

Building and Planning Department

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Overview

The Building and Planning Departments are responsible for overseeing all aspects of city planning and private construction within the City of Mishawaka. This department also serves in a limited capacity to support the Community Development Department. The Planning Department also serves a lead function relative to economic development initiatives and services. On a daily basis, the department is responsible for the issuance of permits for virtually all new construction including residential, commercial and industrial. The Department also evaluates and approves smaller projects such as the modification of signs, fences, sheds, decks and garages. Although separate departments, the Building and Planning Departments work together to efficiently provide the best possible service to our City. Responsibilities and duties include:

- Work with developers who have an interest in developing projects in, or adjacent to the City. This includes working with developers in the design of site plans to ensure that they are consistent with the City's ordinances, goals, objectives and policies.
- Issue and track all building permits, including electric permits, plumbing permits, HVAC permits and other miscellaneous permits. In addition, all Adult Care Homes are inspected annually.
- Provide information to the public on matters relating to zoning, rezoning, annexation, vacations of public right-of-way, subdivision regulations, sign control, historic buildings and obtaining building permits.
- Work with the Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Michiana Area Council of Governments (MACOG). The City Planner serves as a member of the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee on transportation projects, including alternative forms of transportation.
- Preparation and adoption of long-range planning projects. Projects include various elements of the Comprehensive Plan including: land use, housing, historic preservation, transportation, capital improvements, annexation and parks and recreation.
- Administer the issuance of Improvement Location Permits for construction within the City, including evaluating construction projects relative to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- Day-to-day administration of the zoning ordinance. The zoning administrator is responsible for interpreting City codes and ordinances related to development. The Department enforces the zoning and sign ordinances of the City including issuing citations and stop work orders.
- Preparation of fiscal plans associated with both voluntary and involuntary annexations. Fiscal Plans require coordination with all applicable Departments including utilities, police, fire, emergency medical, engineering, parks and finance.
- Coordination with the Information Technology Department on the implementation and continual maintenance of the City's Geographic Information System (GIS).
- Prepare revisions and updates to land use codes and ordinances. Responsible for preparing Historic Preservation Districts including ordinances, maps, preservation guidelines and standards.

- Prepare budgets, work program and annual report for the Department. Annual evaluation of the previous year, identification of development trends, identification of future projects and funding allocation.
- Work with industry and businesses on tax abatement requests and compliance reporting. Makes recommendations to the Mayor, Redevelopment Commission and Common Council concerning economic development issues.
- Provide staff support to the City Redevelopment Commission including the drafting of development agreements with other public and private entities. Review and prepare amendments to Tax Increment Financing Districts.

Building Department

Whether we are in our homes, workplaces, schools, or places of entertainment, we rely on the safety of the structures that surround us. This underscores the importance of modern building codes and their enforcement. The structural integrity of a building, the means of egress, fire suppression systems, smoke alarms, safe electrical wiring, proper sanitation, safe heating and the energy efficiency of buildings are ensured by building code requirements.

Residential building codes are for the personal safety of your family and guests invited into your home and to ensure the economic well-being of the community by reducing the potential for spread of fire and disease, the conservation of energy and to protect future home purchasers who deserve reasonable assurance that the home they buy will be safe and secure.

Commercial building codes help to provide safe means of egress, structural integrity, reduced risk of the spreading of fire or disease and provide safety to all public who enter a commercial building. Most aspects of building construction, whether electrical, HVAC, plumbing, fire suppression or structural integrity represent a potential hazard to building occupants and users. Building codes provide safeguards to help reduce those risks. Although no code can completely eliminate risk, reducing risk to an acceptable level is the goal of building codes. The Building Department helps to ensure codes are followed and helps the builder, owner or tenant meet code requirements. Most of this is done through the inspection process.

In 2017, the Building Department conducted 2,659 inspections. Each inspector conducts 4 to 7 inspections per work day. Approximately 40 to 60 minutes are spent per inspection. Other building department duties include review of building design drawings and meetings with contractors, owners and tenants to explain and help with building code interpretation and enforcement.

The Building Department has become more knowledgeable in the evolving building code. All inspectors have been trained to become combination inspectors, better serving the community and the public.

By enforcing building code requirements, the buildings and homes in the City of Mishawaka will be structurally and mechanically sound. The Building Department will continue to become more efficient in the inspection process, as well as more knowledgeable and accessible to our clients.

Building and Development Activity

In 2017, the construction industry continued to grow in activity over recent years. One of the real bright spots was the construction of new single family homes. In 2016, there were only 36 new homes constructed in the City. In 2017, this more than doubled to 78 new single-family homes. As indicated in previous reports, this is still lower than the number of single family starts that occurred prior to 2007 but is still significant. Also, there continues to be a greater demand for apartments.

New commercial building activity increased again. In 2017, commercial permits were issued with an estimated construction cost of \$96.9 million, a significant \$10.7 million increase over the \$86.2 million issued in 2016. By the numbers, 21 new commercial building permits were pulled for new free standing buildings in 2017 compared to 13 in 2016. The single largest permit was for the new Mill at Ironworks Plaza project being constructed by Flaherty & Collins on the former Uniroyal properties with a \$34 million estimated construction cost.

The City of Mishawaka continued to grow and have significant investment made in 2017. The City issued permits with a total estimated construction cost of 136.4 million - an impressive 39% increase over the total estimated construction cost of 2016 which was a good year at 98.4 million.

Booming Construction!

Since 2013 the City has now had four straight years of double digit percentage growth from year to year. Coming off the recession there was a 14.4-million-dollar increase between 2013 and 2014 (27%). Between 2014 and 2015 there was a 17.4-million-dollar increase (20%). The City issued permits worth \$85.2 million in 2015, a 15% increase in estimated value between 2015 and 2016. Since 2013, every year the City has had a minimum year to year growth in estimated new construction values of greater than 15% and \$14 million per year. In 2017, the City more than doubled that rate with a 38-million-dollar increase, a 39 percent increase over 2016.

Although the City continues to reap the benefits of our geographic location centered in the region, combined with long-term strategic decision making such as the re-investments made downtown, the extension of infrastructure to the Exit 83 interchange of the Indiana Toll Road, and the creation of a medical hub that occurred with the relocation of the St. Joseph Regional Medical Center and the construction of the new VA Clinic; the long-term forecast in construction is still difficult to project. Although it is early in 2018, and development interest is still high, it would be difficult to project a similar booming year in 2018.

Construction in 2017 came from many different projects and illustrates a vibrant economy. Relative to housing, in addition to the single-family housing starts, the Reserve, a project by Watermark out of Indianapolis to build 300 units of larger apartments with garages made significant progress in 2017 and will be completed in 2018. The project is located at the southwest corner of where Fir Road crosses the Indiana Toll Road. The City also had two developers propose separate low income senior assisted living projects. One of those projects started construction in 2017. Silver Birch of Mishawaka is being constructed by Chicago, Illinois based Vermilion Development just south of the southeast corner of Edison Road and Hickory Road.



The Reserve apartments, by Indianapolis-based developer Watermark



Start of construction of Silver Birch of Mishawaka

Another significant development that still has a great deal of potential is the Grandview Planned Unit Development. In late 2017, the developer, Great Lakes Capital, proposed modifying the existing Planned Unit Development to add over a 100 new apartments and lower level commercial space to the existing apartment complex on the site that started construction in 2016 and is now full. The commercial portion of the development located at the northwest corner of the intersection of State Road 23 and Gumwood Road is expected to follow in the coming years.

As mentioned in last year’s State of the City report, in 2015 the City approved plans for and made financial commitments including 10-year tax abatement for Bayer Healthcare to headquarter their North American Distribution logistics center in Mishawaka. Construction was anticipated to occur in 2016 but it continues to be delayed at the corporate level based on other obligations. The good news is that they have purchased the property and still intend to proceed in the coming years. This project will retain hundreds of white collar positions, while allowing room for expansion of the operations over time. Our understanding from the local office is that the existing facility in Edison Lakes added more employees in 2017.

The City also had quite a few stand-alone smaller commercial buildings started in 2017. Centier Bank built a new branch in Heritage Square. United Federal Credit Union entered our market by choosing a prime location to build at the southeast corner of the intersection of Main Street and Edison Lakes Parkway. We also had a long vacant site at the northeast corner of the intersection of Ironwood Avenue and Lincolnway West obtained and developed by Dollar General with a new store.



Centier Bank at Heritage Square



Dollar General on Lincolnway West

One of the developments that excites the community is when a new restaurant comes to town. 2017 didn't disappoint in this regard. Earlier in the year, Longhorn Steakhouse was constructed on the former site of Famous Dave's BBQ across from the University Park Mall. Qdoba started construction on north Main Street. CoreLife and Bigby Coffee located into existing centers. Chase properties built a new two-tenant building on Grape Road that brought Firehouse Subs. The most excitement came when Portillo's announced they were building a new location on north Main Street which is expected to open in March of 2018.



Longhorn Steakhouse



Portillo's currently under construction

2017 also had some significant development activity on the industrial/manufacturing side. Siemens quietly made a 16-million-dollar investment to their facility located at 430 Beiger Street. Lippert Components purchased the former AM General Parts Distribution facility that was housed on the former Wheelabrator Site at 408 South Byrkit Avenue. Their purchase of the former Independent Concrete Pipe site on Beiger Street also gave them significant room for expansion and will mean that hundreds of additional jobs will be housed in this location over time.



Lippert components



Lippert loading dock located off of Bieger Street

2017 Planning and Building Permits

A summary of the 2017 permit activity is as follows:

Residential

- \$17.1 million in estimated construction costs (a \$4.9 million increase over 2016)
 - 78 new single-family homes
 - 545 residential alterations/additions

Multi-Family

- \$22.3 million in estimated construction costs
 - 22 new buildings/units (11 in 2016)

Commercial / Industrial

- \$96.9 million in estimated construction costs (\$10.7 million more than 2016)
 - 21 new commercial buildings
 - 114 alterations/additions

New Single-Family Home Construction by Year:	
2017	78 Homes
2016	36 Homes
2015	47 Homes
2014	43 Homes
2013	39 Homes
2012	28 Homes
2011	22 Homes
2010	22 Homes
2009	32 Homes
2008	46 Homes
2007	112 Homes

Annexations

The City continues to grow in a steady and orderly fashion. There were two voluntary annexations, adding 8.3 acres to the City in 2017. In comparison, the City grew by 33.69 acres in 2016. The existing area within the City limits, according to our Geographic Information System, is now 18.01 square miles.

2017 annexations included:

1. **Pemberton Davis Electric & Direct Line Communications – 914 & 916 E. McKinley Avenue**
5.5 acres annexed and zoned I-1 Light Industrial for a proposed communications infrastructure and consulting business. The proposed development plans include a new 6,000 to 12,000 sq. ft. building, parking and drives, outdoor storage areas, and other related infrastructure improvements.
2. **NRP Group Apartment Building (Name TBD) – 16839 Douglas Road**
2.7 acres annexed and zoned R-3 Multi-Family Residential for a proposed 80-unit senior apartment building.

Downtown Development

Regional Cities Initiative/Flaherty and Collins

As identified last year, in 2015 the State of Indiana, led by former Governor, now Vice President Mike Pence, proposed an initiative to help thwart the on-going brain drain occurring in the State of Indiana. Specifically, the trend has been that a disproportionate number of Indiana’s college graduates end up leaving the state to find work or pursue a career in cities such as Chicago and

other large metropolitan areas. They are leaving not just to find work matching their education, they are leaving seeking a specific quality of life. In the Regional Cities Initiative, the State program formed a competition for regions of the State to develop plans to fund projects that will help combat this trend. Ultimately, the North Central Region, which includes the City of Mishawaka, was awarded one of the \$42 million awards.

Mishawaka initially only submitted one project for the initiative working with Indianapolis Developer Flaherty and Collins. In 2016, the Regional Development Authority awarded Flaherty and Collins just over 5 million dollars to build a new 233-unit high amenity mixed-use apartment building on the site of the former Uniroyal Complex south of Beutter Park in downtown Mishawaka.

In 2017, the City issued a Tax Increment Financing Bond for close to 11 million dollars to fund the City's contribution to the project. The public infrastructure included in the project includes a public parking garage that will provide the public the ability to park for up to three hours for free. As part of that project, Ironworks Avenue will be extended with on-street angled parking, and Hill Street, north of Front Street, will be converted into a two-aisle parking area similar to Mill Street north of Front Street.

We are excited that after 20 years, 4 acres of the former Uniroyal complex is being made productive again and that it will be generating over a half-million dollars in local property taxes a year at the project's completion. The developer broke ground in late 2017 and the building which is roughly 450,000 square feet encompassing two city blocks will take approximately two years to complete. Foundations were being placed in January of 2018.



Ironworks Avenue and Mill Street looking southwest



Artist's rendering of the project

Regional Cities Phase II

In August of 2017, the City submitted an application to the Regional Development Authority to fund a second Regional Cities project in Mishawaka. Although over a million dollars was being requested, only a little over \$100,000 was awarded to the City.

The idea of the project was to tie the momentum of the Townes at Kamm Island project and the planned Riverwalk Apartment project together to leverage an amenity that would contribute to spurring similar development and help retain and attract talent in our region. The funding requested has been allocated to Beutter Park Phase II.

Beutter Park is already the City of Mishawaka's signature urban park with the natural beauty of sculpture, 30,000 plants, and cascading waterfalls of the re-established mill race of the factories that once stood here. It is the past home to the summer concert series and is the centerpiece of the City's park system located along the Mishawaka Riverwalk which provides a multi-use path that connects thousands of homes and 7 City parks with on-going plans for expansion.

For the past 15 years in marketing downtown Mishawaka for redevelopment, one of the concerns that has been routinely brought up has been the apparent minimal activities that are available in winter. This is viewed as a negative, not only for Mishawaka's downtown, but for the region as a whole. We routinely hear that the one thing we can't change is the weather. One thing we can change is our collective attitude toward the weather and its impact on how livable our region can be.

The thrust of this request for Regional Cities funding is to address this need as part of the completion of the City's signature urban park. If completed as envisioned, we believe that the park will be a year-round attraction and will become one of the signature "things" do in the South Bend/Elkhart region.

The design as currently envisioned includes a variety of components:

Signature Café

One of the elements that separate the proposed improvements from other park venues is the type of café envisioned. Although owned by the City, this would be leased to a private entity, likely below market rate in order to incentivize providing a unique eatery/coffee house/dessert/evening drink destination. A modern décor of glass steel and wood with stone accents is envisioned. The Café will have its own outdoor seating area and will contain an outside fireplace contributing to the winter ambiance and activities.

Ironworks Plaza

In coordinating with Flaherty and Collins, the developer of the Mill at Ironworks Plaza project, the plaza, set in the middle of Beutter Park off of Ironworks Avenue is set up as a pedestrian friendly open area with a modern pavilion/event tent area that will be used for a variety of activities including registration for runs, outdoor performances, markets, and even weddings.

Skating Path / Winter Activity Area

One of the challenges in this region is embracing outdoor winter activities. The skating path winter activity area, not only provides an activity, but in connecting it to the Signature café, the close location of other restaurants, the downtown, and the Riverwalk, the amenity has the ability to attract people even if they are not directly participating in the skating. We love Elkhart's NIBCO park, and wanted to use a similar theme but place it in an environment with a diversity that adds to the attraction. We are looking at this as a Mishawaka scaled version of Rockefeller Center. The urban setting, the café, the art, the immediately adjacent housing and restaurants all contribute to the activity. The building requires sensitive design and is envisioned to be separate from the café but with an overhead roof connection. The building will have lockers, warming area, skate rental, and room for maintenance, mechanicals, and Zamboni storage. If constructed,

this facility will likely replace the City’s current rink in Merrifield Park which is at the end of its life and is in need of replacement.

Picnic Area / Beer Garden / Restrooms

We felt that eating and drinking outside in an urban park was a critical component. Serving liquor requires the area to be separated from the other areas during events, but on a year-round basis the area would be used for picnics and seating. Overhead lighting and the architectural theme of the café is envisioned for the architecture including glass steel and wood with stone accents. This will replace the existing temporary asphalt area with picnic tables that has looked unfinished since it was placed in the park more than a decade ago.

Cable-stayed Bridge Lighting

Since its erection in 2008, Mishawaka’s cable-stayed bridge has been one of the iconic images reflective of our community. As part of this project, we would like to emphasize the night time image to convey the activity of the space. The way the river lights project brought renewed activity to downtown South Bend, we feel that adding this lighting will have a similar effect in downtown Mishawaka.



Proposed cable stayed bridge lighting illustration

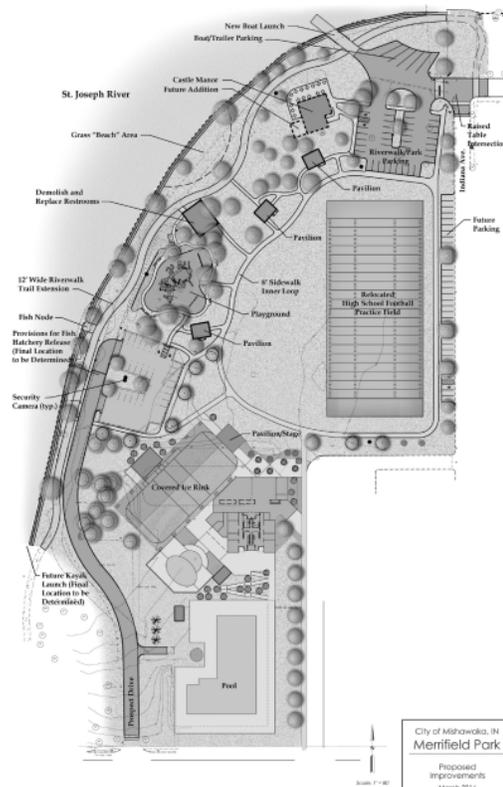
Public Works Projects

The City is committed to serving the Mishawaka community through its support of various public works projects designed to enhance our citizen’s quality of life. During 2017, the Planning Department was responsible for directing private firms and assisting other City departments on several significant public works projects.

Mishawaka Riverwalk

The Mishawaka Riverwalk continues to be the cornerstone for many of the City’s redevelopment efforts. It connects neighborhoods and parks by taking advantage of the City’s greatest natural resource; the St. Joseph River. The Mishawaka Riverwalk also adds value to existing homes and neighborhoods and will undoubtedly be a source of pride for Mishawaka’s citizens for generations to come.

In 2017, the City continued to implement future expansions of the Riverwalk. The City worked with MACOG to obtain Federal Transportation



Plan View of the proposed Riverwalk extension through Merrifield Park

Enhancement (TE) funds to extend the Riverwalk through Merrifield Park. In 2017, INDOT bid the project twice in early 2017 after originally rejecting the first bid because the bids exceeded engineers estimate for the project. In working with MACOG, both the City and MACOG were able to identify the additional funds necessary to allow the project to move forward. The 3-million-dollar project being built by Rieth-Riley Construction Co. will be substantially completed in the spring of 2018.

The project includes the relocation of the existing access drive, the construction of the Riverwalk, creation of a more formal boat launch, new parking and restroom replacement. Upon completion, this section will extend the Riverwalk from the “Merrifield/Crawford Park Connector” to the intersection of Prospect and Indiana Avenue.



View of the Riverwalk and new restroom building under construction in Merrifield Park

Battell Park - Rosemary's Garden

In 2015, the planning Department led the effort to develop an updated master plan for Battell Park. In 2016, the City contracted with DLZ to develop plans to create Rosemary's Garden. Former Plan Commission member and Board of Zoning Appeals member Rosemary Klaer left the City just over \$40,000 on her passing with the intent to make to make a park improvement. In reviewing the City needs and what would make sense to accomplish, the decision was to build a passive overlook space as part of a larger regrading and signage project on the east end of Battell Park, overlooking the cable-stayed Riverwalk bridge and downtown. The space includes two custom bench swings that were fabricated by Deluxe Sheet Metal of South Bend and will be officially dedicated in 2018.



Views of Rosemary's Garden at the east end of Battell Park

Signage and Wayfinding

In 2017 the City completed a number of signage projects. The City partnered with the School City of Mishawaka to install a new monument sign at Mishawaka High School that included an electronic reader board that will allow the City and School system to work together in advertising community events, and as necessary emergency messages such as Amber alerts.

In cooperation with Visit South Bend/Mishawaka through the hotel/motel tax board that provided \$100,000 grant, the City installed new branding and wayfinding signage. Given that Mishawaka serves as the commercial shopping and service hub of the region, the wayfinding and branding signage should provide some assistance to those who are new or visiting the area find their way around.



Installed directional sign and monument sign at Mishawaka High School

Cemetery Fencing/Streetscape

In 2017, the City moved forward with a project that had been envisioned for a number of years. For decades the section of Jefferson Boulevard and Liberty Drive streetscape adjacent to three different cemeteries was a negative image for the community from the predominance of rusted barbed wire chain link fencing that was in various stages of disrepair. The City reached out to the board of Fairview Cemetery and the diocese for the Catholic Cemetery to obtain additional easements and permission to close Fairview's signalized access at the intersection of Jefferson Boulevard and Liberty drive. The third cemetery, the City Cemetery, didn't have room to donate easements, but was in need of improvements in the same manner as the other two. Based on the age and records, we actually had to probe for grave sites to make sure the proposed improvements would not be in conflict. The end result was that the City installed over $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of decorative black fencing and provided a few extra feet of precious sidewalk space for pedestrians. The streetscape is now an appropriate and respectful tribute to the great number of our citizens who have been laid to rest in these sacred places.



Castle Manor

This park building, located in Merrifield Park, was built by the National Youth Administration (NYA), a subsidiary of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The building first opened in September 1941, “dedicated to the Girlhood of Mishawaka”, and was known simply as the “girls lodge”. In 1947, the building was renamed Castle Manor to honor late Mayor Carl J. Castleman. Renovated in 1965, it has provided a place for the community to come together to celebrate class reunions, family reunions, and weddings in addition to its original function as a gathering spot for girl and women’s organizations. In 2017, the City of Mishawaka undertook a substantial renovation including structural improvements, a small storage addition, metal roof, new HVAC, re-established the front porch of the structure, and added the adjacent patio. The work, being performed by Hoerstman General Contracting of Mishawaka, should be completed in the Spring of 2018.



Castle Manor and the adjacent patio under construction

Mishawaka Food Pantry Community Garden

The City of Mishawaka, in partnership with Penn Township, and the Mishawaka Food Pantry constructed garden at the southeast corner of the intersection of Hill Street and Lincolnway West in the spring of 2017. The site is located immediately west of the Mishawaka Food Pantry located at 315 Lincolnway West.

This project was completed by Acorn Landscaping of South Bend. The design of the garden was by Pat Brown of SITESCAPES Inc, a Mishawaka based Landscape Architect. Funding for the project came from the City’s consolidated Tax Increment Finance District. The project includes 14 raised planting beds that are being used to provide fresh vegetables for the



Mishawaka Food Pantry Garden located at the southeast corner of Lincolnway West and Hill Street

Food Pantry. The project also included outside tables, a bike rack, decorative fencing, and plantings. Adding to the City’s Art in Public Places, the City purchased and installed a stainless-steel sculpture from local Mishawaka artist Bob Bloss as part of the project. Mayor Wood indicated that “The sculpture was installed at the street corner to symbolize the transformation of the space from a former brownfield to part of our growing and transforming downtown”.

In 2010, the City reached an agreement to purchase the former brake shop/service station at 327 Lincolnway West. The site was cleared in 2011 and was reviewed for potential redevelopment opportunities. The small size of the property and location adjacent to the pantry made the garden an ideal use of the property.

Projects Moving Forward in 2018

Central Park Stage

The City is working with Arkos Design and Lawson Fisher Associates to design a new permanent stage for Central Park. The stage would be located at the south side of the looped walk surrounding the event lawn on the west side of the park. The goal is to have the platform portion constructed to allow the summer concert series to be held in Central Park for the next two summers as the construction adjacent to Beutter Park significantly limits parking and access to Beutter Park. The roof of the structure and completion of the project will likely occur in the Fall of 2018.

Digital Art Sculpture

As part of the Flaherty & Collins Mill at Ironworks Plaza, the City reserved a space at the northwest corner of the intersection of Mill Street and Front Street to place public art. The City, working with a software application company, Uhray, has envisioned a digital art display where LED screens would be used to display a Princess Mishawaka character. The scenes and images of the character are intended to change based on the time of day and potentially the weather. The idea is to have a dynamic changing art piece that is modern and cool, symbolic of the spaces being created in downtown Mishawaka. Our inspiration was “Ann Dancing” which can be found in Indianapolis along the Cultural Trail. This project will likely be installed in 2019 concurrent with much of the site work and occupancy of the buildings on the Flaherty & Collins project.



Picture of Ann Dancing and an artist concept of Princess Mishawaka

Riverwalk - Race Street to Cedar Street Bridge

In 2017 the City continued to take strides to expand the City’s Riverwalk system. The most impactful decision was to proceed with the acquisition of two properties that came up for sale by the previous owner that were immediately adjacent to Cedar Street to the west. The City acquired the single family home located at 209 north Cedar Street from the Center for Hospice Care, who in acquiring the property from the previous property owner offered higher than appraised value as an incentive for that owner to sell. The acquisition of this property allows for the immediate connection of the Riverwalk to Cedar Street on the north side of the river. Previously, the Riverwalk connected to Madison Street because of the City’s inability to acquire this home from the previous property owner. This walkway should be constructed in the spring or early summer of 2018.

The City also acquired the Quilting Loft, a commercial business that was located at the southwest corner of the intersection of Lincolnway and Cedar Street. This was the last “full” property that was required to make the connection from behind the Police Station at the dead end of Race Street to connect to Cedar Street on the south side of the river. Since acquiring these properties the City has entered into a professional services agreement with DLZ of Indiana to finalize preliminary plans that would allow the City to start making offers on the partial properties needed to complete this section of the Riverwalk. We also had DLZ submit an application to receive federal funding for the widening of the Cedar Street Bridge to accommodate a wider protected walkway on the west side of the bridge. This application was made possible by the City’s acquisition of these two properties. Our understanding is that based on the limited availability of federal funds being provided to this region, the soonest this bridge widening could be funded would be in 2023.

2016 Activity of Commissions and Boards

Plan Commission

A total of 58 petitions were filed before the Plan Commission in 2017. This is just two less than the 60 petitions filed in 2016. Although the activity is steady, it is still significantly lower than the peak of 104 petitions filed in 2007. The private sector activity was similar when comparing 2017 and 2016. Petitions for 2017 included 16 rezoning/annexation requests, 33 final site plans and 9 Plats/Re-plats.

2017 Plan Commission		
Murray Winn	President	
Matthew Lentsch	Vice President	
Dale Freeman	Member	BPWS
Chris Jamrose, PE	Member	City Engineer
Christopher Tordi	Member	Park and Rec. Board
Nick Troiola	Member	
Don McCampbell	Member	
Kathy White Gadacz	Member	
Dale (Woody) Emmons	Member	

Board of Zoning Appeals

The Board of Zoning Appeals heard a total of 48 appeals in 2017. This is slightly less than the 50 appeals heard in 2016. Although a slight decrease when compared to 2016, the activity of the Board has historically varied and is not directly correlative with construction trends.

2017 Board of Zoning Appeals	
Don McCampbell	Chairman
Charles Trippel	Vice Chairman
Larry Stillson	Member
Charles Krueger	Member
Marcia Wells	Member

City of Mishawaka Historic Preservation Commission

The Planning Department serves as the staff for the City of Mishawaka Historic Preservation Commission. The Historic Preservation Commission, established in 1991, is charged with preserving and promoting the historical past of Mishawaka. The Commission, a nine-member appointed board, is responsible for the designation of local single and multiple site historic districts, the nomination of sites to the National Register of Historic Places, and the promotion of

local historic preservation related activities and events. As of January 2018, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) consisted of:

Members:	Advisory Members:
Doug Merritt, Chair	Alan Grzeskowiak
David Eisen, Vice Chair	Shirley McAlister
Mike Bultinck	Thomas Morris
Terry DeMaegd	Jason Stoller
Judy Gray	Cliff Zenor
Jennifer Johns	
Nancy Seidler	
Faye Sullivan	
Kate Voelker (Common Council)	

An overview of the 2017 activities and accomplishments are as follows:

The Common Council approved the City’s first Conservation District in the Normain Heights neighborhood, after almost a year of dialogue between the Mishawaka Historic Preservation Commission and residents of the subdivision. A Conservation District only requires review of new construction, demolition, or moving a primary structure.

The first Historical Marker was placed at 524 W Grove, family home of baseball pitcher Freddie Fitzsimmons.

This prompted the creation of guidelines with criteria, supporting documentation, submission deadlines, and a review process. The Mishawaka Historical Marker Program was developed to identify areas of historical significance that may not qualify as a Landmark.



Mishawaka Fire Station No. 4, 2319 Lincolnway East, previously designated as a local landmark, was entered in the National Register of Historic Places on September 18, 2017 and was featured on the television show “You Live in What?”

The only certificate of appropriateness approved in 2017 was for the Rosemary’s Garden project inside Battell Park. The construction approved included removal of trees; installing a new “Mishawaka Riverwalk” sign; installing front porch style swings; installing 1 new light; and paving landscaping around the sign and swings.

During May, which is National Historic Preservation Month, the Commission distributed over 60 yard signs; to promote awareness of historic properties and the value they bring to the community. This year we included new sites in the Normain Heights Conservation District and some of our award winners.

The bi-annual preservation awards were presented at the June City Council meeting.

- The Mayor’s Award was presented to Pete DeKeever, author of *With Our Past, Freddie Fitzsimmons: A Baseball Life, Past to Present, and Walking Mishawaka: Self-Guided Tours of Historic Sites in the Princess City books*. Mr. DeKeever’s research on Freddie Fitzsimmons provided much of the information for the Historical Marker.
- The Cultural Heritage Award was presented St. Michael Ukrainian Catholic Church (712 Lawrence St). The description given at the meeting was so mesmerizing, the September meeting was held at the church, where Father Yuri described the different artistic accents and their meaning in the church.
- 1207 Prospect and owner Mary Watt were the recipients of the Heritage Home Award.
Three generations of the same family have lived in the home. Mrs. Watt still has the original building permit and several construction-related documents, like receipts.
- Todd Zeiger with Indiana Landmarks was given the Award for Service. Indiana Landmarks has always been a resource for the Historic Preservation Commission, but in 2016 Mr. Zeiger was a big help in forming the Normain Heights Conservation District, by meeting with neighbors, and researching other Conservation Districts in the State.
- Joey Balderas, the Eagle Scout who completed the gym floor piece project, was presented the Award for Outstanding Achievement. Subsequently, the HPC nominated Mr. Balderas for the Indiana Landmarks Servaas Award Youth Category.

Planning Intern Ashlee McQuarters updated our brochure to highlight the new features, such as the Conservation District and Historical Marker Program. She also compiled descriptions of each landmark to complete the online story map and Appendix A-Landmark Site Details of the Member Handbook. As a final presentation to a project she had been working on all summer, Ms. McQuarters presented her design for the Battell Park Playground.

As part of outreach to the community, the Mishawaka Historic Preservation Commission marched in the Mishawaka Memorial Day Parade had had a booth at the Mishawaka Heritage Festival. The center court section of gym floor from Main Junior High was donated to the new Mishawaka Historical Museum.

Please refer to the 2017 Certified Local Government Report for a full accounting of the activities of the Historic Preservation Commission during the past year. A copy of this report will be available for review at the Department of Community Development and Planning upon completion.

Zoning Enforcement and Administration

Another responsibility of the Planning Department is the enforcement of our ordinances and responding to violations and complaints in a speedy and considerate manner. In addition to countless phone calls and personal contact with those in violation, the Department followed up by sending out letters addressing land use concerns, notices of violation and citation warnings. Welcome letters, with sign code information, were mailed to new businesses opening in Mishawaka.

Economic Development

The Planning Department is also responsible for organizing and implementing programs and initiatives aimed at retaining local businesses and assisting them to grow and benefit the greater community. In 2017, the City continued to work with the St. Joseph County Chamber of Commerce to better clarify roles and responsibilities to help respond to State leads and responses to requests. The Chamber serves as the Lead Economic Development Organization (L.E.D.O. for St. Joseph County). In 2017, the Department continued to actively participate in the process for Regional Cities of Northern Indiana.

Tax Abatements

The City Planning Department is responsible for reviewing and administering the tax abatement program of the City. This includes performing annual compliance reviews and presenting applicable information to the Mishawaka Common Council.

The City of Mishawaka awards tax abatements on commercial real estate and personal property taxes to corporations involved in new capital investments and facility expansions that will further the economic development of the Mishawaka community.

Three tax abatements were submitted and approved in 2017. The River Rock Development Group LLC received real property abatement for a proposed multi-family residential project on an approximate 2-acre city-owned site. The site is generally located east of N. Main Street between Mishawaka Avenue and the St. Joseph River. The proposed \$12.5 to \$13.5 million project includes an approximate 120,000 sq. ft. building with 50 to 60 apartment units. At the time of filing the abatement request, the developer anticipated construction to begin in May 2018 with an anticipated completion by August 2019.

Jamil Packaging Corporation, a manufacturer of corrugated paper boxes and distributor of shipping supplies, received a personal property abatement for a \$1.5 million capital investment in new manufacturing equipment and facility upgrades. The abatement petition indicated that a new digital printer will be added to their production line in August 2017 allowing for growth outside their existing territory.

Lippert Components received real and personal property abatements to support the consolidation

of part of their operations and renovation of the former AM General Warehousing facility on S. Byrkit Avenue. This facility had been vacant since 2016 when AM General moved its parts business to South Bend. The proposed improvements, which began in 2017 and are continuing today, will allow the building to be used as a distribution facility, a service center for recreational vehicles, and a call center. Total investment in the property is anticipated at approximately \$9 million with an estimated employment of nearly 450 jobs within a few years.

Since 1986, the City has approved a total of 59 tax abatements for 40 different companies. Currently, there are 12 active abatements in the City including the following companies: BD Development LLC (St. Joseph Hospital Medical Office Building), Long Term Care Investments LLC, North American Composites (NAC), WellPet LLC, Barak River Rock LLC, Dearborn Crane, Bayer Healthcare, Patrick Industries, River Walk Development Group LLC, Jamil Packaging Corporation, and Lippert Components.