

Town of Meridian Hills

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1

MARCH 28, 2005

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STATE OF THE TOWN

This past year has been a year of accomplishment for the Meridian Hills Town Council. We began by assembling an administration of qualified professionals contributing to the manage-



ment of your town. With their knowledge, talent, and professionalism, the hard work and effort of your elected officials, and the contributions of time and energy from many residents, we've laid a great foundation for the future of the Town.

Following are some of the accomplishments during this past year in office:

- Transitioned to a New Administration
- Added Pledge of Allegiance & Resident Forum to Agenda
 - Changed Banking Practices Resulting in Savings
 - Developed Electronic Transfer of Funds from County & State
 - Activated Streets & Thoroughfares Committee, Police & Safety Committee, and Finance Committee
- Created Communications Committee and Development Standards & Residential Construction Committee
- Developed Town Newsletter
- Developed Town Website
- Developed Council Meeting Yard Signs
- Surveyed Residents for Priority Issues
- Developed Town Drainage Study
- Developed Comprehensive Survey of Town Roads & Signs
- Developed Road Management Plan
- Developed Sign Management Plan
- Created Rainy Day Fund
- Restricted Commercial Use of Town Database
- Shared Town Data with IMAGIS & added link on website

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New Meridian Hills Clerk Treasurer

John Taylor was elected to serve as Meridian Hills Clerk Treasurer by the Republican Party caucus held on February 24th.

John brings some great business experience to the Town Administration. He holds a

MBA in Finance and is a successful business owner. He's very active in our community serving as Vice President and Board Member for the Friends of Holliday Park, former Treasurer and Board Member for the Sycamore School, and as Precinct Inspector on elec-

tion day for the past three years.

John's election will offer some stability to the office that has been in transition for the last several months.

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If you're interested in serving on a committee, please call Kay Ivcevich at 251-0404.

ADMINISTRATION

Town Council

Terrence O'Brien, President
979-5646

Katherine Ivcevich
251-0404

Abbe Hohmann
251-6227

Clerk Treasurer

John Taylor
459-7708

Town Attorney

Sue A. Beesley

Town Engineer

Cecil Whitaker, PE, DEE

Town Marshal

Michael S. Russo

meridianhills.org

MARSHAL'S CORNER

Safety Seminar

The Meridian Hills Town Council is hosting a personal safety seminar on Thursday, April 28, from 7:00pm to 8:15pm at the Park Tudor Hilbert Early Education Center (College Avenue entrance at top of stairs). The featured speaker is Town Officer Matt Grimes. Officer Grimes will discuss personal security tips for daily living that will reduce your chances of becoming a victim of crime. Please join us.

In other Town police and law enforcement news, Marshall Russo has increased traffic enforcement at the request of Town residents. Mr. Russo noted at the January 26 Police & Law

Enforcement Committee meeting that 75th Street, Spring Mill, Pennsylvania, and Illinois are busy streets that are not appropriate for children to play in or near. Warmer weather will bring people outdoors.

For everyone's safety, please watch your speed.

A main concern regarding criminal activity in the Town is theft from unlocked cars, garages and even mailboxes. Please be sure to lock your cars, garages and



home, and mail your bills or anything that has personal or account information from the post office rather than your mail box. ***If you see any suspicious activity or crime in progress, call 911!***

Vacation Check

Did you know that Town police officers will check your home while you're on vacation? Call 253-5678 and leave a message with your name, address, travel dates, if an alarm will be armed, which lights should be on, if there's a car in the drive, or if any service people, relatives or friends will be in your home while you're gone. In addition, be sure to cancel newspapers, hold the mail, leave lights on, and tell your neighbors that you will be gone.

Emergency Numbers

If a situation requires immediate or emergency action, always call 911, regardless of whether you need the fire department, ambulance, or a police response!

- Stephanie Crossin

Member of Police & Law Enforcement Committee

Committee Spotlight

Development Standards & Residential Construction Committee

Meridian Hills continues to grow in all directions, from tear-downs to additions to pools and gazebos. The pattern of growth is likely to continue as family composition and space requirements shift and change. So, how might this affect you or your neighbor? Should you be concerned about setback requirements for homes in Meridian Hills? Won't that new addition or pool deck reduce the land area available to absorb storm water? And should that new privacy fence meet the height limits, which are set by code?

The newly elected Town Council has established a Development Standards & Residential Construction Committee, which is working to clarify some of the language in the zoning rules, as an aid to those contemplating construction. In addition, storm drainage is on the Committee's agenda, in an effort to deal with the issues raised by a system which was developed in piecemeal fashion a number of years ago. The committee also strives to keep abreast of proposed development in Meridian Hills, to the extent that inquiries about specific projects are made by the residents.

Councilor Hohmann chairs this committee of volunteers, who meet at 8:15am, on the fourth Thursday of each month at St. Luke School. The current group of nine residents have professional careers in home building, land development, commercial real estate, insurance, urban planning, architecture and real estate appraising.

The committee serves as a source of information on issues such as building permit procedures, zoning requirements and drainage projects. Experience thus far suggests that a "good neighbor" approach is best for those who contemplate a construction project. This entails three basic steps: 1) discuss the project with those around you; 2) obtain a copy of the Meridian Hills ordinances and review the setback requirements that will affect your project; 3) informally present your proposed construction project to the committee to seek positive feedback.

The committee members are: Abbe Hohmann, Eric Lee, Fred Terzo, Judy Weerts Hall, Greg Jacoby, Julie Christensen, Bill Mooney, Tal Denny and Dick Ristine. We welcome your participation in our work to enhance Meridian Hills.

- Fred Terzo

Member of Development Standards & Residential Construction Committee

"Personal Safety Seminar"

April 28th at 7pm

Park Tudor Hilbert Center

New Clerk Treasurer

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On November 1, Dr. Nunery resigned as Clerk Treasurer. Esther Schneider was elected in the Republican Party caucus on November 30th. Esther resigned on January 13 to become the Director of the Hoosier Lottery. The Council would like to thank Dr. Nunery and Esther Schneider for their efforts and contributions. We're looking forward to working with John as we continue to serve you.

Where Are my Property Lines?

Very often where a homeowner *thinks* his or her boundary lines are, may not be where those lines actually are.

Boundary lines are a function of both law and surveying, but *where* a boundary line is can only be determined by a Land Surveyor licensed by the State of Indiana. The opinion of a friend,



neighbor, realtor or any other unlicensed person regarding the location of a boundary line has no legal foundation.

Over time, fences are built, trees are planted, drives are built and owners mow their lawn based on perceptions of where lot lines are that may not be based in fact. Unless there is a survey—and documented survey markers from that survey can be found—the actual location of a boundary line is in question.

If you are considering a building or home improve-

ment project within 20 feet of your boundary line, it is strongly recommended that you contract with a registered surveyor to have your corners marked with a boundary survey of your lot.

You certainly don't want to find out *after* construction that your house violates the zoning setback line—or that your fence or building addition is even over the line and on your neighbor's property! Eliminate the associated legal mess and attorneys fees that you would incur in such a situation by having a surveyor mark your lines prior to construction.

- Julie Christensen

Member of Development Standards & Residential Construction Committee

“It is strongly recommended that you contract with a registered surveyor.”

STATE OF THE TOWN *(Continued from page 1)*

- Addressed a Church Zoning Petition
 - Established a Law Enforcement Continuing Education Fund
 - Established Reimbursement for Elected Officials Continuing Training
 - Addressed Speed Control
 - Equipped Police with Less Lethal TASERS & Established Use Policy
 - Established On-Call Agreements with Vendors
 - Approved a Balanced Budget for 2005
 - Established a Streetlight Light Bulb Standard
 - Established a Traffic Sign Standard
 - Developed Guidelines & Policies for Public Meetings & Communication
 - Created Ad Hoc Staff & Salary Review Committee
 - Hosted First Roundtable Meeting of Twelve Incorporated Towns within the City of Indianapolis
 - Developed School Emergency Contact Reference Sheet
 - Secured Road Inventory from IN-DOT
 - Transitioned to a New Clerk Treasurer
- In addition to the ongoing management of the Town, following are some long-term issues that we hope to study and address with continued public input and available funds, **which do not currently exist:**
- Evaluate Possible Grant Opportunities to Finance Programs
 - Address Drainage Issues
 - Decorative Traffic Sign Poles at High Visibility Intersections
 - Reflective Stop Bars to Reinforce High Traffic 4-Way Stops
 - Landscape High Visibility Town Right-of-Ways
 - Defibrillator for the Town
 - Clarify Town Setbacks with the City of Indianapolis
 - Update Town Municipal Code in Electronic Format for Posting on

Town Website

- Establish a Cumulative Capital Development Fund
- New Town Entry Signs
- Develop Long-Range Master Plan for the Town including Consideration of: sidewalks for safer access to parks, cul-de-sacs for traffic control and safer neighborhoods, burying utility lines on main thoroughfares where applicable, decorative streetlights, and decorative street name signs.

The Town Council will continue honoring our pledge to serve residents with fiscal responsibility, fairness, improved communication, and opportunities for residents to participate through active committees. We'll continue to actively solicit input from residents and establish working relationships with the City, the County and the Township. We've made great progress on these issues and are looking forward to continuing improvements. These accomplishments would not be possible without the effort of many dedicated residents and volunteers, of our professional staff, and of your elected officials. On behalf of the Council, thank you for your confidence.

- Terry O'Brien

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

www.meridianhills.org

Phone: 459-7708
Fax: 334-0955

Calendar of Events

Council Meetings — 7:00pm

April 11, May 9, June 13,

July 11, August 8, September 12

April 17

Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation
Block Forum Series—Judith Kipper
Call 255-6647 for information.

April 19

Holiday Park Movies in the Park
Call 327-7180 for information.

April 29—May 1

Holiday Park Orchard in Bloom
Call 327-7180 for information.

May 1

Second Presbyterian Church
Mass of the Children Concert—3:30pm

May 4

Second Presbyterian Church
Women's Praise Luncheon
With Gigi Graham Tchividjian
Call 253-6461.

May 19

Park Tudor Applefest Home Tour
Call 415-2756 for information.

May 20

Second Presbyterian's Men's Steak Dinner
With Kent Bottenfield. Call 253-6461.

June 20-23

First Congregational Church
Vacation Church School for 3-5yrs

This newsletter is produced by the Communications Committee for the Town of Meridian Hills. If you are interested in contributing to the newsletter, please contact Terry O'Brien at 979-5646 or Helen Carroll at 722-4350.

meridianhills.org

Town of Meridian Hills
Established 1937

Election Procedures

The Municipal Code for the Town of Meridian Hills currently requires councilors to live in separate districts. The Council has been studying this issue recently because Terry O'Brien is moving from one district to another, making him ineligible to continue to serve under the current ordinance. As we contemplate change, our first obligation is to establish an election process that is in the best interest of our residents.



Following are some options:

1. **Vote by District** (Current Method)

Residents vote for one candidate who lives in their district.

2. **Vote by District at Large**

Residents vote for three candidates, one who lives in each of the three districts.

3. **Vote at Large**

Residents vote for three candidates and the districts are eliminated. This is the only option that would allow Terry O'Brien to continue to serve on the Town Council.

Continued Next Column

Although Terry is refraining from voting, the Council plans to vote on this issue at the May 9th meeting and values your input. Please contact John Taylor, Clerk Treasurer, at 459-7708 or email him at jtaylor@moralesgroup.net with your comments *no later than April 30*.

Correction

To sign up for recycling, call Waste Management at **826-5800**. The cost is \$4.95 per month, and they provide tubs and regular weekly pickup.

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P.O. Box 40437
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