

Town of Meridian Hills

VOLUME 8, ISSUE 2

OCTOBER 21, 2011

WHITE RIVER BRIDGE

After many years of neglect, the City of Indianapolis is renovating the Meridian Street bridge over White River. Due to crumbling sidewalks, overgrown weeds, and concern for public safety, the Town of Meridian Hills actively pursued this project over the last several years, but were told that funds were not available. However, with the recent sale of the water utilities, the City of Indianapolis allocated funds to address this bridge as well as many other high priority issues.

The Town initially attempted to claim a portion of the funds from the sale of the utilities. However, after meeting with Mayor Ballard, the Director of Public Works, and advise from council, the Town redirected our efforts to work with the City of Indianapolis to iden-

tify and address issues that are high priority to our residents.



DPW held an open house on September 15th at St. Paul's Episcopal Church with plans for the \$8.5 million project. Although the footprint of the bridge will not change, they are maximizing the efficiency of space by creating a 6 foot traditional concrete sidewalk on the west side of the bridge (wider than the current sidewalk), a 10 foot asphalt activity path on the east side of the bridge (**much** wider than the cur-

rent sidewalk), and four 12 foot traffic lanes. There will be 6 inch curbs on both sides, and both will run from 62nd Street to 64th Street. The activity path on east side will connect to the parking lot for the Blickman Trail, ultimately connecting Holliday and Marott Parks. The new railings will be "Texas-style," allowing better visibility of the River.

Phase One on the southbound lanes is underway and scheduled to end mid-December. All four traffic lanes will be open during the winter months, with Phase Two on the northbound lanes to start at the end of March and be completed in November of 2012.

For additional information, please contact Phillip Hunter, project supervisor, at 519-9993, or phunter@blainc.com.

OTHER TOWN UPDATES

The resurfacing of Meridian Street within the town is complete. New left turn lanes were added at 79th/Williams Creek Blvd at the request of the Town of Meridian Hills, and the shoulders were paved with a top-surface as opposed to sub-surface asphalt.

Additionally, the resurfacing of 75th Street between Westfield Blvd. and College Ave. is complete. DPW paved the shoulders with top-surface asphalt, and striped them for bike and pedestrian use only, at the request of the Town of Meridian Hills. Special thanks

to DPW and the City of Indianapolis for working with the Town of Meridian Hills on these projects. No money from the town's budget was spent on either project, but they both greatly improve public safety and provide safer access to the Monon Trail for residents.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

White River Bridge	1
Other Town Updates	1
Newby Cemetery	2
75th Street Edge Stripes	2
Drainage Open House	3
Indemnify Town Police	4
Calendar of Events	4

POLICE

Emergency 9-1-1
Non-Emergency 327-3811
Answering Mach. 253-5678

ADMINISTRATION

Town Council

Jim Rush, President
257-1886

Terry O'Brien
979-5646

Walter Freihofer
253-5556

Clerk Treasurer

John Taylor
459-7708

Town Attorney

Sue A. Beesley

Town Engineer

Jay Vorisek, PE

Town Marshal

Michael S. Russo

meridianhills.org

NEWBY CEMETERY

Not many people realize there is an historic 19th-century pioneer cemetery within the Town of Meridian Hills. The

Newby Cemetery, on the east side of Spring Mill Road, just north of 79th Street was established in 1851. It is maintained by the Washington Township Trustee's Office, along with Bacon, Crow's Nest, Deford,

Ebenezer Lutheran, and Fall Creek Union Cemeteries. Although the number of burials in Newby Cemetery is unknown, the Washington Township Trustee's Office has a list of 23 names, along with birth and death dates and a brief history of the cemetery.

The cemeteries were neglected for decades, but former trustee Gwen

Horth initiated a project to restore them to their original beauty in 2002. "This is bringing back his-

stone carving into his work. "It's real rewarding just saving history," Walters said.

If you visit the cemetery, please be respectful of the neighbors that live nearby, and of the dead who are buried at the site. For additional information, click on the Washington Township link on the town's website at www.meridianhills.org.

- Contributions by Gretchen Rush



tory," Horth said. "Many veterans, including John and William Deford, who fought in the Civil War, were laid to rest in our township." James Bradley, Co. F Eighth Indiana Cavalry, is buried in Newby Cemetery. The renovation was completed by John "Walt" Walters, and his company Graveyard Groomers. Walters puts his passion for history and



EDGE STRIPES ON 75TH STREET



75th Street Edge Stripes

In September, the Meridian Hills Town Council approved "edge stripes" along 75th Street between Pennsylvania and Spring Mill Rd. This continues the edge stripes that were installed on 75th between Pennsylvania and College last year after 75th Street was resurfaced.

The 75th Street resurfacing project was funded using federal stimulus dollars administered by the state of Indiana, that the Town applied for and secured. As such, there were restrictions that prevented us from modifying the footprint of the street in order to qualify for the funding. Instead, we opted to stripe the traffic lanes at 10 feet, the minimum allowable standard set by the MUTCD - Manual on Uniform Traffic Control

Devices. The bike lane standard in the MUTCD requires 4 feet minimum on **both** sides of the street.

The edge-striping serves two important purposes - they provide narrower travel lanes for vehicular traffic, which is a proven way to slow speeds down; and they also provide a spatial barrier from cars for the many pedestrians and bicyclists traveling on 75th Street. The "shoulders" cannot be marked for bicycle or pedestrian use because they do not meet the minimum four foot width requirements, but it greatly improves public safety and offers a compromise for those residents trying to access the Monon Trail and other destinations on 75th Street.

DPW DRAINAGE OPEN HOUSE

In addition to the major street and bridge projects that have been completed or are underway within and adjacent to the Town of Meridian Hills, several drainage projects are currently in the works.

Drainage problems have been an ongoing issue within the Town of Meridian Hills and throughout the City of Indianapolis. Over the years, homeowners have filled in many of the swales or paved the right-of-way adjacent to the roads, which has exacerbated the problem. Recently, home additions and larger footprints of new homes have added additional stormwater run-off volume. The lack of ongoing maintenance and cleaning of deteriorating clay pipes have contributed to the problem.

Although the Town of Meridian Hills owns the streets and the rights-of-way within our boundaries, the City of Indianapolis and Marion County are responsible for drainage issues in these public areas, while residents are responsible for drainage issues on private property. The Town does not have the funds nor

the authority to adequately address many of these drainage issues.

The Town has appealed to the City of Indianapolis for years to perform necessary improvements to high priority drainage issues. And now, again due to the recent sale of utilities, the City has allocated funds to address some of our high priority drainage issues.

The Department of Public Works is holding an Open House at the First Congregational Church on Thursday, November 10th, from 6pm - 7pm, to reveal plans to address two long-standing drainage issues - 1) Pennsylvania Street, between 73rd and 71st, and 2) 73rd Street, between Pennsylvania and Pennridge. Residents are invited to attend the open house and review the plans designed by MS Consultants.

A great deal of time and effort has been spent to get to this point. Special thanks to Walter Freihofer, who worked closely with the Department of Public Works, as well as Lance Stahley and

Jay Vorisek, our Town Engineers. Over the years, they have spent hundreds of hours doing site visits, discussing with affected homeowners, and working with the Department of Public Works to address these issues.

Drainage Open House

Department of Public Works
November 10th, 6-7pm
First Congregational Church

*To review plans for
two drainage improvements,
on Pennsylvania and on 73rd Street*

If you have ongoing drainage issues on rights-of-way or public areas, please notify Lance Stahley at lstahley@crossroadengineers.com. Our engineer will record the report, and notify our contact at DPW to seek assistance. Please also report the issue to the Mayor's Action Center at 327-4622....a squeaky wheel gets the grease!

Street Name Sign Program



At the September meeting, the Meridian Hills Town Council approved 15 of the new decorative street name signs. Other than twelve on Meridian Street, these 15 represent the last of the old street name signs that need to be replaced throughout the entire town.

Replacement of the street name signs was necessary to be compliant with new MUTCD standards that will begin to take effect in 2014. The new signs have larger lettering and meet MUTCD reflectivity standards and colors. The arch on the blades identifying the Town of Meridian Hills, and the post with decorative scrolling was not required, but consistent with the Town's effort to help create a stronger sense of identity and community. The decorative street signs, along with the town entry signs and decorative streetlights, are intended to help with this effort.

The last 12 street name signs along Meridian, and any overhead signs on the main thoroughfares, may be pursued in the next couple years. The town will need to seek approval and work with the City of Indianapolis on these signs as the City owns and maintains Meridian Street. Please contact Terry O'Brien at 979-5646 with any questions.

meridianhills.org

Town of Meridian Hills
P.O. Box 40437
Indianapolis, IN 46240

www.meridianhills.org

Phone: 459-7708

Fax: 334-0955

Calendar of Events

Regular Council Meetings - 7:00pm

November 8, January 9, March 12

October

- 30 "Holliday Park Fall Festival,"
Holliday Park, Noon - 5pm, FREE
327-7180
- 31 Meridian Hills Town Budget
Public Hearing, 8:30am
First Congregational Church
- 31 HALLOWEEN - *Drive Carefully*

November

- 5 "Woman's Christmas Bazaar,"
Second Presbyterian Church,
8am-2pm
- 5 "Jubilee Casino Night," \$35
St. Luke Catholic Church, 6:30pm
- 5 "The Crucible," Park Tudor,
Ayres Auditorium, 7:30-10pm
- 6 "Naturalist on the Loose,"
Holliday Park, 1:30-2:30pm, FREE
327-7180
- 6 "The Crucible," Park Tudor,
Ayres Auditorium, 2:30-5:30pm
- 8 ELECTION DAY - *Vote!*
- 10 DPW "Drainage Open House,"
First Congregational Church,
6-7pm
- 24 THANKSGIVING

December

- 4 "Meet the Nature Center Animals,"
Holliday Park, 1:30-2:30pm, FREE
327-7180
- 9 "Family Friday Night Campfire,"
Holliday Park, 6:30-8:00pm, \$5
327-7180

INDEMNIFY TOWN POLICE

Jim Rush, Town Council president, and Mike Russo, Town Marshal, met recently with Public Safety Director Dr. Frank Straub with the City of Indianapolis to address some issues that could improve the public safety for residents of the Town of Meridian Hills.

The primary issue is indemnification from the City of Indianapolis for our Town police. Our officers are highly trained professionals that are often first responders on the scene of a traffic accident or a crime. Although they are trained to respond to all emergency situations, the Town has been reluctant to encourage participation in dispatches outside of the town boundaries due to liability.

Although the issue is not yet resolved, the City of Indianapolis and the Public Safety Director's office are in the process of drafting a proposal that would indemnify our town police. From the City's perspective, it would allow for more police protection in

the area, as well as potential cost savings. The proposal may include training the town police under the City of Indianapolis and satisfying state laws.

Special thanks to Jim Rush and Mike Russo for all their time and effort spearheading this important issue that could greatly improve the public safety of residents.

Phone Numbers

- *Call Before You Dig - 8-1-1*
- *Mayor's Action Center - 327-4622*
- *Mosquito Control - 221-7440*
- *Permitting - 327-8700*
- *Pot Holes - 780-1555 x 116*
- *Power Outage - 261-8111*
- *Street Lights Out - 261-8111*

This newsletter is produced by the Communications Committee for the Town of Meridian Hills. If you're interested in contributing to the newsletter, please contact Terry O'Brien at 979-5646.

Town of Meridian Hills
7390 Holliday Drive East
Indianapolis, IN 46260

meridianhills.org

Town of Meridian Hills
Established 1937