



# MARKTOWN UPDATE

A publication of the Marktown Preservation Society

June 2006

## Councilman Robert Garcia On Marktown

WOW - What a year it's been. Ever since my election to the 5th District Common Council position a little over a year ago, I have been moving faster and farther in more directions than I ever imagined. If I had to sum up the year in one word it would have to be OPPORTUNITIES all in caps.

They have not been personal opportunities, but more importantly opportunities for the residents of East Chicago and for me to serve those in the 5th District and across all of this truly great city.

From the new JETS program to the health fair I personally sponsored earlier this year, I have found that the greatest satisfactions I have in life are my children and the OPPORTUNITY to serve our residents.

Marktown - What can I say? Long before I was a member of the Common Council I thought of Marktown as a diamond in the rough just awaiting polishing. With the Marktown Revitalization Plan currently being developed, that much needed polishing is just down the road. I was overwhelmed with the outstanding attendance at the first of the planning meetings this past month. With that many people interested in the future of your neighborhood, any plan devised is bound to succeed.

I look forward to seeing the plans for not only the two vacant commercial buildings, but equally as important, for the revitalization of the vacant properties in the neighborhood.

As 5th District Councilman I am also very, very pleased to see Mayor Pabey move forward with the redevelopment of North Harbor and the opening of the lake front for all of our residents. That project, combined with the Comprehensive Plan and the Marktown Revitalization Plan will help our city for decades to come.

I was also very pleased to see that the work has

begun on the renovation of Spruce Avenue. It was most unfortunate that the initial project that was to be completed in 5-6 years has actually taken 16 years to complete. The residents of Marktown deserve better than that.

This past month saw even more change in Marktown with the election of a new Democratic Precinct Committeeman. I extend my congratulations to Javier and look forward to working with him. He has some really great ideas including the renovation of the park just behind the Old Marktown Community Center, but I will let him tell you more about those plans.

One of the greatest areas of concern is in relation to crime prevention and the safety and well being of our residents. Marktown is very isolated from the rest of East Chicago. That can be an asset or a liability. I was very pleased to see the letter sent to the residents by Chief of Police Angelo Machuca. He is right. The first step in crime prevention is the involvement of the residents. It is for that reason that I am very pleased to announce that Mr. Madrigal and I, in cooperation with the East Chi-

cago Police Department, are organizing a Crime Watch program for the Marktown Historic District. For further details on this program, please see the flyer inserted in this newsletter.

It takes teamwork to get things done and I am here to support the residents of Marktown to guarantee the future of your neighborhood. Let's ALL work together for the betterment of all of East Chicago, and especially the Marktown area.

Most sincerely,

Robert Garcia  
5th District Councilman



# Problem Solving 101 In Marktown

Problem solving takes understand and a degree of cooperation, logic and compromise, although compromise is not always part of the solution. This past month found two important instances where the proper problem solving techniques and a great deal of cooperation from several municipal departments appears to have paid off for Marktown.

**Sewer Problems.** On Friday, May 5th at about 3:30 PM the Gray family on Prospect Street realized they had a problem with raw sewage backing up into their basement. Their first step was to call the Utilities Division and report the problem. Their next step was to alert their neighbors so that items placed on various basement floors could be picked up before they were damaged or contaminated.

Within an hour of their call to the city, Vic Gaskey the CS Cleaning Foreman was on the scene and making calls to get the proper equipment to Marktown.

The crews stayed in Marktown until nearly midnight to make sure that the sewer main was cleaned out and the problem was resolved. It should also be noted that they returned to Marktown at least once the following week to follow up on the problem and to make sure that it did not reoccur. That's what we call community spirit and teamwork.

A thank you letter was sent out the next Monday to Al Velez, Superintendent of the Utility Division.

**Fire Department Access to Marktown.** At a planning meeting in the Council Chambers on Thursday, April 4th, E.C. Fire Department Inspector Captain Reginald Robinson raised the question as to their ability to get some of their fire engines into Marktown in the event of a fire.

**Historic preservation saved this community from the wreckers ball in 1975 and should be the foundation for this neighborhood for generations to come.**

A meeting was then set up for the following Wednesday so that the problem could be approached and solutions discussed. Needless to say, if you are going to discuss accessibility to Marktown, then the best place to do so is in Marktown.

Captain Robinson arrived at about 10:00 AM with one of their aerial units that would usually be used in the fire fighting process. The unit was driven down three of the Marktown side streets and the problems were looked at by all present.

The solution to the problem is a bit involved. First and foremost, the City Engineer and the Fire Department will work out a plan to relocate the majority of the street and stop signs away from the immediate curb areas. A uniform plan will be developed and implemented in the near future.

Secondly, we found that in some cases, residents park a bit close to the corner, making it nearly impossible for fire trucks to gain access to those streets. Sgt. Campos of the E.C. Police Department was contacted and the Indiana Code for parking near corners and crosswalks was reviewed.

The bottom line is that we will need to do a degree of public education in reference to how

close we can park to the corners on many of our streets. Public safety must come before personal preference in virtually all cases.

While a follow up letter was again sent to the E.C. Fire Department by the Marktown Preservation Society, Inc. in reference to this problem, the solution to the problem did not include making everyone find another parking place off of the side streets on which they live. You see, problem solving takes cooperation and teamwork, and it truly does WORK!



*Above: Utility Division worker rods out Prospect Street sewer main at 6:00 PM on Friday, May 5th.*

*Below: ECFD Inspector Captain Reginald Robinson watches as a Fire Department aerial unit attempts to round the corner of Lilac Street at Pine Avenue.*



# Planning For The Future Of Marktown

It has been said that *"People don't plan to fail, they fail to plan."* The same can be said about cities, towns, states and even corporations. Planning is one of the keys to success. Daniel Burnham, the architect of the 1909 Plan of Chicago once said: *"Make no little plans: They have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever growing insistency. Remember that our sons and grandsons are going to do things that would stagger us. Let your watchword be order and your beacon beauty."*

And so it is that the City of East Chicago, under the direction of Mayor George Pabey has begun a number of planning programs that will aid us in truly making East Chicago a wonderful place to reside once again. The planning projects include a Comprehensive Plan for the entire city, an area plan for Indiana Harbor that is designed to provide a greater degree of public access to the lake front, and yes, a Marktown Revitalization Plan which is intended to do just what the name says - REVITALIZE the Marktown Historic District. Such plans do not happen overnight. They take time, effort, and public participation if they are to move forward at all.

The planning process for Marktown began last fall when a Request For Qualifications (RFQ) was released. It was published in the local newspapers and the actual RFQ was mailed and emailed to more than 20 architectural firms across the Midwest. Six nationally recognized firms responded to the RFQ. They were: B.A. Martin Architects of Plymouth, Indi-

ana; Jacobs Pannicke Architects of Indianapolis, Indiana; HPZS - Hasbrouch Peterson Zimroch Siriattumrong of Chicago, Illinois; Bauer Latoza Studio of Chicago & Gary; JJR- Smith Group, LLC, of Chicago, Illinois; and James T. Kienle & Associates of Indianapolis, Indiana.

Of that list of six firms that submitted, a review of their qualifications by the Executive Committee

narrowed the group for interview purposes. Once the interviews were concluded late last fall, the firm of BauerLatoza Studio of Chicago & Gary was selected. It should be noted that this was an absolutely open process and that none of the firms had ever worked with the City of East Chicago, or with members of the Executive Committee prior to this project.

All of the architectural firms had the opportunity to visit Marktown during the submittal period. Bill Latoza of the firm BauerLatoza Studio said: *"I live in the Miller section of Gary and drove by this nearly every day on my way to and from our Chicago office and never knew it was hidden just beyond the steel mills. Once I did come and see the neighborhood I couldn't believe my eyes. I drove up and down every street for*

*over an hour and a half, looking at each of the building and visualizing its potential. Finally, I parked and just sat in the park and took in the sights. I immediately knew the importance and the potential for this most unique neighborhood designed by one of the nation's foremost architects - Howard Van Doren Shaw."*

Once the scope of work was determined and the contract was negotiated and approved by Attorney Nathaniel Ruff, the firm was hired to begin the



*Above: Architects Edward Torrez and Janna Paszdur of BauerLatoza Studio in Chicago work with municipal department directors in reference to Marktown.*

*Below: A number of city superintendents discuss the viability of the Marktown Historic District.*



**The height of your accomplishments will equal the depth of your convictions.**

planning process for Marktown.

For the first month they conducted research into the history of Marktown and sought out other communities throughout the United States that have historic significance and like problems to Marktown.

Their next step was to survey the condition of the properties throughout the Marktown Historic District. Many of the residents noticed both Mr. Torrez and Ms. Pasztur in Marktown on several occasions, taking photos and notes in preparation for the drafting of the revitalization plan.

May 4th began a series of meetings in relation to the plan. City officials, both elected and appointed met with the architects for two hours at the Common Council Chambers. They were asked to give bullet point summaries on a number of topics which included the assets, challenges, threats to the community, needs of the neighborhood, industrial impact on the community and the industrial opportunities. More than twenty department heads and a number of Council Members including Jesse Gomez, Adrian Santos and Gus Kouros were in attendance.

The next meeting was held at the Marktown Community Center on May 10th from 5:30 PM to 8:00 PM and was for the stakeholders (property owners of the neighborhood. Why just the property owners? They are the people who have invested in this community, and yes, there will be future meetings which will include an invitation to all of the residents. Also in attendance were City Planner Richard Morrisroe, Department of Redevelopment Executive Director John Artis, Executive Committee Member Thomas Frank, 5th District Councilman Robert Garcia and Councilman-At-Large Jesse

Gomez. Even George Michels was there.

The meeting of the property owners was probably the best attended meeting in Marktown since the establishment of the Street Improvement Project in 1989. More than 75 owners, both resident and non resident were present for the two hour meeting which was intended to determine the preference of the property owners on a number of subjects including the redevelopment of the parks, the use of the

various commercial buildings, and the renovation and restoration of the individual properties.

So, what is next in the planning process? Well, let's take a look at the various tasks in the Scope of Work. They are:

**Task 1:** Project Initiation Meeting

**Task 2:** Data Collection and Analysis

**Task 3:** Market Assessment

**Task 4:** Community Workshops - SWOT, Vision and Charrette

**Task 5:** Preliminary Concept Plan Scenarios

**Task 6:** Community Concept Plan Workshop

**Task 7:** Implementation Strategy

**Task 8:** Final Plan Document

Where are we in the planning process? Tasks 1 and 2 are relatively completed. Task 3 is well underway and we have just begun Task 4 with the completion of the first two meetings of

a series of meetings yet to come.

One of the problems with any planning process is rumors and misinformation. There is no secret agenda but there is a very public agenda for this project. Quite simply, the plan is sought to resolve the problems that face this neighborhood: deferred maintenance, vacant buildings, and a lack of commercial development. What possibilities exist for the old Mark Hotel? Could it be a Charter School, or



*Above: Marktown stakeholders were joined on May 10th by Councilmen Robert Garcia and Jesse Gomez.*

*Below: More than 75 Marktown property owners (stakeholders) met with architect from BauerLatoza Studio for the first of the Marktown Revitalization Plan meetings.*



**What we do for ourselves dies with us.**

**What we do for others and the world remains and is immortal!**

a K-3 elementary school? Could it become a restaurant and museum with a dance floor once again on the second floor of the building. What about the old Market Square Building. Is it a good location for a small convenience store to serve Marktown residents and those who pass by or visit Marktown.

And what of the old garage lot? Should high price condos be built there and if so, would they be marketable without all of the homes in Marktown first being restored or renovated? What about having it used for fireproof condo type garages where you could buy a garage within walking distance of your home?

And what about the parks? Do we want a swimming pool or a splash/spray water park for the children of our neighborhood? Do we envision our park becoming a place for public sculpture? Do we really want or need additional play equipment, or would more trees and picnic tables work out best in Marktown?

And what of our industrial neighbors? What will happen to our homes if the lands just across Dickey Road are re-industrialized? Do we need more factories or do we need to address the quality of life issues? Would you like to see this area developed into a MAJOR regional or national park with access to the lake front? Just think, you could walk to the beach from Marktown!

What about an industrial heritage museum on those lands? Federal funding could be available for this.

Should tourism be a part of our future? In other historic neighborhoods, funds raised from public tours are utilized to defer some of the costs of individual home restoration. At present the Marktown Preservation Society doesn't even charge for the tours they

provide. In Pullman to our west they charge \$20.00 per person for their annual house walk. Would increased historic tours make it possible for a cottage industry of arts and crafts to form in and around the Marktown Historic District?

These are just some of the questions that have been and will be raised in the planning process for the future of the Marktown Historic District and all of East Chicago. Remember: People don't plan to fail, they fail to plan.

We thank Mayor Pabey and his staff for taking these most important first steps in making positive plans for Marktown, Indiana Harbor and all of East Chicago.

The problems that exist in the Marktown Historic District are the same type of problems that exist in many neighborhoods across the country. They did not appear overnight and they will not disappear with just the presence of a plan or even in a year or two after the plan is completed.

From the 1975 National Register nomination we find: "...Marktown presents a living lesson in history and culture from the pioneer growth period of the Calumet Region. This region, which is America's industrial heartland, is quite young compared to other great regions of this nation. Sometimes in such areas the concern for history is lost. But here there is the opportunity to preserve the Marktown community as a living and useful landmark of genuine architectural and cultural significance for the Calumet Region, the state and the Country. The Marktown area is an important cultural resource which should be restored to accurately present the intentions of the original design."



*Commercial redevelopment is one of the keys to a successful community. What uses will be found for these three great buildings in the future. Will the Market Square Building be restored and reopened? Will the Mark Hotel be offices or a new restaurant? Could the Garage building become a museum? Will they ever be made available for redevelopment? Only time will tell.*

opportunity to preserve the Marktown community as a living and useful landmark of genuine architectural and cultural significance for the Calumet Region, the state and the Country. The Marktown area is an important cultural resource which should be restored to accurately present the intentions of the original design."

**Please contact us via the internet at [mrmarktown@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mrmarktown@sbcglobal.net)**

## Play Ball Is Heard Once Again In Marktown

As noted in previous publications of Marktown Update, baseball and softball are not new to our neighborhood. From the early 1920s to the present, Marktown has been home to both sports. Our own Ryan Rodruguez of Park Street is playing his final season with the E.C. Central Cardinals. Once again wearing No. 2, Ryan truly loves the sport. He is shown here in a special Roosevelt High School jersey worn on two occasions this past season. Marktown was also once again the home field for the Lady Cardinals this season. We will miss them when they begin playing at Tod Park next year. Below is a photo of the 1937-1938 Marktown Softball team.



### **E.C. Central Lady Cardinals - 2006**

Front row: Laura Rodriguez, Jessica Hernandez, Jessica Pabey, Alex Silvas, Stephanie Rodríguez, Connie Ramirez, Celina Rivera, Micaela Vargas

Back row: Coach Cindy Wilson, Brittany Hylek, Eva Santiago, Gabrielle Smith, Melissa Marquez, Melissa Martinez, Veronica Navarro, Jennifer Ochoa, Laura Perez, Lauren Perez, Samantha Perez, Claudia Martinez

## Parks Department Moves Forward In Marktown

Keeping the Marktown Parks in good condition takes a great deal of work, and yes cooperation from the residents of Marktown and everyone else who use our parks. Sometimes, having someone in the neighborhood helping to identify problems and solutions also pays off for all concerned.

This past month Paul Myers met with Parks Superintendent Rudy Byron to discuss getting our parks ready for the summer. Some of the items discussed included:

1. Securing the gates at the Parks Maintenance Building on Broad Street at Pine Avenue.
2. Getting the public washrooms at that building ready for use this summer.
3. Replacing and repairing the lights on the basketball and tennis courts.



4. Getting the tennis nets reinstalled early this year.
5. Budgeting for the replacement of the roof at the Marktown Park Pavilion. It is now more than 20 years old and the weather has taken its toll on the shingles.
6. Replacing the slide that was damaged by vandals in April of this year.
7. Mulching the base of all of the trees planted on the public parkways and in the park these past few years.

Defining the problems and finding reasonable solutions doesn't take a great deal of effort

One thing we do need is the cooperation of the residents of Marktown.

Keeping our parks clean on a daily basis begins with those who litter. Please, make sure you pitch in by throwing your garbage in a garbage can. Remember - recycling helps to save our environment!

## BP Appoints Citizens' Advisory Committee

Community spirit and openness are not lost with our neighbors to the north. BP, formerly AMOCO and Standard Oil is continuing its open door and community understanding program with the quarterly meetings of their Citizen's Advisory Committee. The Committee, which was originally formed about ten years ago, recently had a number of new appointments join the committee, and for the first time a resident from East Chicago was asked to join them.

Considering that a good portion of what is known as the Whiting Refinery is actually in East Chicago, appointing an East Chicago resident, especially a Marktown resident was not unexpected at all.

The agenda for the March 28th meeting included:

- A. Update of Communication Efforts
- B. Committee Questions on Communication Efforts
- C. Update of Remediation Efforts
- D. Canadian Extra Heavy Oil Presentation
- E. Overview of Baker Panel Visit

As a new member it was nice to see the meeting well run and well attended. One of the items we found out was the BP has a series of well points in Hammond, Whiting and East Chicago. The wells are sampled on a regular basis to monitor the possibility of groundwater contamination. They also issue a publication titled BP Community Communication which pro-

vides a detailed listing of community inquiries. The report states the date and time of the report, the location, the caller's description of the problem and most importantly, the action taken to resolve the problem.

It was an honor to have been appointed to the committee and to have an opportunity to learn more about the refinery that has been here long before Marktown was built.

BP Citizens' Advisory Committee members are:

- Tim Armstrong, Lake County Parks Department
- Ron Dippo, Environmental Business Mgr. BP
- Dan Douglas, Local Resident  
Current Director of IDEM
- Steve Johnson, Grand Calumet Task Force
- Mark Kalwinski, Councilman, City of Hammond
- Thomas Keilman, Community Representative
- Brian Lowry, Dir. Public Affairs, Calumet College
- Paul Myers, Local Resident
- William Phillips, President PACE Local 1
- David Ryan, President, Lakeshore Chmbr. of Cmrc.
- Diana Smyser, School City of Whiting
- Stanley Sorrels, BP Representative
- Lee Watson, Local Business
- Rudy Wunder, Mayoral Aide, City of Whiting

*Respectfully submitted,  
Paul A. Myers*

**With TEAMWORK all things truly are possible.  
You don't have to be elected to be a leader in a community.**

# Letters From Our Readers

April 1, 2006

Dear Paul -

I must apologize for not writing sooner to thank you for the Marktown book. I am so glad I got it and it brought back so many fond memories. Now, my daughter would very much like to have a copy too. I would appreciate it very much if you would send me another copy with the extra envelope with all the brochures. I would like to surprise her. She is also interested in seeing Marktown.

After reading the book, I began to wonder if by chance you might know or have any addresses of people who grew up there in the 1920's or 1930's.

It was a pleasure to receive the May update this morning. Congratulations on all you are doing to preserve Marktown.

I will look forward to receiving the book.

Sincerely, Ruth (Taylor)Carlson

Marktown Preservation Society,

As a member of the Historic Preservation Committee of the American Institute of Architects and a regular attendee of the Traditional Building Conferences, it was nice to hear all the great comments from my colleagues who went on the Pullman-Marktown tour. Congratulations on your success.

James T. Kienle, FAIA

Dear Paul,

Ross called the other evening...he has been enjoying the book. I do appreciate that you took it to him. I'll be in the neighborhood at some time and will read through it. Ross is of course the one who has remained in the region and has different stories than I being the "elder". It is great when we share our memories. Keep up the great work.

Myrna (Johnson) Quinn

## New Leadership In Marktown



Mr. & Mrs. Javier R. Madrigal of Marktown

While many of our residents were aware of the results of the election within hours for the closing of the polls on May 2nd, we thought it only proper to officially announce that Javier R. Madrigal of 416 Lilac Street had a resounding victory with a 2:1 vote ratio. Javier has lived in Marktown nearly all of his life and is a manager at the Super K Mart in Homewood, Illinois.

Javier is married to his wife Garbiela who works for a local financial institution. Together they have four children: Vanessa (age 11), Alicia (age 9), Garbiella (age 9) and Ruben (age 6).

Javier has some really great ideas for the Marktown Historic District. His immediate concerns are the reduction of crime in our neighborhood and getting the residents to work together on a number of projects. One of which is as he put it is "*Just cleaning up this neighborhood. You know, picking up the trash and getting people to pay more attention to their homes and yards.*" Javier can be reached at 805-4426.

It should be noted that he appointed Kimberly Rodriguez as is Vice-Precinct Committeeperson. Kim probably doesn't need an introduction, as she has been an active resident here for decades.

**Marktown Update** is published each month by the **Marktown Preservation Society, Inc. (MPS)** from their office at the residence of Paul A. Myers. It distributed free of charge to all of the residents of Marktown. It is also distributed to more than 400 non residents via the U.S. Mail. An index to all of the past issues, as well as PDF electronic copies of each issue are available at the official

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