

MERIDIAN STREET FOUNDATION
NEWS & VIEWS

Spring 2003

Volume 16, Number 1

Park Plans Unfold

by Phil Cox

Eleven neighbors from Meridian Street and Butler Tarkington attended a public meeting February 20 with Indy Parks representatives regarding future plans for Alice Carter Place at the corner of Meridian Street and Westfield Boulevard. Michael Krosschell, a senior planner with the city, referred to the park as "a clean slate," which the city is interested in working with area residents to develop into a true amenity for the surrounding neighborhoods.

The purpose of the meeting was to brainstorm

and gather many opinions on what neighbors would like to see happen. Numerous creative ideas were provided and discussed by everyone. Mr. Krosschell explained that the city will help develop the plan and will pay for baseline improvements such as parking, lighting, sidewalks, and trees. Funding for any additional enhancements will need to come from the neighborhood.

The next meeting will be held April 10 at 6:30 P.M. at the North United Methodist Church. Please join your neighbors and the Indy Parks staff to review initial drawings and plans.

Traffic Committee Formed

A new committee, Traffic, has been added to the Roster of Meridian Street Foundation committees. The most important purpose of this committee will be to find ways to reduce speed and traffic on Meridian Street. Many ideas have been proffered, and we need some manpower to help explore possibilities with the city. Please help us! Contact Kathy Shorter, 283-5322, if you have ideas or would be willing to give some time to this endeavor.

Just Say No to Signs!

The Meridian Street Beautification Committee has a special request of the neighborhood. Please do not put up political signs or repairs signs in your yards during the Glory of the Snow blooming period. Remember, more than two hundred volunteers have worked very hard to plant the bulbs along the historic district. It would be a shame if signs obscured the beauty of the neighborhood during this time. The approximate time of the bloom period is the month of April.

As a reminder, signs on Meridian Street lawns are generally discouraged at all times. Please say



Although record-breaking February snow falls made travel treacherous, Meridian Street looked like an ice-clad fairyland on many mornings.

no to people requesting that you allow them to post their signs in your yard. Your cooperation on this matter will be sincerely appreciated by all your neighbors.

The Main Stem

*The following is an excerpt from the second chapter of *The Main Stem*, a book published about Meridian Street by Historic Landmarks Foundation. Unfortunately, the book is no longer in print and copies are difficult to obtain. For those who don't have the book, *News & Views* will be reprinting excerpts in each issue.*

Alonzo P. Henderson dreamed of creating a model suburb on the unpaved northern reaches of Meridian Street in late Nineteenth-century Indianapolis. In 1898, he and his partners bought a large orchard on the high ground north of Maple Road, now 38th Street, subdivided the 100-acre plot, and called it Meridian Heights.

The design was grand, with curving drives, large irregular lots, and small parks in the center of intersections. A magnificent gateway was its entrance—two ornate stone castles that spanned Meridian at 46th Street. Nearby, a water tower rose in a 100-foot stone shaft. When the last field stone was laid in place just days before the turn of the century, Indianapolis citizens flocked to the site, proud of a city that could boast such an obviously prestigious addition.

Many people picnicked by the entrance in ensuing years, but few wealthy people aspired to live in Meridian Heights. Wash Dye, a stockyards executive, built a home in 1899, only to sell it two years later because it was too far from the city. The failure of Henderson's dream is difficult to explain. The high minimum cost of the development's homes may have dampened sales, but other subdivisions flourished in spite of similar restrictions.

Meridian Heights—at least its physical remnants—vanished slowly. The water tower was dynamited in 1912 as unsafe. The same castle on the northeastern corner of Meridian and 46th Street disappeared early in the twentieth century. Its mate on the west corner lingered intact until the 1940s and in ruins until a decade later. In 1960, the last two of the castle's boulders were removed from its now the south lawn of the Governor's Residence. Today, all that remains of Henderson's plans are the name of a church and a dry-cleaning establishment.

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Glory of the Snow Approaches

Hooray! It is almost time for the Glory of the Snow to bloom along Meridian Street. We so appreciate all the volunteer efforts last fall that allowed us to plant 400,000 bulbs in year one of the project. Thank you for your participation in what promises to be one of the best neighborhood beautification efforts ever. About one half of the Meridian Street residences, Alice Carter Park, Tarkington Park, and North Methodist Church were planted last fall.

Please remember not to use any broadleaf weed killer on the areas planted with bulbs until all the foliage from the plants has died down. It would be ideal to wait until at least June. If weed killer gets on the leaves, the bulbs will die. If you have a lawn service, call them now to tell them about the bulbs!

The bulbs will fill over time, so it is possible that the visual impact of the flowers will not be strong until three or four years from now. Please do not be discouraged if the first year bloom is not as spectacular as you are expecting. The bulbs were planted about four inches apart and they will double each year.

Please encourage your neighbors who did not participate this year to sign up for next fall's planting. We hope to have an uninterrupted River of Flowers flowing the length of the historic district.

Meridian Street Crime Watch Update

by Sheila P. Little

Because of prior planning by residents on Meridian Street between 40th and 43rd Streets, this section of Meridian Street has been declared our first Crime Watch Zone. Congratulations to all neighbors who have participated. The Public Safety Committee of MSF will now approach residents in other blocks to attend one meeting with Officer Benjamin Hunter and Officer Deborah Fletcher so that other Crime Watch Zones can be established. For more information about Crime Watch, contact Deborah Fletcher at 20139@indygov.org.

News from the Neighborhood

Kathryn Vignati, daughter of **Ruth and Skip Vignati**, is engaged to **Christopher Ferrugia**. Kathryn, a student working on her master's degree and an intern with the ATF, and Christopher, who works for Johnson & Johnson, will marry on August 16. Welcome to new neighbors **Walter and Cynthia Knabe**, who have two daughters, **Anna**, at St. Richard's School, and **Gwen** at Orchard School.

We are sad to report the death of **John Burnham** on February 21. We extend our condolences to his wife, **Anna**, and young daughter, **Danila**. John had been a stockbroker with Charles Schwab.

The Meridian Street Foundation's Valentine's Party on February 14 was a wonderful evening of great company, despite the miserable ice, snow, and rain storm outside. The Meridian Street Foundation board extends its profuse thanks to **Conrad and Patsy Solinger**, who graciously opened their newly restored home to seventy neighbors. Hoaglin Fine Catering presented a wonderful dinner, received with pleasure by all guests. Not only did we savor fine food and drink, but we also enjoyed visiting with new and old neighbors. The MSF would like to thank **Curley's**

Cleaners, which has free pick-up and delivery, and **Hoaglin Fine Catering** for their very generous donations to the event.

In addition to the upcoming Easter egg hunt, the neighborhood can look forward to another garden tour and to the Decorator Show Home; the houses are across the street from one another on Meridian this year.

If you have neighborhood news that you would like to share, please contact Helen O'Guinn, htoguinn@aol.com or 255-0071.

Solinger Party Sweetens Valentine's Day



Patsy Solinger, hostess for the Valentine's Day gala, posed with new board member Rome Nkosi and his date, Kathy Chaney.

Curly Solinger (second from right) welcomed (from left) Alan and Teri Symons and Neil Handley to his home.



From left, Jim Sabens, Janine Calabria, Carl Calabria, and Peggy Sabens joined the festively attired crowd.

Fred Shorter, Greg Dedinsky, and Alan Symons were among those who braved the weather to attend the Valentine's Day party.



Imagine this in red: Cupid himself couldn't have designed a more fitting combo than Alice Berger's shoes and bag.

Meridian Street Foundation

Hopes to see all preschool and elementary children at their



Second annual neighborhood EASTER EGG HUNT

(a tradition resurrected from the 60's)

At 1:00 pm
Saturday, April 19, 2003
On the lawn of the Old Governor's Mansion
4343 North Meridian Street

Bring your own basket and camera for photos with the Easter Bunny

\$3.00 donation at the door for MSF Neighborhood Beautification

Parking east side of Meridian north of 43rd

RSVP Elaine Klein 283-1835

Rain or Shine

Real Estate Roundup

By G.B. Landrigan, Realtor*

As any Hoosier knows, the last snow of the winter season usually falls just as the boys' high school basketball sectionals concludes. Crocuses and violets begin to appear and the last vestiges of road salt, dirty snow, and potholes are dealt with. It also signals the end of the first quarter—a good time to see where the MSF area property values are heading. By the time this article is read, war and economic concerns may have changed our outlook, but the first three months of 2003 have brought with them a continuation of the appreciation rate we experienced last year when the area broke the million dollar price barrier for the first time.

As of 10 March 2003	Meridian Street	Pennsylvania Street	Illinois Street	Side Streets
Active	4	1	5	1
Price Range	\$439,000–\$1.4 million	\$649,900	\$169,000–\$749,900	\$309,900
Pending	2	2	0	0
Closed Sales	2	0	3	1
Price Range	\$660,000–\$835,000		\$142,000–\$224,000	\$259,900
Median Price	\$747,500		\$170,000	\$259,900

The above statistics were gleaned from the Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of Realtors as well as personal knowledge of certain private sales. These statistics do not include private sales of homes not known by this writer.

*For each issue of News & Views, G.B. Landrigan provides this column for our newsletter. Many thanks to him for this feature, which constantly draws comments from readers. G.B. can be reached at: Century 21 Realty Group, gb@landrigan.com, or 767-0774.

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5230 N. Meridian St.
Indianapolis, IN 46208