Near West Neighborhood Land Use Plan  
Neighborhoods & Housing Work Group  
Third meeting  
Haughville Branch Library  
February 11, 2013  

Attendance:  
Carly Brandon, IU School of Social Work  
Anthony Burke, Sr., Marion County Public Health Department  
Patrice Duckett, Near West Coordinator  
Julie Ellison, Hawthorne Neighborhood Association  
Linda Estep, Stringtown Neighborhood Association  
Rik Fuller, Stringtown Neighborhood Association  
Tom Glass, 500 View Neighborhood Association  
Alice & Jim Hetland  
Spring Hug, Haughville  
Martha Judkins, Fairfax Neighborhood  
Ann Krieker, George Washington High School  
Nancy Mobley, Haughville Library  
Kathy Parker, 500 View  
Julia Ramsey-Tharpe, IU School of Social Work  
Sally Root, Fairfax Neighborhood  
Susan Scott, Wayne Township Trustee’s Office  
Phyllis Usher  
Richard Vonnegut, Hoosier Rails-to-Trails Council  
Phil Votaw, WCDC  
Janet White, Stringtown Neighborhood Association  

Staff:  
John Byrnes  
Alice Gatewood  
Keith Holdsworth  

Summary:  
The meeting began with introductions. A map was presented of the street and sidewalk conditions in the six target areas for single-family residential revitalization. The information was provided in response to a request at the Work Group’s first meeting. Although there were some streets in poor condition, there was a much more significant amount of either missing sidewalks or sidewalks in poor condition.  

A draft of the Work Group’s report was provided to the meeting attendees. This is an early draft that will be updated after each meeting. The draft had been attached in the letter announcing the meeting to give Work Group members an opportunity to review the draft in advance of the meeting. Staff received comments on the draft by e-mail to include a section on illegal signs and to add publicizing of recycling sites, increasing
recycling and tox-drop opportunities, and strengthening the enforcement, prosecution and penalties associated with nuisance violations. Meeting participants agreed with these additions. They will be added to the next draft of the report. It was noted that the Hawthorne Neighborhood Association had developed a seven-page document called “Talking Trash,” which explains property owners’ duties and options concerning trash.

Staff had been asked at the previous meeting to do research on historic markers in the area. The state’s website shows that there is one. It honors Anthony Wayne for whom the township is named. The marker is the second oldest in the County. There was discussion that there are a number of historic events and persons in the area that are worthy of historic markers including the massive 1913 flood. It was noted that Reisner Street had been named Minkner Street prior to WWII.

The remainder of the meeting was spent looking at land use for four specific areas. The four areas are those with a high rate of vacant residential lots and vacant houses. As such the long-term viability of these areas for single-family residences is in question. The first area discussed was the southeastern portion of Stringtown. This was a continuation of the discussion from the previous meeting. Concern was expressed about building heights in the area. The idea was expressed that this area could benefit from its proximity to the Indianapolis Zoo. Ties between the neighborhood and the zoo have been minimal, but this may be an opportunity to build better connections. It was noted that the zoo owns several significant parcels of land within the neighborhood. It was noted that the pattern of streets in the area makes vehicular traffic difficult. It was also noted that pedestrian connections between the neighborhood and White River are difficult. The Stringtown Memory Garden at the base of the “U” created by Ohio and Astor streets was noted as an area to be preserved and enhanced as open space. The area is used to honor Jackie Knox. The west side of the Stringtown Memory Garden is bordered by White River Parkway, which, with the New York Street bridge, is also the E. B. Kelley Memorial Parkway and Bridge. Kelley was associated with the Lauter Boys Club.

The second area of discussion was the 200 block of Richland Street. This generated a discussion of the revitalization of New York Street as a “downtown” for Stringtown as well as an area for serving international visitors and holding events. Under this scheme, parking lots surrounding the areas would allow the restriction of traffic on New York Street to only those from the neighborhood. It was also suggested that New York Street could be turned into a “bicycle boulevard,” a street used primarily for bicycles but still open to vehicular traffic. Speeds for vehicular traffic would be held to 5 mph. The idea was expressed that the intersection of New York Street and White River Boulevard could be “softened” to provide for better pedestrian and bicycle crossing. There was discussion of marketing Stringtown as an area for living for IUPUI staff and older students, hospital staff, artists, and other downtown workers.

The third area of discussion was the 300 block of Miley Avenue. The proposal to recommend multi-family housing in this area was met with approval. The area was not seen as a desirable area for either industrial or commercial use because of its location deep within the residential part of the neighborhood. Approval of multi-family housing
was qualified by concerns of possible contamination on the junkyard site. One participant recalled seeing chemicals being buried on the site back in the 1980s.

The final area of discussion was the east side of the 200 block of Belmont Avenue. Although developed residentially, this block is zoned commercial. After some discussion the idea of this block as a mix of residential and low-intensity commercial uses appeared to be the most-favored scenario.