



# MARKTOWN UPDATE

A publication of the Marktown Preservation Society

February 2007

## Marktown Participates In Wolf Lake Conference



Left: Betty Balanoff spoke on the influx of African American Workers to the Calumet Region.

Above: Mike Boos discussed the Wolf Lake Initiative

Right: Rod Sellers addressed the history of the Illinois side of Wolf Lake

No man is an island and neither is a neighborhood, not even tiny little Marktown. There are two major regional plans that people are working toward. The first is the Marquette Plan and the second is the Calumet Heritage Project. Both can be considered quality of life based initiatives and both include the Marktown Historic District.

Another area that is mutual to both plans is the Wolf Lake Initiative and for the 6th year they celebrated their natural environment and our shared social history at their bi-state Winter Wonderland at Wolf Lake. The one day event was held on Saturday, January 13th with the morning session at

the Environmental Education Center on Calumet Avenue in Hammond and the afternoon session at the Southeast Sportsmen's Club in Hegewisch, Illinois.

A number of organizations, including the Marktown Historic District provided tabletop displays including historic photographs, articles and handouts for the participants at the conference.

The list of speakers was quite extraordinary and most diverse in topics. Leading off the presentations was Paul Myers who spoke in reference to the Marquette Plan, the Calumet Heritage Corridor and the need for both environmental remediation and historic preservation throughout the Calumet Region.

Betty Balanoff spoke in reference to the history of steelworkers in the various Wolf Lake Communities. Her knowledge and expertise in the field is truly amazing.

Robert T. Kay of USGS discussed the introduction of slag to Wolf Lake.

While there hasn't been ice on Wolf Lake during the past three conferences, Rich Ogrentz, the Commodore of the Illiana Yacht Club discussed the history of ice boats on the lake.

At the end of the afternoon session a group discussion was held lead by Mike Boos, Executive Director of the Wolf Lake Initiative. During the discussion, presenters and the public exchanged histories and ideas brought forward during this most remarkable one day event.

The day came to an end with a bonfire coordinated by Mike and Dennis Brennan of Chicago's East Side and Calumet City, Illinois, respectively.



## Planning That Marktown Garden

This past summer a relatively new resident of Marktown noted that they were going to put in a garden this year so they could have a photo of their house in Marktown Update. Outstanding! With that in mind we decided it is never too early to plan that garden, especially considering the size of most Marktown yards.

Let's start with the fact that most Marktown yards are relatively small. Since the average lot is 40'X40' (i.e. 1600 square feet) and the average home has a footprint of approximately 600 square feet, by the time you take out the square footage for the residential sidewalk and the basement window pit you are probably down to about 600-700 square feet.

That doesn't leave a great deal of space for a lawn, let alone a garden. But gardens don't have to be huge, nor do they have to take up the entire yard.

You may also have the option of installing a street side garden adjacent to your yard. If you de-

cide to do this, then the best thing to do is work with the neighbor next door so that the garden continues from one front gate to another.

For ideas on the street side gardens drive or walk past 402-406 Prospect Street and you can see two outstanding examples of gardening and neighborhood cooperation.

The same type of street side gardens are scheduled to be installed on much of Spruce Avenue in mid to late spring of this year.

As for your in the yard garden the best you can do during the winter months is think about it, do a little research and monitor the sun.

There are two basic types of flowers that will be relatively available this spring. They are annuals and perennials. Annuals require that you replace them each year. This gives you the opportunity to totally change your garden each year. The second type are known as perennials. They come

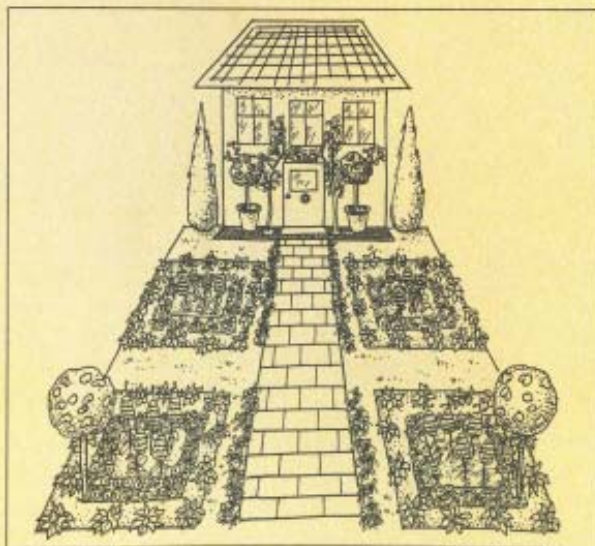
back year after year, but the initial purchase price will probably be a bit higher than the annuals.

You may want to consider planting perennials closer to the house or fence and then adding the annuals in front of them. This combination works well in most gardens and provides both stability in the garden and a greater variety of color throughout the spring, summer and fall.

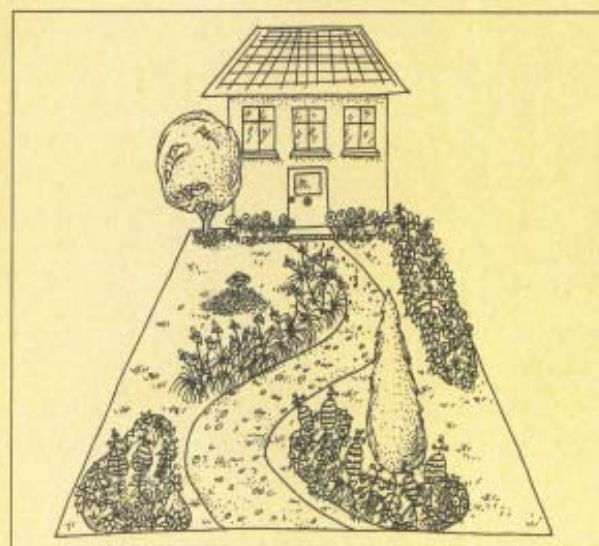
One of the things that you need to remember is that some flowers do better in shade than sun, while others prefer the sun over the shade. Pay close attention to how much sun your yard gets and then decide what you want to plant and where.

If this is your first garden in Marktown **START SMALL**. Nothing looks worse than a garden full of weeds, and yes, starting with a large garden can take a considerable amount of time, effort and money to install and maintain. For further gardening ideas visit the East Chicago Public Library.

### Choosing a Garden Style



Formal gardens are laid out with straight lines and symmetrical plantings.



Informal gardens tend to have curved lines and a wider variety of casual plantings.

***Gardens don't happen by themselves. They take planning and work all summer long. They do show that people in the neighborhood take pride in their homes.***

# THE TOWN OF MARK, INDIANA

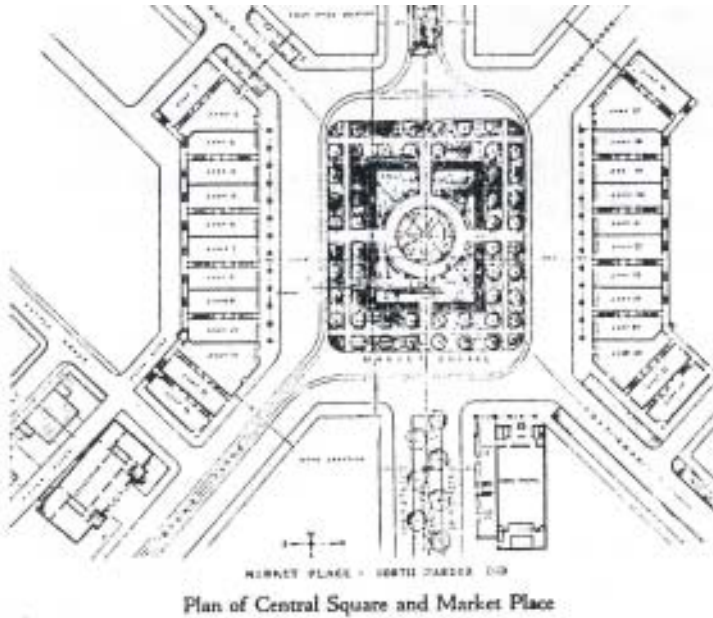
## A MANUFACTURER'S HOUSING ENTERPRISE

By Ralph F. Warner

In considering the progress that has been made, since the outbreak of the war in 1914, in meeting the extraordinary pressing demand for industrial housing, certain interesting and significant developments are to be found by glancing over a list of the names of architects or architectural firms who are, or have been engaged in the actual planning of homes for industrial workers. It will

be seen that a surprisingly large portion of them are architects whose names have heretofore been associated only with the design of larger and more pretentious structures. It is, however, to the credit of the profession as a whole, that in most cases the architects are measuring up to the trust placed in them, aided, it is true, by a better understanding of the meaning and importance of industrial housing, thanks to the lessons which the war has taught.

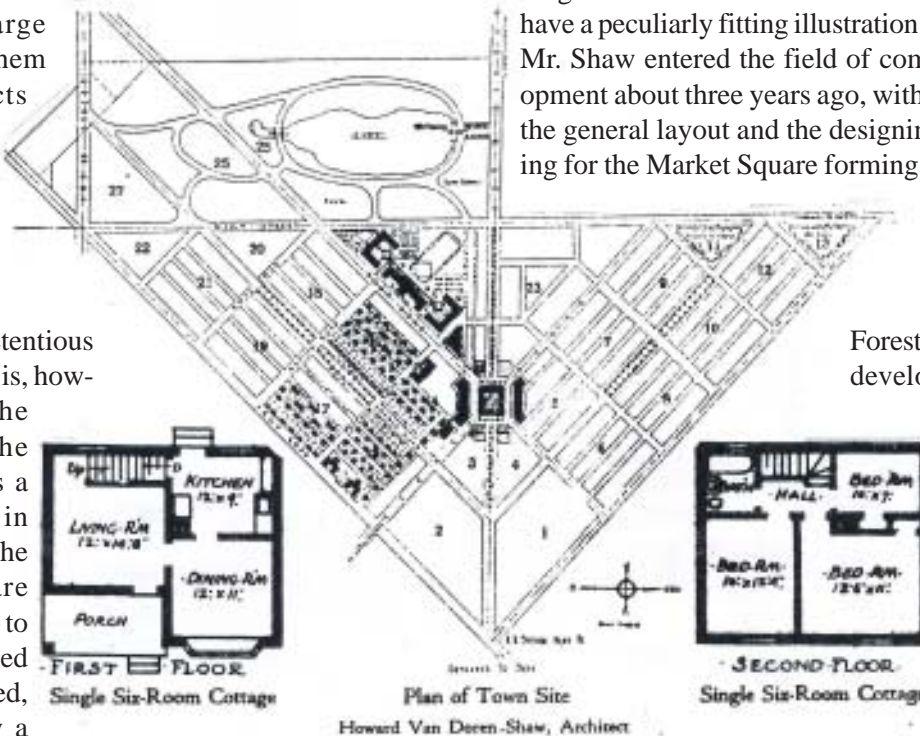
It is also peculiarly gratifying to find that, where the architect has been entrusted with the draft-



ing of the town plan, a work requiring a broad appreciation of the interrelation of a large number of factors not all directly related to architectural design, that he has, generally speaking, shown the same grasp of essentials and the same thorough understanding of the fundamentals of good design, that have characterized his efforts in the regular practice of his profession.

In the town planning work of Mr. Howard Van Doren Shaw, we have a peculiarly fitting illustration of these points. Mr. Shaw entered the field of community development about three years ago, with the drafting of the general layout and the designing of the building for the Market Square forming the entrance to

the town of Lake Forest, Ill. In many ways, the Lake Forest Market Square development, which was completed and published last year, is the most attractive and complete scheme of its kind that has yet been realized in



this country.

In the development of the town of Mark, a community for wage earners built by the Mark Manufacturing Company (now the Steel and Tube Company of America), located at East Chicago, Indiana,

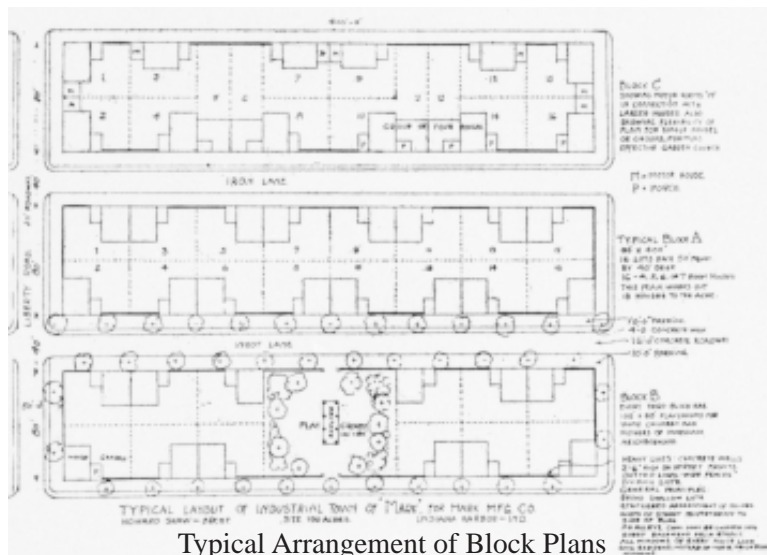
## THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

Mr. Shaw has brought the same careful and conscientious study to bear on the solution of his problem. In fact, it is apparent from a comparison of the Market Square at Lake Forest, with that for the new town, that the former has strongly influenced the design in the latter development -- both of which, it may be said, show the effect of English examples combined with a certain twang of continental origin, noticeable particularly in the buildings about the square.

Not the least of the difficulties which had to be met and solved in the development of this scheme, was the fact that the entire site of 190 acres was, for the most part a swamp, and had



Diagonal view between buildings, showing spacing apart of houses



Typical Arrangement of Block Plans

to be filled to a height from four to seven feet throughout. The work of filling is still going on, as the photographs taken before the development was completed show. Due to this condition, it is necessary for the reader to exercise his

imagination in order to fully visualize what the conditions will be when the streets and lot development and plantings are completed. When that time arrives, we feel sure that the development will compare most favorably with any similar enterprise in America which is governed

by the same conditions.

The task of devising a town plan on a filled and leveled site, which in outline is rigidly geometri-



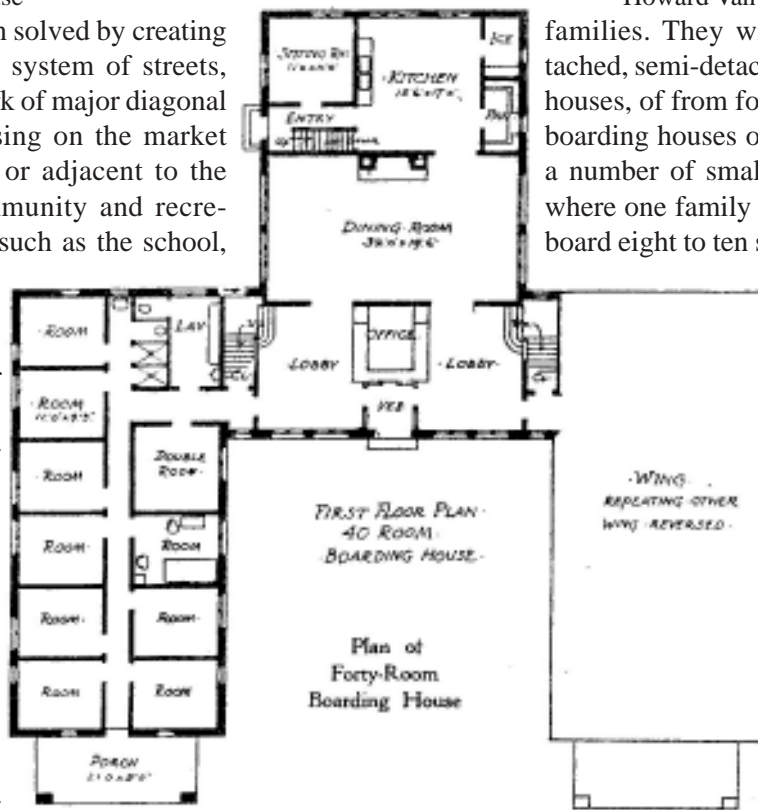
## THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW



View of Boarding House

cal in form, has been solved by creating a modified gridiron system of streets, based on a framework of major diagonal thoroughfares focusing on the market square. Facing on or adjacent to the square are the community and recreational buildings -- such as the school, library, club house, stores, public garages, and the like, the effectiveness of which is vastly increased by their proximity and orderly grouping.

The new town of Mark will provide accommodations for approximately eight thousand persons, including male and female employees, and their



Howard Van Doren Shaw, Architect families. They will be housed in detached, semi-detached and row or group houses, of from four to seven rooms; in boarding houses of forty rooms; and in a number of smaller boarding houses, where one family on the first floor will board eight to ten single men, with bedrooms on the second floor.

The houses are generally of two stories in height, with cellar and, in some cases, an attic. All the houses have running water, toilet with bath, gas and electricity, hot air heat, set wash tubs in kitchen and sewer connection.

The houses



Double Six-Room House. Parking between shown, still unplanted.  
Howard Van Doren Shaw, Architect

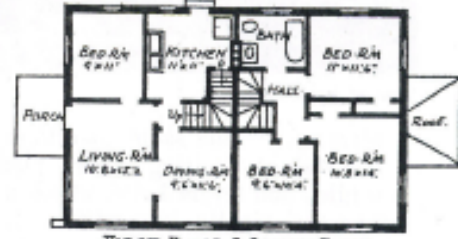
# THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW



Quadruple Four and Five-Room (at left) and Double Six-Room Houses (at right) Howard Van Doren Shaw, Architect



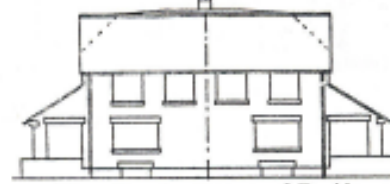
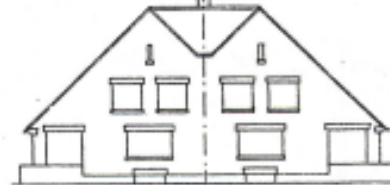
Plans of Quadruple Four and Five-Room Houses



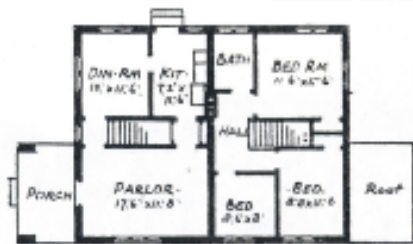
Plans of Double Seven-Room House

have tile walls, which will be covered with various tints of cement wash to give variety, color and gaiety. The woodwork, windows and other frame portions are also being given various treatments in color, having the same end in view, such as red and black, orange and black, green and black, blue and white, etc.

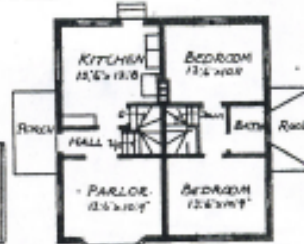
While the houses are located on a uniform building line, generally about forty feet apart, and cover from thirty-five to forty percent of the lot, they are nevertheless disposed upon a somewhat unusual "pattern" of arrangement. The lots are in most cases, square, and the buildings are "staggered" on each block, on opposite sides of the street, so that windows of houses look out into the gardens of their neighbors, rather than into their windows or the blank walls of adjacent buildings. The houses are connected with bush hammered concrete



Three Elevation Variants of Double Six-Room House Plans



Plans of Double Six-Room House



Plans of Double Four-Room House

Howard Van Doren Shaw, Architect

walls three feet high.

The streets are in most cases thirty-two feet wide, with sixteen-foot roadways, so that the houses are in proper scale, and the whole effect is very similar to the streets of English villages, or the old continental towns, such as Prague. The architect has thus avoided a feature unfortunately characteristic of many of our American town-planning developments where small four, five and six-room houses are on broad streets wide enough for the

Chicago Loop District, with an inescapable loss of proportion and scale. The six-room detached houses are to cost from \$2,000 to \$2,500; the double or semi-detached houses

of four to seven rooms from \$2,000 to \$3,000; and the row houses of four, five and six rooms from \$2,000 to \$2,500 apiece.

## Perception Is A Hard Thing To Overcome

**Perception** according to the dictionary is the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses. We all perceive things and we do so from our own perspective of life.

**An Example:** Some (very few) perceive driving through a public park and destroying it as being a fun thing to do. Others (the vast majority of us) perceive such actions as being inexcusable.

From a national standpoint The Region is perceived as being "the rust belt of the nation" despite the fact that the steel industry is stronger today than it has been in the past 50 years.

Some in the State of Indiana perceive The Calumet Region as the home of corrupt politicians who are only out to line their own pockets, when in fact there are a number of totally respectable elected officials and governmental workers who just want to do the right job for all of the people all of the time.

If you talk to people in the southern parts of Lake County or virtually anyone in Porter County and ask them of their perception of East Chicago, Hammond and Gary, you probably won't want to hear what they have to say, and yet, not only is their perception of these three cities probably true to some extent, many residents of the three cities will probably agree with them.

The problem lies in how do we change the perceptions? Marktown Update attempts to do so by

helping the residents of this neighborhood understand our heritage and our potential for a very positive future. We do so on a monthly basis and we do so in print for all to see.

At times I look at Marktown like an automobile. If you have a nice car and someone backs into the front grill, all some will see is the damage and not the overall car or the potential for restoration.

Is Marktown perfect? Absolutely not. Is Marktown important to the history of East Chicago, the Calumet Region, the state and nation? Absolutely! But one thing we need to do is change our perception, the perception we have and that of others.

The City of East Chicago is working hard to change how they are perceived and Marktown is doing the same. When we had the street lights installed back in 1990, some said they would be destroyed by the residents within six months. They weren't destroyed and because of that we began the process of changing people's perception of our community. Because of that historic light fixtures are not being installed throughout East Chicago. Remember: Evil prevails when good people fail to act. Act now and help change the perception of our neighborhood to a positive one. The neighborhood you save is your neighborhood.

Paul A. Myers, Editor & Resident of Marktown and yes, East Chicago

## Marktown Street Project Nearly Completed

Despite the best attempts of everyone involved, it appears that the finishing touches to the long awaited completion of the Spruce Avenue Project will not take place until the weather warms up. There were by all means a myriad of problems throughout the project that caused about 60 days of actual work stoppage on the job. With that said, what is important to remember is that the project is probably about 95% complete at the present time.

In the last newsletter we distributed a letter from the City Engineer in reference to Comcast and SBC line problems. At the writing of this newsletter it appears that

those problems have now been fully taken care of by the two companies.

So, just what does need to be finished up? A couple of complaints are still outstanding in refer-

ence to the fences that were installed. At least one home owner has noted that the newly poured concrete is apparently cracking. Due to the heavy trucks that entered onto private property and the addition of the garden areas, a good degree of landscaping will be needed. They are also looking into a new decorative sign post system that would complement the historic lighting throughout the historic district. Well done E.C.!



*Line crews remove the last of the old above ground telephone lines before taking down the wooden poles that lined Spruce Avenue for at least 5 decades.*

Need to reach us? Try our email at [mrmarktown@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mrmarktown@sbcglobal.net)

# Teamwork Is What Makes A Neighborhood Work



**BEFORE**



**DURING**

**AFTER**

It's simply called teamwork. It was Sunday afternoon in the fall of 2006 that brought four Marktown residents together to resolve a problem that had an adverse effect on the entire block. The project: to remove a mulberry tree that had taken over not just two yards, but much of the



street. Property owner Jarlindho Naranjo was assisted in the removal of the tree and other debris on the adjacent property by George Murillo, Javier Madrigal and yes, Paul Myers. It only took a few short hours to get the job done and what a difference it made for School Street.



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