

Notes from Sarasota Bayfront 20:20 learning trip to Carmel, IN

July 12-13, 2016

Beginning of Redevelopment:

Mayor Brainard opened the session by introducing his team and providing us with a briefing of Carmel and how it redeveloped its older area where city services and expensive infrastructures already exist. Carmel's population is more than 80,000 and close to 50 square miles long. He mentioned how the main focus is on architecture and provided a slide show presentation of different Carmel buildings in the beginning stages and how they were redeveloped.

The city and real estate developers developed a partnership where they worked together on redevelopment.

The primary tool provided by the state law is Tax Incremental Financing (TIF). The redevelopment area had specific boundaries with a base tax year being established. For up to 25 years, all increases in business property taxes, NOT single family taxes go into a fund in that base year for redevelopment. The redevelopment fund is then used to pay interest and principals on loans to redevelop the area. The proceeds are used for streetscapes, redevelopment of the project and some parking structures.

Roundabouts

Carmel is internationally known for Roundabouts. Mayor Brainard had researched journal articles at Purdue University's engineering library and brought those articles to engineers where they agreed to build its first roundabout in Carmel in 1997. Brainard explained that the U.S Department of Transportation didn't have specifications for roundabouts and that they used Australian roundabout specifications.

The Roundabouts were built because of their ability to make it easier for bicyclists and pedestrians to navigate, compatibility with environments and most importantly their safety record. Injury accidents has been reduced by 80% percent and overall number of accidents by 40%.

Mayor Brainard then provided benefits of roundabouts:

- Slower vehicle speeds
- Vehicles travel in the same directions, which reduces the number of crashes.
- Eliminates head-on collisions
- Reduced accidents by more than 80% , injuries by 90%
- More green space
- Crosswalks are included for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Calming traffic
- Cutting of Costs:
 - Accident damages is less
 - Gas savings
 - No traffic lights to install and maintain

- Roundabout construction is over \$100,000 less than signaled intersections

Carmel now has 97 roundabouts, by the end of the year it will have 100 more than any other city in the United States. There are 30-40 more planned.

Carmel Arts & Design District:

Mayor Brainard took us on a walking tour of the Carmel Arts & Design District which is the Midwest's premier arts and design destination. It was named one of the best places to live in America by Money Magazine and American City Business Journal. It is home to over 100 businesses including art galleries, showrooms, interior designers, restaurants, and a variety of specialty shops. Retail spending is two times the national average.

Developers built a mix of retail and residential units, retail on the main level and residential on the upper three floors. The City invested more than \$10 million in the renovation of Old Town Carmel with upgrades such as brick sidewalks, signage to create a historic look and street lighting.

On each street you will find public art and sculptures and businesses where different arts classes are offered.

Neighborhoods:

Mayor Brainard took us on the tour of The Village of West Clay in Carmel. There were tightly spaced homes facing a central green space with walkways/courtyards that showed living and dining spaces up front, while streets, garages and parking are accessed behind the homes on alleyways. Visitor Parking was along the neighborhood's main central street at the base of the community lawn.

Mailboxes were arranged together with a sitting area where the residents read mail and catch up with their neighbors.

All of the neighborhood homes had a small park that was located 3-4 minutes from each.

Brainard stated that the whole concept was to see the homes and retail stores near the streets rather than the parking lots.

The Center for the Performing Arts:

Mayor Brainard led the tour of the Center for the Performing Arts while finishing up the tour with CEO Tania Castroverde. Brainard provided the Bayfront 20:20 with the goals of the center prior to being built:

1. Serve as a regional cultural venue.
2. Meet facility need for local and regional arts organizations.
3. Create a unique facility that address unmet space needs in the area.
4. Meet world-class standards of acoustics and performance quality.
5. Provide economic benefits for the Indianapolis area.

Concert Hall (Palladium)

- ❖ 1,600 Seats
- ❖ Highest-quality acoustics
- ❖ Accommodate wide range of musical performances

Multi-Purpose Drama Theatre (Tarkington)

- ❖ 500 seats
- ❖ Proscenium-style auditorium
- ❖ Accommodate drama, dance, and musical performances

Black Box Theater (The Studio Theater)

- ❖ 200 seats
- ❖ flex-seating auditorium

The Center for the Performing Arts is funded through a public-private partnership. The City of Carmel issued \$80 million in bonds payable from taxes for new commercial developments in special economic development districts. Residential taxes were not used in financing the Performing Arts Center's design and construction.

The City of Carmel owns the center and the Carmel Performing Arts Foundation, Inc (CPAF) a non-profit organization operated it. The CPAF board of directors hired the Center's executive director, set policies, and raised annual operating funds and endowment.

There are two City owned buildings of the Center for the Performing arts, the 1600-seat Palladium which cost \$130 million and the second building cost \$47.5 million and consists of a 500-seat theater and a 200-seat theater. Also, in the second building is a parking deck and offices.

The funds used to build the Palladium along with the Studio, Tarkington Theaters and parking garages came from the 38 TIF Bonds from the districts. When TIF districts expire the bonds are timed to be paid in full back to the community in the form of county, city, township, school tax income and library.

Mr. Nick Tighe, Vice President of Operations for The Center for the Performing Arts had taken us on a tour to view the Palladium, Tarkington Theatre, and The Studio Theater.

The Center for the Performing Arts has six resident companies that are independently-owned nonprofit organizations that have their own staff and board of directors, but call the Center for the Performing Arts their home:

- Actors Theatre of Indiana
- Booth Tarkington Civic Theatre
- Carmel Symphony Orchestra
- Central Indiana Dance Ensemble
- Gregory Hancock Dance Theatre
- Indiana Wind Symphony

Bayfront 20:20 had the chance to meet 3 of the resident companies the Booth Tarkington, Carmel Symphony Orchestra and the Gregory Hancock Dance Theatre.

