

Green Broad Ripple

by Cortellini



Why Green

In 1952 my family immigrated to Indianapolis from Italy. We settled in a small house on Indianola Street south of 52nd Street. For the better part of the intervening half century I have lived and worked in and around Broad Ripple harboring a growing affection for this place for various vague and unspoken reasons. Yet it has only been in the last decade or so, in the seasoned phase of my life, that I have truly begun to appreciate Broad Ripple for the marvel that it is.

Broad Ripple is a rich and complex community largely because, through the years, it has attracted and accommodated the unusual, the offbeat, and the independent along with the traditionalist, the established and the pragmatic. This mix lends an air of sophistication to its character - an honest worldliness largely devoid of affectation. Hip and with it, there is always a myriad of activity in Broad Ripple. Art, poetry, live music, fine dining, quick food, spas and salons, unique mom and pop shops, grocery stores ... all comprise the elements that make urban life desirable.

The other face of Broad Ripple is the one most appreciated by its residence - the village ambience. Quaint cottages and bungalows arranged along quiet streets shaded by mature trees which harkens back to a slower more natural way of life for which many of us in our hurried culture hold a deep longing. This, in conjunction with the river, the canal, the trail and numerous parks points to the strong connection Broad Ripple has to Mother Nature. Broad Ripple has a Green soul. As such, I believe that it is timely, appropriate, and visionary for Broad Ripple, now, to declare itself the first Green Community in Indianapolis.

What would a Green Broad Ripple look like? How would things change? What are the steps to get from where we are to where we want to be? There are no ready made answers to these questions yet it will be through the addressing of these questions that our community will gain an informed understanding of what it means to be Green.

This column, in the upcoming articles, would like to open the discussion of Green as it pertains to Broad Ripple. It will attempt to illuminate the various issues on going Green: what it means to be Green, what has been proposed by other communities, the practical consequences, the means of implementation, the difficulties and the benefits. It will work to present information in a factual and unbiased manner. Yet the author, here, openly admits that he is a proponent of Green and because he believes that in a certain sense Broad Ripple has been Green many decades prior to the concept becoming popular, if this column is only half way successful in telling the Green story, many of you will come to realize, as he has, that Green Broad Ripple is a phrase whose ring is just so undeniably right.

Cortellini