

The Journey to Becoming a Neighborhood Association
By Penny Weber, President
Sheboygan Neighborhood Pride

In the fall of 2014, Sheboygan Police Officer Stephen came to me and said he wanted to organize a neighborhood group in the Indiana Corridor Neighborhood. He said residents were concerned about the speed of traffic on Indiana Avenue and also about an abandoned gas station located there. As a board member of Sheboygan Neighborhood Pride, I said I would be willing to assist him. This was the beginning of Indiana Corridor Neighborhood's journey to becoming a city-recognized neighborhood association.

On November 11, 2014 we held our first small group meeting. Six neighbors attended. We talked about working as a group to discuss issues and to work through solutions to those issues together. As we continued to meet as a small group, the best thing that happened was neighbors got to know each other. Since individuals attending the meetings lived in different sections of the neighborhood, information shared at the meetings helped them to discover what was going on in their entire neighborhood. The group began to grow together as a unit all wanting the same thing – a safe and wonderful place to live.

As we continued forward, we wanted to expand our group. So the idea of a neighborhood walk was put into action. In August of 2015 we had a group of over 30 neighbors walk with Officer Stephen and me around the neighborhood, making contact with neighbors as we walked by.

Now we had a core group of neighbors who were interested in working together. The neighborhood was divided into geographic areas and individuals volunteered to monitor specific areas. The idea was to have all areas of the neighborhood being observed for anything that looked suspicious or properties that were in disrepair or had debris that wasn't being removed in a timely manner. The result of this procedure brought forth issues that could be resolved by the police department, DPW, building inspection or by discussing the issue and determining what the neighbors could do to solve the problem. Along the way, the neighbors became informed about city ordinances and what the city departments could and could not do, together with the corresponding reasons.

In February of 2016, the Indiana Corridor neighbors decided they were ready to become a neighborhood association. After that decision was made, things moved forward at a rapid pace. Individuals stepped forward and agreed to run for election to the neighborhood association board. Goals and a mission statement for the association were chosen and Articles of Organization were prepared. Flyers were distributed to the entire neighborhood to have a meeting in early May to elect board members.

The result of all the neighborhood group's efforts was to have an elected five person board and recognition from the Common Council as the Indiana Corridor Neighborhood Association. A member of the association also has a seat on the Mayor's Neighborhood Leadership Council (MNLCL).

Since that time, in September 2016, the association sponsored a block party and neighborhood cleanup. A MNLCL Mini-Grant was applied for and received to fund the event, another good reason for becoming a neighborhood association. In addition, the association falls under the fiscal umbrella of Sheboygan Neighborhood Pride, which provides 501(c)(3) status and certain financial services while acting as their fiscal agent.

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As the president of Sheboygan Neighborhood Pride and the mentor to the Indiana Corridor Neighborhood Association, I am very proud of all the hard work and effort of the Indiana Corridor neighbors. It has been my pleasure to work with Officer Stephen in the process of making the Indiana Corridor Neighborhood Association a reality. Indiana Corridor Neighborhood Association began with six neighbors coming together to talk about the neighborhood in 2014 and now, in 2017, has blossomed into an active, successful neighborhood association with 15–20 members attending each meeting!