



WINTER
2020

FINAL LEGISLATION COULD AFFECT GARY RESIDENTS

Frankly, a lot of us perhaps most of us, don't pay a great deal of attention to the details of the work of the Indiana legislature where hundreds of bills are introduced in the House and Senate each year. I know I don't. Only when proposed legislation directly affects me or my community do my ears perk up for more information. Fortunately for me, the Indiana Association of Realtors has full-time political people reading proposed legislation and talking to legislators. If members of the IAR read the emails sent to us, the concise, readable information keeps us up-to-date. Each year in January the IAR has a legislative conference in Indianapolis for the purpose of visiting with our legislators and informing them about our positions on legislation.



I had already registered to attend the conference held this year, January 27th, when I read a digest of House Bill 1031 which seemed to be an effort to undo the Indiana Supreme Court's decision in Gunderson VS the State of Indiana lawsuit. That decision, as many of you know, settled the lawsuit that sought to establish the right for the Gunderson's, who owned a lakefront home in Long Beach, to restrict the use of the beach between their home and the water. Private property rights are important to us all. Enjoying the asset of the beach should be important to us all as well. These are the issues decided on in favor of the public by the Indiana Supreme Court.

Here is a link to House Bill 1031 as it stood on January 26 before the hearing <http://iga.in.gov/legislative/2020/bills/house/1031>. As is often the case members of the House and Senate get together to introduce identical or nearly identical bills in both chambers. Here's a link to Senate Bill 321 as it stood on January 26 <http://iga.in.gov/legislative/2020/bills/senate/321>. There was also a subsequent bill introduced in Senate Bill 325 which seems to be an effort to codify the supreme court decision on the issue <http://iga.in.gov/legislative/2020/bills/senate/325>.

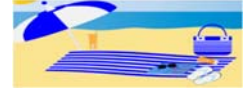
Hearings on bills at the Indiana State House typically start at 10 AM which means 9 AM our time. George Rogge wanted to represent the MCC on this issue so I offered to pick him up at 6 AM and we headed for Indianapolis on Monday, January 27th. On the road we discussed the issue and reminisced about the tax crisis of 2003/2004 and the many meetings we attended in Indianapolis including one memorable morning.

Judy, who was also in Indianapolis with me attending spousal programs and waiting to meet up with a couple of friends happened to be standing outside an Indiana Association of Realtors Board of Directors meeting I was attending as your First District Director of the Association. At the meeting, in an incredibly timely decision, the IAR board of directors voted to support the position shared with the MCC on the property tax legislation. Knowing Judy was outside the door, I stepped out of my meeting for a moment to inform Judy of the news and asked her to rush to tell George before he testified at the hearing that the IRA had just voted to support a proposal similar to that of the MCC. It was a great moment for property tax fairness for our community.

This time when George and I arrived in Indianapolis we went straight to the Capital to locate the hearing rooms (Senate Bill 325 room #130 and House Bill 1031 room# 106). The chairman, Representative Tor, suggested a large piece of HB 1031 be removed and it was. If you are looking at the link to HB 1031, Page 4 lines 29 - 42 and Page 5 lines 1 - 40 were cut. When the committee moved on to other business I was able to go to room 130 where a Senate committee chaired by Senator Glick had not yet gotten to discussion on Senate Bill 325. The chairman immediately introduced an amendment to allow the Indiana DNR to determine the procedure to be followed to identify the ordinary high watermark. The federal government and Indiana Supreme Court have identified five characteristics for this. The amendment was tabled. This allowed discussion on the bill to proceed. Various people from Long Beach, Save the Dunes, George Rogge representing the MCC, and others spoke in favor of the bill. The hearing was suspended until the committee could meet again much later in the day or in the evening.

This is a hot button issue for lakefront communities and the discussion at the Statehouse continues. The Gary lakefront, not owned by industry, is designated as park for public use. By the luck of history, no structures on our lakefront are threatened because they were all built further away from the ordinary high water mark and no impediments to the natural sand movement were built just east of us. Final legislation could affect us, however. We just don't know until the law is settled and time passes and lawsuits are resolved. All in all a very interesting day was had watching the wheels of government grind along. I am sure there is a reference to sausage making I could insert here (you never really want to know how sausage is made) but it would be better if you chose an issue and go to Indianapolis and take advantage of our ability to participate in the process of passing laws.

BEACH BITS



- **Miller Pizza** - 622 1/2 S. Lake Street:
Miller Pizza turns 35 years old and offers an epic price for the legendary lunch special! Every Tues. in Feb. 11am -2pm their Legendary Lunch Special only \$3.50, WOW! Check their Facebook page for more info and upcoming events. www.millerpizza.net/
- **Miller Beach Arts & Creative District** - Gardner Center for the Arts - 540 S. Lake Street:
 - Feb. 7 - Mar. 1 Group Art Exhibit, Opening Reception Feb. 7, 6-9pm
 - Feb. 22 Special Event "Strong Roots Amazing Achievements" with South Shore Dance Alliance, soprano lyricist Aklia McCain and Billy Foster trio & soul food, 6-9pm
 - Feb. 20 - Enjoy live music, LOLS (Live on Lake Street) the third Thursday of every month starting at 6pm. LOLS's band will be Chicago artist "Smooth Willie Fultz Band" playing Jazz and R&B. Tickets \$10 at the door, beer, wine & Miller Pizza can be purchased.
 - Apr. 2 - MCC's Shoreline Committee - Beach Public Safety Community Meeting at 6:30pm.
 - Apr. 24 - Erik Gellman will be speaking during the Art Shay Retrospective.
 - Yoga, Tues.&Thurs. 12-12:30pm, \$3.00 fee and mat Yoga Wed. evenings 6:30-7:30pm, \$10 fee. For more info - <https://millerbeacharts.org/>
- **Humane Society of Northwest IN** - 6100 Melton Road:
 - Feb. 13th - Join HSNi at Service Doctor 5150 E. Lincoln Hwy. (RT 30) Hobart, IN 219-942-0883 4:30PM - 7:30 PM (Across the street and west of Albanese Candy Factory)
 - Mar. 21st - PET ROCK 2020 - County Line Orchard 200 S. County Line Rd., Hobart, Doors open at 5pm/ Music -The band Mr. Funnyman starts at 6pm, cash bar, food, silent & live auction. Tickets & info: call HSNi @ 219-938-3339 or www.petrockanimalrescue.com or <http://humanesocietynorthwestindiana.org/>
- **Paul H. Douglas Center For Environmental Education** -100 N. Lake St:
 - Movie Screenings at the Douglas Center, national park or outdoor related documentary - Every Sat., Jan. 4 thru Feb. 29 1pm - 2pm
 - Miller Woods Hike on the Paul H. Douglas Trail, join a Park Ranger for a hike thru IN Dunes Nat. Park's Miller Woods. Every Sun., Jan. 5 - Mar. 1, 1:30pm - 3:30pm www.facebook.com/IndianaDunesNPS or www.nps.gov/indu
- **Aquatorium** - 6918 Oak Ave:
The Oscar's return to the Aquatorium!
 - Feb. 23rd - "Hidden Figures" - 3pm
 - Mar. 22 - A Movie by Jean Shepard - "The Phantom of the Open Hearth". \$10 per film, popcorn will be available. For more info - www.aquatorium.org/
- **Suttle Bistro** - 6039 Miller Ave:
Offering a wide variety of food; burgers, chicken dishes & salads. Open Sun. 2pm -10pm, Mon. 5pm - 10pm, Thur. 5pm - 10pm, Fri. 5pm - 2am & Sat. 2pm - 2am. For more info and menu - <https://www.facebook.com/suttlebistro/>
- **Indie Indie Bang Bang** - 625 S Lake Street:
Open daily 11am -6pm. Coming soon; shop I2 B2 online! For more info - www.facebook.com/indieindiebangbang
- **Lake Street Gallery** - 613 S Lake Street: Open Tues. - Fri: 10am - 6pm & Saturday: 10am -4pm. For the month of Feb. LSG is having a Used Frame Sale, 1st come, 1st served. Be there or be square (or rectangle, Ha Ha!) For more info - www.lakestreetgallery.com or email gallopinglisa@msn.com
- For more info on our Miller Beach community events be sure to read **Street Beat** in this newsletter and go to www.VisitMillerBeach.com

LIST, SALE PRICES UP

The statistics included in this section of the newsletter are from the Greater Northwest Indiana Association of Realtors MLS. Because the high priced houses and the lower priced houses in all neighborhoods are included, the average for your specific neighborhood will be substantially different.



The 2019 year end real estate statistics are now available for the Miller market area within the National Park boundaries. There were 81 home sales reported. This total of 81 is up from 2018 when there were 76 sales.

Bank owned sales of homes are becoming less of a factor in our market after several years of repo sales being a substantial percentage of our market. The highwater mark was in 2011 when 50% of the sales in our market were repos. Since then, the percentage has been decreasing to 25.7% in 2016, 16% in 2017, 3.9% in 2018 and 4.9% in 2019.

The average list price in 2019 was \$202,503 an increase from \$195,236 in 2018. The average sales price was up correspondingly from \$185,935 in 2018 to \$192,192 in 2019. The average sales price of repos at \$93,025 compared to the average sales price of the non-repo home sales at \$197,344, had a lesser effect on the overall statistic because of fewer repo sales in the market again this year.

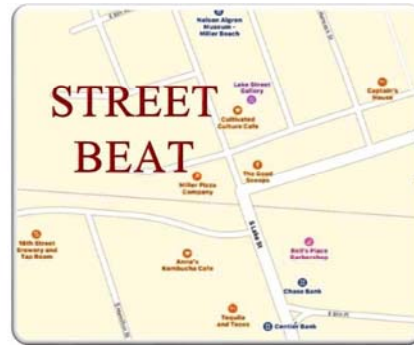
As reported in 2018's year-end report, lakefront property sales prices are always dramatically higher than all properties not directly on the water. Therefore, in 2017 the 7 lakefront sales really boosted the average sales price for all properties. In 2018 there were just 3 lakefront sales to boost the overall average. Usually if there are 7 lakefront sales one year and only 3 such sales the next, the overall average sales price for the area would drop. However, in 2018 the market was so robust the average sales price as reported above still saw a substantial increase. This "robust market effect" has happened a second year in a row. In 2019 there were only 2 lakefront sales counted in the MLS statistics vs. 3 last year. However, our market still enjoyed an increased average sales price overall. There were actually 4 lakefront sales in 2019, 2 were for sale by owner and not in the MLS. They averaged \$455,000 sales price and 2 sold by Ayers Realtors averaged \$693,750 for a total overall average of \$579,375.

The surge of vacant lot sales slowed up. From late 2007 until 2017 very few lots changed hands; some years none. In 2017 there were 8 lot sales. In 2018 there were 21 lot sales and Ayers Realtors handled 16 of the listings. There were 7 in 2019 with Ayers Realtors being involved in 4 of the 7. Interestingly, 2 more lots closed this month, a great start for 2020.

Finally, Ayers Realtors has over three times the volume of sales as the nearest competitor with 39% of the market share. It remains a **Fact** in our **Market** that Ayers Realtors is the market leader.

Thank you for your support for 98 years.

PROM, POT LUCKS, HONEY BUNNIES HELP MILLERITES GET THROUGH WINTER



There's a new place in town - "Dialogue" - located at 601 S. Lake Street where according to their logo books, wine and coffee revive the lost art of conversation. Open Fri: 5pm - 10pm, Sat: 10am - 2pm and 5pm - 10pm and Sun: 5pm - 9pm. For more info go to www.dialoguebookbar.com; or email - dialogue@yahoo.com ... or you could just stop in and have a conversation. Welcome to Lake Street!

The new Dollar General Store at 801 S. Lake Street (the former Walgreen's building) is up and running from 8am-9pm daily. It is fully stocked, very nicely organized and quite handy if you forgot an item you need for a new recipe you are making for dinner or the anniversary card you forgot for your Honey Bunny or when you don't have left overs for lunch the day after the night before you can buy a fresh salad. After a couple of emergency stops "convenience store" will have a whole new meaning.

The Miller Garden Club is off and running and ready for the 2020 growing season. The first meeting of the year will be Sat., March 21st at the Aquatorium at 10am. Make sure to mark your calendars for the annual Plant and Paraphernalia Sale on Sat. May 9th - conveniently scheduled one week before Mother's Day. The 20th annual garden walk, "Pot Luck", will be July 11th and 12th and Brats, Bulbs and Beer will be sold on Sat. Oct. 17th. This group of gardeners rarely sleep, seasonally creep and always leap into action throughout the year. Come join the club and the fun!

A program about our Miller Town Hall will be held Tuesday, Feb. 11th from 6:30 to 8pm at the Marshall Gardner Center for the Arts. For more information please contact Brad Miller at 219-947-2657 or BMILLER@INDIANALANDMARKS.ORG. It will be interesting to learn about the building's past and to join the conversation about it's future.

Miller School Shops and Spaces is under new management and they have an upcoming schedule of events and classes that can be seen at www.millerschoolshops.com or by emailing millerschoolshops@gmail.com. Upcoming classes for everything from working with clay, making beach glass jewelry, creating sock monkeys and cat dolls as well as macramé workshop and a pot-luck-brunch. There is no need to wonder how to make winter fly by faster. Stop by to see all that is happening. Open Fri-Sun. 9am-5pm.

Sat. Feb. 8th from 7-11pm the annual Miller Prom takes place at the fabulous Marquette Park Pavilion. Music will be provided by the "SIDESTREETS". Tickets are \$35 per person if bought prior to the prom - \$45 per person at the door if still available. There will be a Hors d'oeuvres buffet and Cash bar. Tickets are available at Ayers Realtors, Lake Street Gallery, and at www.Millercitizenscorp.org. It's a dressy event so wear your best bib and tucker!

“LITTLE JUDY DICKENS” RELUCTANTLY SHINES SPOTLIGHT ON ANOTHER

Home on the Range



Having visited a dear “old” friend a few days ago and thinking about my visit with her as I usually do for days after one of our chats, I thought writing about my friend instead of another “Little Judy Dickens” episode might be a nice insight into not so much what aging is but what it can be.

My friend is Laura Jones, born 102 years ago on June 30th, 1917. At this point in my life she has known me longer than any other person on earth having been a neighbor of my family since I was born and raised on Hancock Street just two doors away from where Laura lives today.

She was among the first group of students that went to Miller School and grew up with kids from the 8 or 10 houses at that time on Hancock Street. She remembers most of the houses being built. Miller was a full fledged community at that time with businesses and professional offices. A good way to get to downtown Gary was to take the street car that traveled from Lake Street down what we know as Miller Avenue to Broadway. Laura graduated from high school in 1936 but decided to take an extra year of classes in order to be able to work in an office. She remembers at that time women didn’t work outside their homes unless they were teachers or nurses. Because of her extra training she was hired by a neighbor, Mr. Jackson, who was the head of the Gary office of Rail Way Express – a national package delivery service that used existing railroad infrastructure to safely and rapidly deliver parcels, money and goods during World War I. The office was located where the New York Central and B & O railways converged in Gary at 3rd and Broadway and she worked there for 30 years. When the war started and most of the men working at Rail Way Express had been drafted or had enlisted, Mr. Jackson asked Laura to help people get on and off the train, point them in the right direction and be the one to accept packages and deliveries. When the US Army took over the operation of Rail Way Express she more than once had to convince the Army she was more than capable of doing her job and could actually be quite helpful. She has fabulous stories about animals on their way to Lincoln Park Zoo, traveling nuns, a dead guy in the men’s bathroom, two United States Presidents passing through – all of them just trying to get from one place to another.

Laura met her husband, Sam, when he and his father, who owned a movie theater in Gary, set up a program during the war to show 2nd run movies on week nights in local schools – Miller School being one of the schools used for showings. Sam had already graduated from college with a degree in architectural engineering and was working at US Steel when he was drafted by the army. Because of his education and with further training in the military he was assigned to a project and that didn’t allow him to give Laura much detail nor could he tell Laura exactly what his role was and why he was transferred from Alabama to the University of Iowa to New York. Sam called her often and during one particular call Laura told him she had been listening to the radio the night before and heard about the bombing of Japan. It was then Sam could tell her he had been working on the development of the “A Bomb”. Later he received written recognition for his military contribution.

These stories are from our most recent get together. Maybe all this is significant and interesting to me because I know or knew or loved so many of the characters in her wonderful stories. Maybe she confirms what I have always remembered to be true and not exaggerated or distorted by my memory of the time, place and people with whom I spent my life as a kid and young adult. I’m truly thankful for that part of our friendship but here is what I really think is what I admire the most about Laura Jones.

The message I get after spending time with Laura is not that her life has been one big, funny, wisdom packed adventure. She certainly has the effects of physical decline which she best describes with words not always befitting when spoken by a lady. She has trouble with her hearing aids and her vision is beyond poor. She moves from room to room yet in her own home with the aid of a walker that should probably be fitted with a governor. Yet she always has a list of things she wants to accomplish – be it clean out a drawer or pay her bills or look forward to the next outing with her more than reliable and dedicated health care giver, Wayne. She delights in telling stories of days gone by but she always talks about what she hopes to do tomorrow. Maybe the message before my very eyes is that happiness is a choice we make. We probably shouldn’t worry about what might happen and then just adapt when it does.



Laura Jones loves pie and my mother, Barbara loved to make pies. Often when my mother made a pie she would phone Laura and ask her to come over for warm pie and coffee. Or sometimes she called Laura and said she would meet her at the back gate with a piece of just out of the oven pie. This just might have been one of the pies they shared.

“CRUMMY BLUEBERRY PIE”

1 pie crust for a 9” pie

Filling:

4 1/2 C fresh blueberries

1/2 C Sugar

3 TBS Tapioca

1 tsp cinnamon

1 TBS lemon juice

Topping:

1 C all purpose flour

1/2 C Oats

1/2 C Brown Sugar, packed

1/2 C Butter, melted

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Mix all filling ingredients & pour into pie shell. Mix all topping ingredients and spread on top of pie.

Bake for 45-50 minutes until bubbly and topping is lightly browned. Cool slightly or serve at room temperature to pie loving friends.

MILLER BEACH!



**7660 Harold Avenue
\$275,000**

www.MillerBeach.com
219-938-1188



Iconic Mid-Century Modern Home

If size is what you're looking for, this home has plenty of it! This mid-century modern home has over 4,500 square feet with 7 bedrooms, 5 baths, 2 kitchens, 2 family rooms, fireplace - all on a wooded acre just 5 blocks to the beach. With some updating, it can be a show-place.

MILLER BEACH!



**8602 Maple Avenue
\$189,900**

www.MillerBeach.com
219-938-1188



Cozy Cottage!

Charming beach bungalow 2 blocks to Lake Michigan Beach. Features include arched doorways, stone fireplace, hardwood floors, paneled doors, crown molding, skylights, large deck, fenced yard, and 1 car attached garage. Schedule your showing today.



"Small Company, BIG RESULTS!"

219-938-1188



The Ayers Realtors' Team
Gene Ayers, GRI, CRS
Nancy Del Prado, GRI, CRS
Beth Buckley, Assoc. Broker
Judy Ayers, Renita Reyna



See our beach cam and virtual tours at www.MillerBeach.com

Classic Brick Home



6411 Ash Place
\$125,000

Spacious Bi-level



550 N Tippecanoe Pl.
\$149,900

Split level just blocks to the Beach



8732 Lakewood Ave.
\$149,900

Beautiful wooded lot



7500 Ash Ave
\$18,000

Half acre wooded duneland site



7638 Harold Ave.
\$29,500

Beautiful wooded lot



9217-9221 Juniper Ave.
\$30,000

SOLD!



7400-04 Maple Ave.

Great corner lot



803-805 N. Warren St.
\$38,500

SOLD!



8227 Locust Ave.



PHOTO BY GEORGE ROGGE

MILLER PROM

AT THE MARQUETTE PARK PAVILION

1 N. GRAND BOULEVARD, GARY, IN
(A DRESSY EVENT)

BY THE MILLER CITIZENS CORPORATION

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2020
7:00 P.M. TO 11:00 P.M.

MUSIC PROVIDED BY SIDESTREETS
DANCING - HORS D'OEUVRES BUFFET - CASH BAR
TICKETS \$35.00 PER PERSON
(\$45.00 PER PERSON AT THE DOOR, IF AVAILABLE)

Tickets at
Ayers Realty, Lake Street Gallery,
Millercitizenscorp.org



646 S. Lake Street
Gary, IN 46403
(219) 938-1188



INSIDE: DID YOU HEAR THE ONE ABOUT THE TRAVELING
NUNS AND THE DEAD GUY IN THE BATHROOM?



NAME
"THIS
OLD
HOUSE" ...

Monday-Friday and give the correct
address will win a \$50.00 gift certifi-

cate to their choice of Miller Pizza Station, Beach Café, 18th Street Brewery, Captain's House, Anna's
Kombucha Café, Flamingo, or Tequila & Tacos.

... AND WIN \$50.00

Sorry, the present owner and family cannot win. You'll have a chance next newsletter.

To enter send an email with subject "Newsletter" to info@millerbeach.com.

You can also view our newsletter online at www.MillerBeach.com