

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Garrison School Lofts 1

Benedictine University 1

Online Hub Provides Tools for Workforce Development 2

Sugar & Spice 2

Kishwaukee Revitalization Plan, Empowerment Group, APA Award 3

Census Q & A 4

CEDD A.C.T.I.O.N. Awards 4

Garrison School Lofts

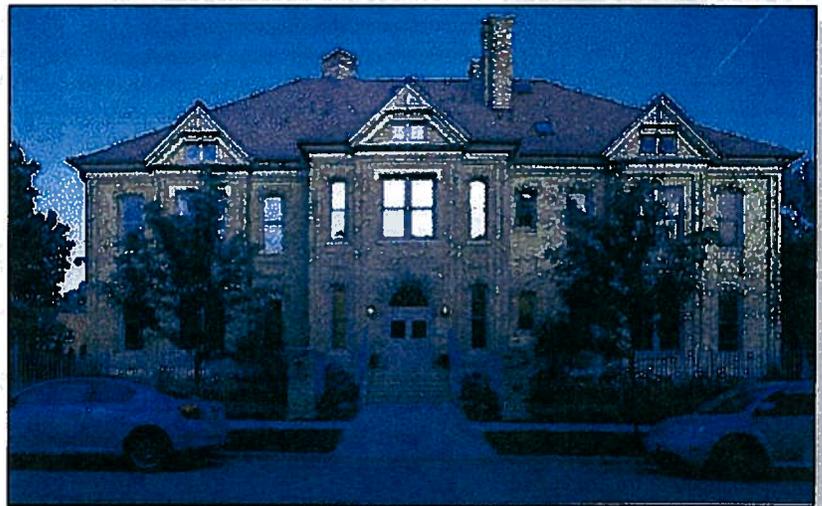
On Saturday, October 3rd, the Garrison School Lofts and Town Homes were honored by Landmarks Illinois as part of the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation Preservation Awards. This annual event honors individuals, organizations and projects throughout the state that represent excellence in historic preservation.

The school and gymnasium were carefully rehabilitated and retain many of their historic architectural details, which were incorporated into new residential units.

To further influence the neighborhood and insure overall and long term success, as nearby

single-family houses became available the Morrissey family and associates began systematically acquiring and upgrading them. Altogether, including surrounding properties, 46 units either are finished and occupied, underway or scheduled. The uplifting impact on the greater neighborhood has been transformational.

Garrison school was designed by local architect George Bradley in 1887. The brick Italianate, located in the Signal Hill neighborhood, is the oldest surviving schoolhouse in Rockford. The main building, 1892 addition and 1920 gymnasium sat vacant for 12 years before a real estate company purchased the complex for redevelopment in 2001.



Garrison School Lofts

Benedictine University Opens Rockford Campus

Residents in the northern Illinois community with the highest unemployment rate in the state could soon take a college course for free. Benedictine University plans to open a satellite campus in downtown Rockford next year and university spokeswoman Michelle Koppitz says officials plan to offer a first course for free tuition for new students.

The four-year liberal arts college is based in Lisle. Koppitz says while there are about a dozen education institutions around Rockford, there aren't any downtown. She says the school will rent space and hopes classes will start in February. Benedictine University will offer adult accelerated programs in business and education.

Online Hub Provides Tools for Workforce Development

The Employment and Administration (ETA) sponsors a network of websites called Workforce3 One, an online community allowing experts to share content and stay connected, including resources and best case practices-and it's free.

<http://www.workforce3one.org/>

Workforce3 One, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor/ Employment and Training Administration (ETA), is an interactive communications and learning platform designed to build the capacity of the Workforce Investment System (WIS) to develop strategies that enable individuals to be successful in the 21st century economy. This platform provides online insight into the skills and competencies required by business and industry through the innovative workforce solutions identified by a wide range of strategic

partners and grantees. Workforce3 One:

- Allows the workforce system, educators, business and industry, and others to share their innovative approaches, products, and tools;
- Offers online learning events (webinars) that highlight promising practices and provides a space to share ideas;
- Provides a vehicle for ETA to share information and products developed at the national level;
- Serves as a key point of dissemination for the approaches, products, and tools for High Growth, Community-Based Job Training grants, and Workforce in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) Initiative;

- Offers a current searchable database of 3,500 learning modules with additional material added weekly; and
- Provides and supports collaborative workspaces to allow individuals associated with the WIRED initiative regional economies to share information to support the socially networked leadership groups, partnerships, and strategies.

Workforce3 One is an invested community of system stakeholders who share best practices and model demand-driven and regional economic development strategies at work.

Sugar & Spice

If you're looking for breakfast or lunch, Sugar & Spice has what you're looking for. This local shop opens at 6:30am to serve great breakfast dishes and remains open through the lunch hour to create homemade sandwiches, wraps, burgers, soups and salads. Pizza lovers can enjoy pizza by the slice! Got a sweet tooth? Sugar & Spice makes terrific pastries - very large sizes for an affordable cost.

Located right across the street from City Hall, Sugar & Spice can prepare your

breakfast or lunch quickly so you have more time to enjoy your meal while on the clock. They also offer catering service at comparable rates.

We're hoping you'll make your lunch choice at Sugar & Spice in the near future.



Sugar & Spice

Kishwaukee Revitalization Plan Takes Off

The City of Rockford Division of Planning & Department of Public Works have partnered with consulting firm HNTB to develop a Kishwaukee Corridor Revitalization Plan. The plan covers the areas along Kishwaukee & 3rd Streets, from the Whitman Street interchange to the airport.

With the recent improvements and expansion of Kishwaukee Street underway, this plan will address the many types of neglect that have afflicted the blocks within the corridor over the last few decades.

The Kishwaukee Corridor Revitalization Plan

will present a comprehensive development strategy for the corridor, addressing future land use needs and transportation improvements. The Plan will also develop a marketing strategy to attract and expand business activity in the area.

Highlights of the plan include organization of the corridor based on contiguous industrial, commercial, and residential development nodes to provide a consistent land use pattern. Redesigned streetscapes and pedestrian paths allow for more safe foot and car traffic along the corridor. Improved greenspace will allow better connections between residential areas and local employment. Whitman Street

Interchange will be reconstructed with the potential for an interchange at Kishwaukee and U.S. 2-0.

Since the Fall of 2007, City Staff and the consulting firm have had many interviews, group discussions, and public open houses, with major stakeholders in the community. All sections of the plan are available for review on the Community & Economic Development Department's website at www.rockfordil.gov

Kishwaukee Empowerment Group

After a market assessment (completed through the Kishwaukee Corridor Revitalization Plan) gave bleak results, the City of Rockford created an empowerment group for the area. This involves workshops to strategize with community and business leaders within the corridor on how to attract interest and investment in the Kishwaukee area.

With the dedicated involvement of many types of stakeholder groups in this plan, the Empowerment group is aiming for a vibrant and attractive gateway linking downtown and the airport. This gateway should reflect

the visions of area businesses and residents.

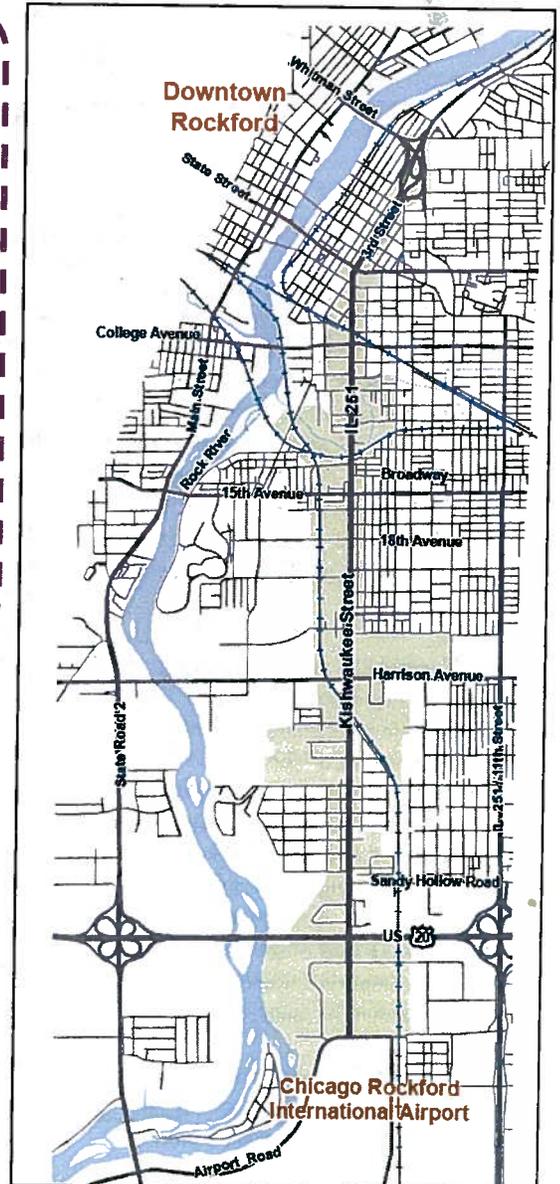
The success of a revitalization strategy for this area will depend on champions working towards this corridor's potential. The Empowerment group will act as a collective voice to expand and attract market opportunities in the area.

The rejuvenation of the River District and expansion of services at Rockford's airport will go hand in hand with this corridor revitalization strategy towards creating an attractive getaway between Rockford's commerce and transportation centers.

Kishwaukee APA Award

The American Planning Association awarded the 2009 annual planning award from the Illinois Chapter of American Planning Association in the category of "Community Outreach." This award highlighted the dedication of the Kishwaukee Empowerment group; for an initiative that illustrates how a community utilized the planning process to address a need that extends beyond the traditional scope of planning, and demonstrating how community input was used to shape a plan or produce change.

On November 9th, 2009, during the Rockford City Council meeting, the City, HNTB Corporation, and representatives of the Kishwaukee Empowerment received the annual Community Outreach Award. Award recipients were announced at a regional APA conference held in Chicago in September 2009.





City of Rockford
 Community & Economic Development
 425 E. State Street
 Rockford, IL 61104
 Phone: 815-987-5600
 Fax: 815-967-6933
 E-mail: arianne.clarke@rockfordil.gov
www.rockfordil.gov

Excellence in Services



Contact

Arianne.clarke@rockfordil.gov

Census Q&A

Q-Isn't there an easier way that would take less time and money, such as use of public records or private companies, to compile the population figures?

The U.S. Constitution mandates that an actual count of the population be taken once every ten years. The Census Bureau is the only government agency that counts the entire population and collects information from every household in the United States. Some people think that the United States Postal Service ought to do the census. While they are not authorized to conduct the census, one of their key roles is to assist the Census Bureau staff in developing the address list and to locate mailboxes. They also deliver all of the questionnaires to individual addresses and pick up and return the completed questionnaires to us. But, we still need to hire the hundreds of thousands of temporary workers to visit those households that do not mail back a questionnaire. Right now, the best way for American taxpayers to save money on the census is to fill out and mail back their census questionnaires.

CEDD A.C.T.I.O.N. Awards

The Mayor's A.C.T.I.O.N. award is an employee awards program that recognizes extraordinary accomplishments by City of Rockford employees. Although Community & Economic Development management believes all our employees are great, a few exceptional employees were nominated for A.C.T.I.O.N. awards. Management would like to thank these employees for their excellent work this year.

Gene Werbicki-By providing ongoing customer Service beyond the typical inspector, Gene is an example of how inspectors should be performing. With the reduction of staff, including elimination of 3 building inspectors Gene has had to complete all the requested inspections on a daily basis, sometimes completing over a dozen inspections in a day. Gene continues to provide the same level of service previously provided by completing inspections within 24 hours if not within the same day.

Seth Sommer-Does an outstanding job of representing the City through his customer service, his passion for excellence and his

ability to work through problems while setting an example for others in the division. He routinely takes the time to work through issues for our customers; many times bridging communication across departments. Seth is the go-to guy and is asked to take the lead in various development projects throughout the year because of his reliability to complete the job, his ability to interpret the code in a way that our customers understand and his ability to follow through.

Arianne Clarke- Whether it's helping an employee who needs training, creating reports or presentations, collecting data in various formats, creating and producing a department newsletter, assisting in FOIA requests, or assisting the public at the counter or on the phone, Arianne Clarke sets an example for outstanding customer service provided internally and externally within our community!

Seth Sommer, Brenda Stromquist, Gene Werbicki, Ned Friel and Mike Bonavia worked together to identify and match the business process for building

permitting and inspection with the Hansen software system. Every one minute of staff time spent entering information on a permit application equates to 116 man hours when applied across all permits. For example, by reducing the time to log an inspection from 10 minutes to 8 minutes results in a savings of 232 man hours annually.

This team identified that a number of steps required by the software system in the permit inspection tracking component were unnecessary. The outcome of the project has resulted in a streamlined inspection reporting process with our software system. By matching the business practice with the software system we were able to remove the unnecessary steps that were previously required to be completed. Staff is no longer frustrated with unnecessary steps, our process is quicker and as a result our man hours spent on entering unnecessary steps has been reduced by a minimum of 150 man hours annually.