

**Irvington Town Hall Meeting
Historic Irvington Discussion
February 21, 2004**

Facilitator: Paul Diebold

Discussion: 10:00 am Break Out Session 1

Paul Diebold, facilitator, described the National Register boundaries around Irvington. He explained that the National Register designation is honorific and provides tax credit opportunities, but does not provide protection from demolition or guidelines for new construction or additions.

Diebold explained that a local committee has been working for the past two years to gain support of property owners for a local historic district designation that would provide protection and architectural guidelines. Brian Boyd, local resident, chairs this effort.

Diebold noted that Irvington is the largest National Register district in Indianapolis and would be the largest local historic district if that designation is achieved. Diebold also noted that the committee is only about 146 signatures away from 75% support for the local designation concept.

An attendee inquired as to what the next step is after acquiring 75% support for the local designation effort. Diebold and Amy Bear, Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission (IHPC), explained that the neighborhood must then work together to draft a preservation plan for the area and then gain approval for their plan from the IHPC and Metropolitan Development Commission (MDC). There was further discussion about the steps involved and community involvement needed in order to develop a preservation plan.

There was discussion about how local designation may effect the economic diversity of the neighborhood. Some neighbors expressed concern that the designation and architectural guidelines that come with it will impact the ability of lower-income home owners to make repairs and continue living in the neighborhood.

Neighbors inquired about the benefits/incentives that come with local designation. Diebold explained that state tax credit program. Bear discussed the protection and stability that designation typically brings to a designated neighborhood.

An attendee inquired if a preservation plan will address deferred maintenance needs. Bear explained that the commission doesn't address deferred maintenance, but the staff is willing to work with neighbors and the City code enforcement staff to address deferred maintenance concerns.

Diebold explained that the focus of this committee is to consider:

- The role history should play in the present day Irvington
- The important features of Irvington's past that should be preserved

Visit <http://www.historicirvington.org/> for more information regarding the plan.

- The significant features of Irvington architecture
- How new development can be compatible with existing development

An attendee inquired how the neighborhood planning process will coordinate with the preservation plan development process. Diebold indicated there will be a high level of coordination, but the neighborhood plan may address issues not typically included in a preservation plan and vice versa.

An attendee inquired how the streetscape plans that are currently in development will tie-in to this planning process and the preservation plan development process. It was explained that all will likely overlap in some areas.

Attendees expressed interest in discovering ways to link US 40 in Irvington to other streetscapes/communities along US 40 in Indiana.

Attendees expressed concern that they did not want to see contemporary development to take on a phony historic look or “Disneyland” effect.

Attendees expressed interest in raising awareness and increasing identity in regard to Irvington’s history. Street signs were one option discussed for achieving increased awareness.

Discussion: 11:00 am Break Out Session 2: There is no prioritization in the listing.
What role should history play in the neighborhood?

1. Raise awareness of history of neighborhood
2. Welcome wagon packets to new homeowners
3. Educate realtors
4. Gather Resource listings/Contractor listings
5. Identify a clearinghouse location for history archives (Bona Thompson/ Library)
6. Develop a “Cultural District” atmosphere
7. Market arts/retail experiences available in the neighborhood
8. Increase promotional efforts

Important history/architectural features in Irvington

1. Install Historic identification signs
2. Create Gateways
3. Brick streets
4. Sidewalk Tiles (that call out street names)
5. Brick gutters/Limestone curbs
6. Pursue federal grants for streetscape projects
7. Lighting (acorn globes)
8. Maintain architecture for what it was originally designed (ex. One-family; two-family; commercial)
9. Irving Theatre
10. Original Neighborhood boundary marker located at Arlington & Bridge intersection

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How can new development tie-in?

1. Identify the Irvington “palette” of materials
2. Identify architectural styles present in the neighborhood
3. Look at historic photos / Gather historic photos
4. Develop central resource center
5. Look at failures/successes of other towns
6. Don’t promote “Disneyland” historic atmosphere
7. Look at Library and Hawthorne Family Clinic as good examples of infill architecture
8. Consider simplified, but complementary architecture
9. Consider architectural guidelines for commercial development like applied to the Westfield Lowe’s

People who have agreed to be on the Historic Irvington Committee:

Facilitator: Paul Diebold

Members: Amy Bomke Keating, Pat Brown, Rob Elliott, Helga Hovath, Dean Ilingworth, Joshua Kaufmann, Judy Kosegi, Becky Langsford, Micheal Mace, Emily Mack, Karen Martin, Jennifer Meehan Mills, Joyce Newland, Marty Powell, John Readle, Jennifer Richardson, Kimble Richardson, Dawn Wendel, and Ben Younce

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Irvington Neighborhood Plan, Historic Irvington Committee will be Thursday, March 25 at 6:30 pm at Irvington United Methodist Church.

Notes taken by Amy Bear, Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission