**HISTORIC IRVINGTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL MINUTES**

**Minutes for February 20, 2024**

**MEMBERS PRESENT (**quorum at 8**):** Andrea De Mink, Alyssa Lauer, Caitlin Luebcke, Carrie Yazzell, Chad Cerda, Charles Miller, Dawn Cox Briggs, Francine Calvert Lee, Lesli Gibson, Jacob Lauer, Jake Walker, Kyla Thompson, Robert Uhlenhake, Ronak Shah, Roxanne Hilton, Sue Beecher

**COMMUNITY IN ATTENDANCE:** 30

The meeting was held in person at the Irvington Presbyterian Church, open to the public, and called to order by Sue Beecher at 7:03 pm who opened the meeting by welcoming Council members, guests, and public attendees.

**Approval of Minutes**: The minutes for the previous month, January 2024, were approved virtually.

**Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department, Roman Williams-Irvin, Community Resource Officer**

* IMPD is aware of the recent increase in car break-ins, and especially thefts of Kias and Hyundais, and is allocating increased patrols in the area, which has already led to one proactive arrest.
* IMPD advises to not leave anything in cars, especially cars, which can lead to broken windows.
* If you have a Kia or Hyundai within the time range that can be easily stolen, the Jiffy Lube on Shadeland will provide a steering wheel lock to prevent its theft
* Monthly meetings for East District are typically the second Wednesday of the month

**Updates from** [**Jenny S. Menelas**](mailto:jenny.menelas@indy.gov)**, Area 2 Neighborhood Advocate**

* Previously neighborhood advocate for Area 3, in the southeast side of Indianapolis
* Born in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and speaks fluent Haitian Creole
* Keep Indianapolis Beautiful is filling up their calendar for cleanup days, so request those early
* IMPD has announced a new chief, Christopher Bailey
* Coffee with a Cop is Thursday from 9am to 10am
* IndyGo has a website about Blue Line impacts specific to Irvington
* RequestIndy is an app to submit requests to the Mayor’s Action Center, such as potholes, loose animals, requesting a new trash can, and other things that the city manages.
* A ticket being “**closed”** does not mean that it has been resolved, it means that the ticket has been sent to the acting agency.
* According to the system, Irvington made 32 service requests in 2023 and 7 requests so far in 2024.
* The Mayor’s Neighborhood Advocates meet regularly to coordinate on issues that affect multiple areas.

**Updates from** [**Andy Nielsen**](mailto:Andy.Nielsen@indy.gov)**, City County Councilor for District 14**

* Andy’s favorite color is purple
* Full City-County Council Meeting occurred last week:
  + Old Ford Visteon site will be absorbed into the Irvington TIF without creating a new allocation area. This site will house the new Monarch Beverage plant as well as another as-yet-to-be-decided tenant
  + Fatal Crash Review Team will expand its scope to include serious bodily injury
* Thrive Indy plan: Office of Sustainability will be able to provide a longer update to the Council later this spring. Specifically around citywide recycling, the city is required to go to bid on solid waste between 2025-2026, and this might include recycling processing and collection. Organic waste/compost may be included as well, as an additional cost while recycling would be included.
* Continue to document theft and vandalism where landlords are not taking adequate action
* Citizens is removing trees as part of their project but it wasn’t clear to anyone the extent of the damage and how fast it would happen. There may be an opportunity to make the most out of bad situation but this another situation of poor communication and a poor relationship between Citizens, Parks, and the community. Orange X’s mean removal
  + Citizens says they need to input wells that will be covered
  + Citizens did not mention this to Council when met with them three days ago
  + Citizens said they would inform residents near these trees of the work but some residents did not get that notice
  + Some trees without X’s were taken down including many very old trees
  + Replacement trees will need to be diameter-based rather than simply individual trees so that the value would be more equivalent
  + A local arborist, John Arbuckle, is planning to document the trees that were cut
  + Zoning requires approval of cutting down heritage trees, which needs to be done by the city forester or the director of DPW. Citizens got that approval
* Indy offers free tax prep for families earning $63,000 or less

[**Andrew Bochnicka**](mailto:andrew.bochnicka@mail.house.gov)**, Field Representative, Office of Congressman Andre Carson**

* Congressman Carson will be hosting virtual town halls through Facebook [here](https://www.facebook.com/CongressmanAndreCarson/videos).
* [Youth Opportunities Fair](https://carson.house.gov/about/events/join-us-2024-annual-youth-opportunities-fair) will be at the Ivy Tech Culinary Center on March 12th from 12pm to 7pm
* The Congressman’s office is a resource and service provider and everyone in the office is a case worker, so residents can reach out for help with housing, passwords, benefits programs, fraud, and many other things.
* Valentines for Vets program completed for the 24th year since the late Julia Carson started it.

[**Jim Rawlinson**](mailto:info@irvingtondevelopment.org)**, President, Irvington Development Organization (**[**IDO**](https://irvingtondevelopment.org/)**)**

* IDO has been operating for 21 years. Jim joined 3 years ago and took over as President in October
* 501(c)3 supports facade grants and business development in the neighborhood
* IDO has also maintained streetscape and lights historically and conducted studies
* Recently had a lot of losses and no longer has active staff, but has spent the last year trying to rebuild
* Irvington still has a need for an organization like IDO and the goal would be to be able to have administrative staff by the end of this year and executive director by the end of next year
* Social media is relaunching and many fundraising events will be occurring over the next year
* Committees around placemaking, real estate, fundraising, and marketing
* IDO needs volunteers and help from the community to rebuild
* IDO was able to get Irvington named as the first community in Indianapolis to be an Indiana Main Street, opening up funding and capacity-building opportunities
* Murder Mystery Dinner will be this weekend with food from the Med and a rum punch drink from Strangebird along with music from Irvington Books & Vinyl. This is a fundraiser for IDO.
* Golf Scramble at Pleasant Run in May/June
* Other ideas are to bring back Taste of Irvington and hold development days where people from the city come in to talk about economic development ideas
* Keep Indianapolis Beautiful cleanup on April 20th
* Streetscape maintenance fund is coming up soon along with grants and spaces for murals
* Social media and marketing volunteers are especially in need

**Michelle Pleasant, President, School 57 PTSA**

* Safe Routes to School Irvington has officially kicked off
* Includes all of the schools in the neighborhood and benefits other people who follow the same paths
* Survey will be coming out for all members of the Irvington community but especially those taking routes to school about impacts
* Safe Routes audit will be happening in the spring and volunteers are needed to walk routes and document what hazards or challenges may be faced.
* PTA Planning Session on Monday, February 26th at 6:30pm at Howe Middle School

**Open Forum**

* What kind of legal pressure can be put on negligent landlords to protect tenants rights?
  + Tenants have very few rights in the State of Indiana
  + The state has pre-empted local government regulations on landlord-tenant relations and tenant do not have a private cause of action against a landlord
  + The Health Department has the ability to act but the ticket is closed if the tenant leaves
  + There may be an avenue when landlords don’t keep their property safe generally
  + AES/IPL has a program where you can purchase a streetlight for a property or an alley – $150 for installation and $8 per month to maintain it
* Senate Bill 52 updates?
  + The bill would put a one-year pause on the dedicated lanes for the Blue Line
  + 60 people spoke in opposition to the bill and after 4 hours of testimony the bill was not voted on and amendments were not taken
  + Next Tuesday is the deadline to report the bill and is the last day the committee will meet
  + The Ritter station was moved to the west side of the intersection
  + Halloween Festival month will be a blacked out for construction
  + Economic relief program will be made available to small businesses impacted by construction
  + The streetscape that will be built after construction will be designed by a streetscape committee. It has to be replaced because it exists.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26pm.

Respectfully submitted by Ronak Shah