



# MARKTOWN UPDATE

*A publication of the Marktown Preservation Society*

*July 2006*

## Committeeman Javier Madrigal On Marktown

Why did I run for this position? Because I want to make a difference, a positive difference in this community. We needed a new vision and new goals for Marktown, and I need your input and support if I am to accomplish anything in our neighborhood.

The first and one of the most important things I want to get started is a Crime Watch program for Marktown. We already know that the majority of the problems come from young people in Marktown. We need to let them know that we are not only here, but that we are watching and that we will participate in the process to stop the vandalism. As far as that goes, I am also tired of seeing beer bottles strewn across parks and parkways. It isn't bad enough that some drink and drive, but those doing it consider this neighborhood to be their own personal garbage can. That has to stop and stop now!

As most of you know, I've lived here nearly all of my life. I watched as the parks were improved in the 1980s and I watched as the city refused to maintain the trees, bushes and sprinkler systems. I want to see the level of maintenance and overall improvement increased in the Marktown Parks. All of the parks! The park just behind the community center lost a number of trees and bushes the year after they were installed. We have the blueprints for that area and I want to see them replaced this next year. I also would like to see the sprinkler system in that park restored. And while we are on the subject, what about a nice spray park for the kids in Marktown. They have a great one in Wicker Park in Highland, and while I'm not saying we need one that big, we sure could use a place for the kids in Marktown to cool off in the summer.

I'm glad that the Spruce Avenue project has begun, but like many of you I am not happy with the progress these past two months. It seems that days if not weeks go by that the construction crews are

not on the job. I was glad to hear that the row of telephone poles on Spruce Avenue is about to be removed and that the three utilities will be moving their lines underground. The city has also approved the addition of gardens along the sidewalk instead of an additional two foot of concrete. I know my Mom is looking forward to the additional garden space. I want to thank the city officials and Mayor Pabey for making this happen.

One thing I want to see once Spruce Avenue is done is a garden planted in the trellis area by Grove Street and the parking lot adjacent to the center properly paved. Between the dust in the summer and the mud in the winter, it is always a problem.

I would like to see something done about the industrial noise in Marktown. Have you ever just stood outside and listened? That low rumble and hissing of steam pipes has to be coming from somewhere. I am looking forward to meeting with management from local industry to identify the sources of the noise and to work with them in making this a quieter neighborhood.

The Marktown Revitalization Plan came as a surprise to me, but a very welcomed one. Marktown has a number of problems that we, as residents cannot resolve on our own. The revitalization plan will help us address those problems and I look forward to future community meetings on this plan.

I am very glad to hear that they are beginning a citywide cleanup and that Marktown is included in the first area to be visited. It will be nice to see that the unlicensed cars will be removed from the streets as well as the yards! Let's all pitch in and help.

Marktown is a great place to live and to raise our families, but it can be better. I am here as your elected Democratic Precinct Committeeman, but more importantly, I am here as your neighbor and friend. I am here to help make Marktown great once again!



visit us on line at [www.marktown.org](http://www.marktown.org)

# Spruce Avenue Restoration Project Moves Forward With Historic Preservation In Mind

The Spruce Avenue Project in the Marktown Historic District is going to take just a few weeks longer to complete than what was planned. But before you start calling City Hall to complain, there are good reasons for the present delays. To begin, we must realize that this is the last street and that it ties together all of the hard work that went into this project for the past fifteen years. Just getting the street paved is not the goal. Finishing this last street properly is!

As noted on the bottom of the next page, we began with a slight delay due to a broken sanitary sewer line. The important thing to remember is that the repairs were made immediately. (Please see the article for details).

The next problem that came up was the relocation of the fire hydrants along Spruce Avenue. When the street was widened back in the 1970s the fire hydrants were not relocated and ended up in the public sidewalk. With the establishment of the American Disabilities Act, those fire hydrants had to be set back to permit the new sidewalks to be handicapped accessible. In the process of attempting to valve off the water to relocate the hydrants it was discovered that several of the water main valves had not been exercised in decades. What does this mean to the project. Yet another SHORT delay. Fortunately for us, the East Chicago Water Department is committed to making sure that all of the water main valves in Marktown are fully functional and repairs are underway to guarantee just that.

Just as the Water Department thought they had all of the problems resolved, they found that one of the newly relocated hydrants had a leak. Now, it wasn't a MAJOR leak, but water leaks have to be repaired. So, for those who noticed the pond on the corner of Liberty Street on Father's Day, that problem was fully resolved on Monday morning.

But what about the historic preservation portion of the project? To begin with, City Engineer Ernie Jones has obtained funding for the relocation of all of the utility lines on Spruce Avenue. All of the unsightly telephone poles on Spruce Avenue will disappear by the completion of this project. The various utility lines will be relocated to underground conduit and the street lights along this street will be replaced with the historic lighting that was used on the other streets of Marktown. We thank Mr. Jones and the Board of Public Works for making this possible.

The other portion of the project is the reestablishment of the street side gardens along the fence lines on Spruce Avenue. When the Marktown street plan was first approved by the residents/property owners of Marktown in 1990, we were to have gardens in many places where we currently have concrete. The decision has been made to permit the property owners on Spruce Avenue to choose for themselves whether this two foot area will be filled with concrete, or left open for the planting of gardens once again. What a great idea! GARDENS!



*Garden area as originally designed and approved in 1990 by the residents of Marktown.*



*The same area filled in with concrete. Which would you prefer at your home?*

**Historic preservation saved this community from the wreckers ball in 1975 and should be the foundation for this neighborhood for generations to come.**

## Reglazing And Repairing Broken Windows



Broken windows happen whether we like it or not. They are by all means a fact of life, but should still be avoided when ever possible. One of the problems that we have is finding the proper materials to fix a broken window.

These last two months I heard Bob Yapp of Historic Landmarks of Indiana speak of a glazing product called GLAZOL from United Gilsonite Laboratories in Jacksonville, Illinois. At the Restore Michiana Conference and Old House Fair in May a local hardware store has a can on display and I managed to convince them that they needed to sell it to me at the close of the day.

I brought it home and guess what? It worked as good as Bob said it would. It went on easier, stayed in place, finished smoother, and I was able to paint over it in just three days.

When glazing windows, remember to remove old putty, and be sure that the surface is clean and dry. The air and surface temperature must be above 40 degrees F. For bedding the glass, if desired, they recommend you soften Glazol with a small amount of mineral spirits. Always use glaziers points or clips on the glass to hold it in place. Use a clean putty knife, and take pride in the restoration of each of the windows in your home.

## Sewer Problem On Spruce Avenue Resolved

At about 10:00 PM on Thursday, May 25th residents of Grove and Lilac Street realized there was a problem and it wasn't getting any better. Sewage had begun to fill their basements and they had no idea who to call or how to get it resolved. Finally, a call went in to Paul Myers of the Marktown Preservation Society and within a half an hour fore man from the Utilities Division were on the scene.

Apparently, the sanitary sewer main on the intersection of Lilac Street had failed at some point earlier in the day. The Utilities Division stationed two employees to man a pump that transferred the sewage around the break until the next day.

Friday saw the entire area filled with contractors, city employees and engineers who defined the problem and the possible solutions.

While an initial attempt was made to re-

solve the problem on Friday evening, it was realized that the ground water made the site far too unstable to continue.

Saturday morning found additional crews and equipment on site. Dewatering well points were installed around the work site which permitted the repairs to be made without the surrounding soil collapsing into the excavation.

One of the other problems that developed in resolving the sewer failure was that the street light

control box on the adjacent corner was disabled by the backhoe.

Once again the city did not hesitate to call in the proper contractors to repair the problem.

To everyone involved in making the much needed emergency repairs we extend a community Thank You to one and all.



**The height of your accomplishments will equal the depth of your convictions.**

# Restore Michiana Conference & Old House Fair



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Saturday, May 20th found literally hundreds of historic preservation enthusiasts gathered at Century Center in South Bend, Indiana for what has to be considered one of the most outstanding opportunities to learn about historic preservation and to network with professionals and amateurs alike, ever held in Northern Indiana. The event was hosted by Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, the Indiana Alliance of Historic District Commissions, and the South Bend and St. Joseph County Historic Preservation Commission.

The event, formally known as the **Restore Michiana: Conference & Old House Fair**, provided participants with *practical preservation solutions*. Where do we begin? The Old House Fair was a trade show type event with participating corporations, and service groups setting up a miniature trade show in which to promote their products, services or non-profit organization. Participants were able to see first hand what new and old products can do to enhance the restoration of their home. For those not so willing to do the work themselves, a number of contractor or service corporations were on hand to dis-

cuss the services that they make available.

Of most interest were the several corporations that either make quality, historically correct window replacement units, and those who



actually restore the windows of historic homes. With the number of historic homes in East Chicago and Northern Lake County, I would think that one of the companies would want to open up a branch office here in East Chicago or

even possibly in the Marktown Historic District.

While the Old House Fair was impressive, the conference was truly outstanding! Leading off the event was **Bob Yapp** (*center three photos on left*), who in 1986 produced and hosted the national PBS series, **About Your House with Bob Yapp**. The 52 show series was co-underwritten by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Bob has dedicated his career to community planning, historic preservation and central city revitalization. He's been involved

in the restoration or renovation of over 150 historic properties and usually has two to three complete renovations going on at any given time. Oh, and by the way, Bob LOVES Marktown!

**Jim Turner** (photo #1) is a life long resident of Detroit and fast becoming one of the countries hardest work-



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**What we do for ourselves dies with us.  
What we do for others and the world remains and is immortal!**

# A Who's Who Of Historic Preservation



ing preservationists. Jim started Turner Restorations in 2001 as a company specializing in the restoration of wood and steel casement windows as well as tax credit consultation.

**John Seekircher** (photo #2) of Seekircher Steel Window Repair discussed the do's and don'ts of repairing the older steel frame windows.

**Ron Zmyslo** (photo #3) has been involved in the building industry for over 30 years. His presentation on how to create and follow through with a plan to maintain your historic property was very well received and attended.

**Steve Kennedy** (photo #4) from the DNR's Department of His-



toric Preservation provided an in-depth look at what it required to become a Certified Local Government and how to take better advantage if you already have the designation. Steve has been with the Grants Section of the Division since 1996, and has served as Chief of Grants and Administration since 1997. He and his wife are active numbers of their neighborhood organization and are rehabilitating their 1927 home on the east side of Indianapolis.

**Ellen Harper** (photo #5) is the director of Indiana Main Street and works from the program's southern office, in Vincennes, Indiana.



The Main Street program is keyed towards the revitalization of local downtown areas like the old Main Street area in Indiana Harbor and of course, the Market Square Building here in the Marktown Historic District.

**Dan Becker** (photo #6) has served as Executive Director of the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission since 1986. His presentation titled Managing the Certificate Of Appropriateness (COA) process dealt was outstanding. COAs are required when the owner of a property located in a historic district wants to make changes to the historic context of



their property.

**Todd Zeiger** (photo #7) serves as the Director of the Northern Regional Office of HLIF. Todd has a degree in historic preservation from Roger Williams University and a minor in business from Indiana University. Todd presented an outstanding power point presentation on architectural styles and periods of historic properties.

All in all it was an outstanding opportunity to learn more about historic preservation, and to meet some of the most talented and dedicated historic preservationists from across the Midwest. Historic preservation can be the key to unlocking Marktown's future!



Please contact us via the internet at [mrmarktown@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mrmarktown@sbcglobal.net)

## Marktown Tours Overcome Street Reconstruction

Having Spruce Avenue torn up for reconstruction has not dampened the spirits of those interested in the architectural, industrial and social history of our neighborhood. May 24th found nearly 30 participants in a special tour of the Marktown Historic District. The group was formed of students who are home schooled and their parents and all were fascinated in our neighborhood.

It was a little unusual for half of the participants to play in the park before the tour began, but then again, that too is not that unusual. The questions were fantastic and the answers, as always were informative.



The most difficult part was walking down what had been Spruce Avenue from Prospect Street to Liberty Street and then crossing Spruce Avenue at Grove Street on our way back to their cars.

An email from the tour sponsor later that week says it all:

*Dear Paul,*

*Thanks for the tour, we really enjoyed it. It lead to a lot of other discussions as well. One family in our group suggested that we ask you if you have any volunteer opportunities for our group (cleanup/flower planting/garden building, etc).*

*Thanks again - Jane*



*Photos courtesy of photographer Christopher Smith - The Times*

## Garden Ideas For Marktown Found In Pullman

Gardens are by all means a quality of life issue. They enhance the lives of those who plant and maintain them as much as they do those who view them even on an occasional basis.

Saturday, June 17th the Pullman Historic District in Chicago, just west of the Marktown Historic District, held their Twelfth Annual Garden Walk. The theme for this years event was water gardens and what a treat they were. The tour began on the veranda of the Florence Hotel and meandered three blocks south and four blocks east of the starting location.

The gardens included this year were: 1) Gateway Garden, 2) Kuhn Railroad Garden, 3) North Allee, 4) Johnson Garden, 5) Ware Garden, 6) Kenney Garden, 7) Pearson Garden, 8) Smith & Ryan Garden, 9) The

Herb Garden, and 10) Peponis Garden.

Since the majority of the water gardens were in private back yards, eight of the ten gardens had to be entered through the alleys of Pullman. While in many cities and towns the alleys may not be the greatest place to be, the Pullman alleys are all paved and relatively well maintained.

The walk from one garden to the next was quite interesting as a number of gardens not on the tour lined both the front and back yards of adjacent properties. It should be noted that many of the Pullman yards are about the same size of the average Marktown yard. We congratulate the Pullman Garden Club for their enthusiasm and look forward to

the annual house tour this fall. Care to join us on October 7th or 8th? Think Historic Preservation!



# Pullman Historic District - 12th Annual Garden Walk



**With TEAMWORK all things truly are possible.  
You don't have to be elected to be a leader in a community.**

# Hoops in Marktown

We call it teamwork and community pride. It started with a simple request: "How about chain nets for the basketball courts?" 5th District Councilman Robert Garcia purchased them. He passed them to Marktown's Democratic Precinct Committeeman Javier Madrigal who in turn dropped them off at the home of Paul Myers. Paul spotted Mark Vidaurri heading home from the basketball courts on Monday, June 12th and it only gets better from here.

Mark brought back a half dozen Marktown youth. Paul got the ladder and pliers and Mark went up to install the nets. Once up the kids noted that there were trees overhanging the fence on two of the rims that prevented them from being used. OK - do we call the Parks Department in the morning or do we take care of this right now?

It didn't take Paul long to go get the Model A Ford, a chain saw, broom, leaf blower and the ever present weed whacker. Within an hour the branches were down, cut up and carried to the street. The debris from this past winter was finally cleaned up and the kids have a decent place to play basketball once again. Like we said, its teamwork and community pride are at work once again in Marktown!



## Weed Whacking Our Way To A Better & Cleaner Marktown Historic District

**"Have Whacker - Will Travel"** at least in the Marktown Historic District that is. For the fourth consecutive year the Marktown Preservation Society, Inc. announces our neighborhood street scape cleanup program. Do you have unsightly weeds on your street and along the sidewalks? Need a hand in cleaning up the entire block you reside on? The Marktown Preservation Society, Inc. has a solution for your problems! All you have to do to cleanup your street

is call us at 397-2239 and tell us what block you live on. We'll schedule a special cleanup for you and your neighbors. Remember, we DO NOT go onto private property without the permission of the owners. We can always use a hand so if you want to volunteer to help cleanup Marktown, just give us a call. Let's all work together with Javier Madrigal and Robert Garcia to make this a better, cleaner and safer place to live and to raise our families.



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