although the Montage on Mass project had a lot of supporters, the primary problem with it was the 40-foot high digital billboard with sound and motion from 7 a.m. until 12 midnight at 90 decibels. However, there were also traffic issues, legal issues, and design issues. So instead of continuing, the proposal was withdrawn. Its new name is Penrose on Mass.

The existing digital billboards on Fall Creek Parkway are on Indiana State property. The ball is now in the Metropolitan Development Commission's court. They will be reviewing and revamping the city's sign ordinance. A public input group was supposed to be organized in July, but it hasn't happened yet. Hopefully, HUNI will have a seat at the table. Thank you to Marjorie for keeping her feet to the fire. According to the billboard companies, Indianapolis is "under-billboarded."

Jim Lingenfelter noted that even more onerous was the fact that the billboard companies tried to circumvent the proper procedure. Instead of sending the ordinance to the Department of Metropolitan Development for review, the billboard companies bought the City-County Councillors' votes and tried to get them to run it through the council, bypassing due process. It took a tremendous amount of education for the Councillors to understand that the guys slipping money into their pockets were trying to bypass the system.

Thanks go to Jeff Miller for alerting HUNI that the City-County Council was going to ram the vote through on the Monday after Thanksgiving. Thanks go to Marjorie Kienle for being "Johnny on the Spot" to spring into action. Jim Lingenfelter noted that Tammara Tracy was in charge of Rezone Indy, and she was informed by her superiors that the sign ordinance wasn't going to be part of it because there wasn't anything that needed to be changed.

Lorraine Vavul wondered if HUNI members might be comfortable in supporting a big screen in another more appropriate location like Pan Am Plaza or some other area where there are no residences. Garry felt that would be a special screening, not a permanent digital billboard

Jim Lingenfelter spoke on the subject of dog parks. Jim has lived downtown for 18 years. He's traveled to other large cities and seen how successful small dog parks are for urban environments. With the growing number of downtown dwellers, there are people walking dogs everywhere. IndyParks has resisted the idea of urban dog parks, because they think dog parks need to be big like the one at Eagle Creek. Jim thinks there is an opening for a prototype or a pilot program for a downtown dog park. Jim would like to know the interest of HUNI neighborhoods for getting together to discuss ideas for having small urban dog parks. He'd like to put together a task force Paula commented that a small dog park needs to be associated with a strip center or a larger park next to it, and not be a stand-alone dog park. Jim's son lives near a successful dog park in Chicago, which works well. Woodruff Place has been working on a backyard park behind its town hall. Marjorie thinks it would be good to have information about successful dog parks in other cities.

She will recruit someone from Lockerbie to be on the committee. Tim noted that historically, people aren't eager to lose green space to dog parks. Jim Lingenfelter agreed to research dog parks in other cities and get a committee organized. Garry will put out a little blurb on this subject.

A brief discussion ensued about the fact that our speaker still had not arrived. Garry noted that Tammara Tracy is the senior planner at DMD, so she's very knowledgeable. We really need to have her come to a meeting, so Garry will try to reschedule.

Glenn Blackwood reported that Indy Rezone has videos that you can watch online. INRC also gives training sessions. Glenn also wanted to mention the transit referendum, which will be on the November ballot. He wanted to know if HUNI would endorse the mass transit referendum.

"Shall Marion County have the ability to impose a county economic development income tax rate, not to exceed a rate of 0.25%, to pay for improving or establishing public transportation service in the county through a public transportation project that will create a connected network of buses and rapid transit lines; increase service frequency; extend operational hours; and implement three new rapid transit lines?"

Lorraine Vavul reported that the subject was brought up at the HUNI Annual Meeting, and in an informal poll, all neighborhoods were in favor. Chris Carlson asked if HUNI had a formal statement from the Broad Ripple Village Association. Lorraine said HUNI does not, but it might have more clout to have written support from individual neighborhoods, rather than one from HUNI.

Secondly, Glenn wanted to discuss the Bicentennial Torch Relay, which will be arriving in Marion County on October 15th. He wondered if HUNI wanted to have some kind of a Bicentennial event to celebrate the arrival of the torch. Garry reported that Nelson Price is working on a remote live broadcast of "Hoosier History Live!" at Bicentennial Plaza. We don't have a lot of time to plan, and we don't have another HUNI meeting before October 15th, plus we don't have a budget, so we may not be able to do anything.

A third topic Glen wanted to mention is that a lot of our elderly neighbors are not on social media. They have interesting stories they could share. We should record their memories. Garry recalled hearing something on NPR about an app. Several people thought it might be StoryCorps. Jim noted that the Irvington library has been recording longtime residents.

Julia Pratt reported on the HUNI table at Indiana Landmarks' Treasure Hunt. It was nice to have a number of HUNI members help staff the table. There were good conversations with visitors to the table. We had a banner with our name on it this year, which helped identify us. Julia wondered if we might have a giveaway that would draw people to our table. Chris Carlson asked if HUNI is a 501(c)(3). We are a sanctioned committee of Indiana Landmarks, which is a 501(c)(3). Why don't we have another membership or donation category that would permit people to fund our needs. HUNI's bylaws are neighborhood-oriented. Historically, one or two representatives have attended HUNI meetings. HUNI is a vehicle for information and inspiration, but the neighborhoods are the ones that take action. We might be able to seek some funding for specific HUNI projects from CICF. We have gotten grants in the past for things like speakers. Historic Meridian Park is working

on a pocket park. It is in its final stages of completion. HMP's summer barbecue was cancelled due to the extreme heat, so they will have a fall chili cook-off and progressive dinner. She also reported that Downtown Indy has quadrant meeting with a one-and-a-half hour presentation about its new initiatives.

Fletcher Place has a grant for how to research the history of your home on Saturday, August 20th, from 9:00 a.m. to noon, at the Bureau at the Hinge. They are working on a coffee table book with a collection of home photos in it. They also plan a holiday home tour in December. Fletcher Place participated in National Night Out. They had an ice cream social, 40-50 police officers, firemen, and some people from the prosecutor's office. They had a proposal from two 9-year-olds to create a Fletcher Place junior committee to plan events for youngsters. They're going to do a Hallowe'en party. Fletcher Place's annual yard sale will be September 10th and annual picnic on September 1. They've also started a monthly game night.

Marjorie noted that several young people who were born in Lockerbie have now moved to Cottage Home. Lockerbie also participated in National Night Out. Unfortunately, there have been a lot of car break-ins. The perps primarily target unlocked cars, although they will break a window if they think they see some. Lockerbie's yard sale will be September 17th, and a block party will be on October 18th.

Ransom Place had 13 car break-ins in a two-day period. On June 19th, they had a dedication of their pocket park just off the Cultural Trail at Camp and St. Clair on June 19th, a 100-degree day. Ransom Place received a grant to update tour materials. This is the 25th-year of the Ransom Place Neighborhood Association. With the new development going in, the neighborhood will double its population in the next year, but it has only 15 on-street parking spaces. There are three single-family homes with no onsite parking. The neighborhood would like to have the resident parking spaces tied to specific homes. They will have a yard sale this Saturday, August 6, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. On Thursday, September 22nd, Ransom Place is having a safety day. IMPD, IFD, Code Enforcement, and BlueIndy have confirmed. They also hope to have, EMS and IUPUI.

Old Speedway City played host to visitors to the 100th running of the Indianapolis 500-Mile Race in May. In conjunction with the race, they had porch parties. The neighborhood had its annual picnic in June. One of their goals is to get involved in the local schools. They've been invited to Back to School Night. They offer babysitting during their neighborhood meetings as a way to get adults involved. On August 27th, a new marker will be installed along a trail for race car builder and mechanic, A. J. Watson. On October 5th, there will be a candidates' forum. Local restaurants are going to provide refreshments. BlueIndy car rental gave a short presentation, which was really interesting. In November, they will be hosting an active shooter presentation to prepare yourself if you find yourself in that situation.

Garfield Park also participated in National Night Out on Tuesday. They had about 175 people in the pagoda. They had a 5-mile rookie run in the park on August 10th. Garfield Park will have its annual block party on September 10th. Garfield Park now has a farmers' market. It began in May and was more successful than they ever imagined it would be. On a bad weather day, attendance

has been about 500, and on a good weather day, about 1,000. Garfield Park is in the throes of a Quality of LifePlan. The University of Indianapolis was awarded a \$100,000 grant from Fifth Third Bank through LISC. This will be the tenth quality of life plan in the city.

North Square's major gateway at Virginia and Grove Avenues has had two rehabilitation projects. IHPC approved a project. The large white house that was once a bakery was bought by the Battistas. North Square just had its National Night. About 40 children and 20 adults participated. Art Squared will be on September 17th, which will include a Masterpiece in a Day contest. At the end of October -- probably the 29th -- they will have a Hallowe'en themed party.

Broad Ripple and the Indiana Bicentennial Commission have organized a festival, which will run from August 11th to August 14th and celebrate the history of Broad Ripple. Since Broad Ripple Park used to be an amusement park, the events will try to recreate as much of that feeling as they can. A recent Butler-Tarkington Neighborhood Association meeting addressed the North Flood Wall project and the Indiana Central Canal, which is owned by Citizens Energy. Due to numerous historic register-eligible structures in the proposed path of the flood wall, its completion is currently at a standstill. Broad Ripple cleanups are held on the first Saturday of every month. The BRVA's Land Use and Development Committee meets once a month to review proposed projects and variance requests. The 12th Annual Broad Ripple Historic Home Tour will be on Saturday, September 24th, with a kickoff party on Friday night, September 23rd. The Fall Art Walk will be on Friday, October 14th. On November 2nd, BRVA will host a Personal Safety Series, co-hosted by City-County Councillor, Colleen Fanning.

Watson Park was one of the four historic districts toured during National Preservation Month. The house into which the tour goes got to go inside sold to someone who was on the tour. A neighborhood block party scheduled for May was cancelled due to rain and rescheduled for June. Their neighborhood yard sale was the same day as Woodruff Place's, plus it rained that day, so attendance was not great. The Watson Park board has revised their bylaws, but they haven't been officially approved yet. Watson Park participated in National Night Out. A progressive dinner is planned for September and a cleanup occur in October.

Marjorie Kienle moved that the minutes from the previous HUNI meeting be approved. Jim Lingenfelter seconded. The motion carried.

Garry thanked Chris Carlson for providing refreshments for the meeting attendees.

The fourth quarter HUNI will be held at the Morris-Butler House at 1204 Park Avenue, on November 4, 2016, at 5:30 p.m. Jim Kienle will make a presentation on the renovation of the Circle Theatre.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Butsch Freeland
Secretary