

## **The dominos keep falling and Norwood is next: Stopping the ethnic cleansing of Black Indianapolis**

Like dominos, over the past years, traditional Black Indianapolis neighborhoods have fallen to gentrification, displacing the original residents, and erasing the history and culture of these historic communities.

### **The fallen dominos are:**

- Indiana Ave.  
(<https://www.newamerica.org/indianapolis/blog/indiana-avenue-ethnic-cleansing-black-indianapolis/>)
- Lockfield Gardens
- Paca St./Camp St., (Ransom Place)\*
- the W.10 St. YMCA
- Hosbrook St. (North Square)\*
- Babe Denny Park/Concord Center area (Old Southside)\*
- Riverside/Burdsal Pkwy. (16 Tech)\*
- the Dorman St./Highland Ave. area (Cottage Home)\*
- Haughville (River West)\*
- E. 16th St. (Tinker St.):
  - Kennedy-King Park,
  - N. College Ave./Kountry Kitchen/Bellefontaine St./Yandes St. area (Monon 16)\*
  - A. J. Brown Ave.,

\*Gentrified names for these neighborhoods

### **Norwood is next to be gentrified**

Now, it's Norwood's turn. Norwood's a long-time Black Indianapolis neighborhood on the southeast side of town at Prospect St. and Sherman Dr. Norwood is just east of the Prospect St. entrance to the new jail.

**On Wed. Nov. 4 at 1:00, the Department Metropolitan Development (DMD) meets** to decide on a proposal put forward by Renew Indy (<https://www.renewindianapolis.org/>) to sell 18 lots/houses in Norwood to Southeast Neighborhood Development (SEND).

### **The \$4M ethnic cleansing of Norwood**

Each SEND house will be rehabbed at an average cost of \$227,561.00. These single, quarter of a million dollar homes, will then be put on the market. The total package to be considered by DMD is about \$4,096,098.00: <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Renew-Indys-list-of-Norwood-properties-SEND-wants-to-buy-to-rehab-and-sell.pdf>.

All these fixed-up houses sound good except for the fact that the deal is the beginning of the \$4M ethnic cleansing of Norwood by SEND, which gentrified Hosbrook St., and erased the only traditionally Black neighborhood in Fountain Square: <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Who-killed-Hosbrook-Street-SEND-and-the-gentrification-of-Black-Indianapolis-An-analysis-with-commentary.pdf>

Norwood is one of the last two Black neighborhoods south of Washington St. not to be ethnically cleansed

### **Question: What's the rush to gentrify Norwood? Answer: The new jail**

Norwood, this long-time culturally entrenched Indy African American community, just happens to be within the shadow of the 3,000-bed criminal justice center complex, a place soon to be notorious for housing Black bodies.

Eventually, professionals, who work at the jail and who are wealthy enough to be able to afford to live in a gentrified house that cost over a quarter of a million dollars to rehab, can walk to work.

## Stopping the colonization of Norwood: Drawing the line on future ethnic cleansing of Black Indianapolis

The neighborhood improvement group, the Redevelopment Revitalization of the Southside, CDC, Inc. (R/ROS) is in the process of studying and organizing to stop the current ethnic cleansing of Norwood by SEND.

R/ROS is seeking support from individuals, groups, and organizations to support its efforts to block the gentrification of Norwood and to fight any further efforts to ethnically cleanse Black Indianapolis.

*R/ROS is organizing the city to applying pressure to the boards of SEND (<https://www.sendcdc.org>) at ([send@sendcdc.org](mailto:send@sendcdc.org)) and the DMD (<https://www.indy.gov/agency/department-of-metropolitan-development>) at [DMDcommunications@indy.gov](mailto:DMDcommunications@indy.gov).*

We just need a short e-mail to DMD saying:

“It’s time to stop the gentrification of Black Indianapolis. Norwood must not be gentrified. We highly recommend that the Division of Metropolitan Develop turndown the proposal to sell houses to SEND and instead have SEND start public negotiations with R/ROS for truly affordable housing and the restoration of houses of Norwood homeowners.”

Send the e-mail to [dmdcommunications@indy.gov](mailto:dmdcommunications@indy.gov). And, please “CC” R/ROS so we can have a copy to build a movement to stop the gentrification of Black Indianapolis at [johnharrisloflin@yahoo.com](mailto:johnharrisloflin@yahoo.com).

October 28, 2020  
John Harris Loflin  
Board Secretary  
Redevelopment Revitalization of the Southside  
317.998.1339

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Here's the definition of colonized:

- of a country or in citizens send a group of settlers to a place and establish political control over it
- come to settle among and establish political control over the indigenous people of an area
- appropriate a place or domain for one’s on use

In a Nov. 25, 2018 CBS/channel 4 story by Russ McQuaid, Norwood was poised for growth <https://cbs4indy.com/news/twin-aire-neighborhood-poised-for-growth-with-new-jail-courthouse/>

All the sudden, after years of neglect, except for a token Pride Park Family Center project, Norwood was now important; yet, not in itself, not for its history and cultural contribution to Black Indianapolis, but as “a ploy...to attract new--mostly white--people and businesses “ and so enabling the beginning of the colonial displacement of the original residents by urban settlers.

#### The colonization of Norwood

A start of the story of current attempts to colonize Norwood starts in the late 50s/early 60s around the discussions and actual demolition of homes in Indy’s Black northwest side neighborhoods for I-65. This ends up starting the ethnic cleansing of Indiana Ave., the demolition of Lockefield Gardens, and

the building of the IUPUI campus. See:

<https://www.newamerica.org/indianapolis/blog/indiana-avenue-ethnic-cleansing-black-indianapolis/>

Also read the essays on race and I-65 by IUPUI's Dr. Paul Mullins, "In the shadow of interstate: Living with highways" <https://paulmullins.wordpress.com/2019/10/03/in-the-shadow-of-the-interstate-living-with-highways/>

### **The I-65 (and I-70 story) leads to the start of our present gentrification matrix**

Let's start with the displacement of the original residence of Paca St., Camp St. and W. 9<sup>th</sup> St. in the historically Black area east of Indiana Ave. now called "Ransom Place."

Along with Ransom Place, a part of the viable Black Indy history and culture erased by gentrification was with the demolition of none other than the creative cultural heart of Black Indianapolis, the Sunset Terrace jazz club where Indy jazz greats Wes Montgomery, Slide Hampton, or Freddie Hubbard got their start.

Then there's the W. 10th Street YMCA. Remember, the roots of the 10th St "Y" was the famous downtown "Senate Avenue Y." In the 60s and 70s, under the leadership of John Lands, the 10th St. Y until its destruction, was the center of local Black identity. Nonetheless, via gentrification, these 2 Black cultural-political icons are gone and few will know they ever existed.

### **Fountain Square: The ethnic cleansing of Hosbrook St. by SEND**

The Fountain Square area is another example of the cleansing of Black Indianapolis. Today "the Fountain" is experiencing "hyper-gentrification" (H-G): <http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/The-Hyper-gentrification-of-Fountain-Square-Erasing-a-working-class-community-and-their-network-of-mechanisms-for-survival-by-Angie-Calvert.pdf>.

H-G is the final step in the gentrification process. It will totally cleanse any ruminates of historic Black Indianapolis from the city's memory.

Don't forget, SEND enabled the erasure of the long-time Black Indy history/culture of Hosbrook St. Today, its iconic Black identity is colonized by the white and wealthy North Square neighborhood: <https://www.wrtv.com/news/local-news/apparently-indys-most-hipster-neighborhood-is-north-square>.

Years from now, few people will not know that the street, due east of Peppy's Grill and parallel to Virginia Ave., was the center of Black culture in Fountain Square. Now, even 2 Chicks and a Hammer live on Hosbrook--once a street where Blacks were "forced" to live by Jim Crow segregation, is now a place where Blacks were "forced" to leave.

### **Indy's Near-Eastside: Cottage Home**

Next, consider the gentrified Cottage Home (<https://cottagehome.info/>) area in the near-downtown's eastside which was the former Black Dorman St./Highland Ave/Sturm Ave. neighborhoods.

### **Riverside: 16 Tech**

The Indianapolis Black Community is in an uproar as gentrification is bringing unaffordable housing to the Riverside neighborhood. Coloniality is bringing \$300,000 homes to Riverside.

<https://www.blackindylive.com/gentrification-bringing-300k-affordable-100k-housing-to-riverside-neighborhood/>. Due to the future 16 Tech industrial park (<https://www.16tech.com/>) northwest of the 10th St./Indiana Ave. intersection, the historically black Riverside neighborhood is being racially and

economically cleansed.

### **Haughville: River West**

The neo-colonial Great Places 2020 gentrification scheme has started the ethnic cleansing via gentrification of the long-time Black Haughville area. It's now called River West:

<https://www.greatplaces2020.org/river-west-1>

### **East 16th St.: Meridian St. east to Hillside Ave.**

The current gentrified E. 16th St. strip is now "Tinker Street"--a product of Joanna Taft's "PreEnact" concept that's racially cleansing the city's historically eastside Black American King/Park area. The ethnic cleansing spreads both east on 16th St and north of 16th in areas starting with Park Ave and going east on 16th passed Dr. A. J. Brown Ave. This is Monon 16 area: <https://monon16.org/>.

Especially, note the colonization of the Kountry Kitchen 19th/College area of Cornell, Yandes and the Monon Trail. These are historically Black neighborhoods which are now crowded with expensive homes and mainly white professionals.

This is why the Monon Lofts Apts or the Scarlet Lane Brewing Gastropub are signs of the colonialization of Black Indianapolis.

### **Monon 16: "A ploy to attract new--mostly white--people and businesses"**

Black Indianapolis can't forget the July 27, 2020 *Recorder* story, "We've been gentrified," about the colonized so-called "Monon 16" neighborhood, we hear the complaint of original residents about being pushed out of their neighborhood where they always lived, "...[but]...don't tell Pearl Carter she [now] lives in the Monon 16 neighborhood. 'That's a ploy, she said, to attract new--mostly white--people and businesses.'" [http://www.indianapolisrecorder.com/recorder\\_headlines/article\\_45ca559e-cced-11ea-9833-1f17f74c8b21.htm](http://www.indianapolisrecorder.com/recorder_headlines/article_45ca559e-cced-11ea-9833-1f17f74c8b21.htm)

Just check out Bellefontaine St./16th St. area. The culture and history of that street, in the middle of a neighborhood, epitomized Black Indianapolis. The 16th St. carwash, store, barbershop are gone, not restored. The pea shake house/s are gone. Ironically, now the offices of Renew Indy, a land trust organization, is located at 1701 Bellfontaine St.--in a former segregated neighborhood where Blacks were "forced" to live, and now is a neighborhood where they are "forced" to leave.

### **Renew Indy: The fox guarding the henhouse**

It is important to note that Renew Indy, the land trust group who passed SEND's \$4.09M proposal is located at 1704 Bellfontaine, in the heart of the Monon 16 gentrification matrix.

### **Indy's Southside**

Along with these we can count the ethnic cleansing of historically Black neighborhoods in the near Southside: Babe Denny Park/Shapiro's (S. Illinois, S. Capitol, S. Kenwood) and Concord Center areas. See <http://oldsouthside.org/>

### **Norwood**

Norwood is an historically Black American Indianapolis neighborhood located directly southwest of Prospect St. and Sherman Dr.

Regarding Norwood, the Great Place 2020 scheme has morphed its southeast side initiative around the Twin Aire Shopping Center. This is right across from the entrance to the new jail. into a neighborhood now called Twin Aire. Note, the Twin Aire area is going to be the home of the new jail.

The Fountain Square area had been the home of SEND since 1991--almost 30 years! (<https://www.sendcdc.org/about>). But, sensing the “opportunity” the new jail brings to the gentrification of the Twin Aire area of the new jail, SEND moved its office to the old Long John Silver restaurant at 3230 Southeastern Ave., just north of the new jail’s location.

**Ethnic Cleansing strategy: Displace Blacks from Norwood while building a jail for them**

SEND’s actions re: its \$4M rehab of Norwood houses is an attempt to deny the racism that has informed the years of SEND policy while it developed in the midst of the more racist part of Indy, its Southside.

It is obvious to those Indianapolis Blacks who have experienced the unwanted gentrification that the SEND move is meant “to attract new--mostly white--people and businesses” to Norwood.

The tragic irony here is that as SEND plans to displace members of the Indy’s Black community from Norwood as a new jail is being built just blocks away. SEND must realize how disrespectful, hurtful, and racist is a plan to gentrify a Black neighborhood in the shadow of a new jail--the symbol to Blacks of a racist system that has over incarcerated people of color for over 150 years.

This is why the neighborhood improvement group, the Redevelopment/Revitalization of the Southside, CDC (R/ROS) is in the process of studying and organizing to stop the current ethnic cleansing of Norwood. Norwood one of the last Black neighborhoods south of Washington St. that’s not gentrified.

Local residents can’t forget US 40 is the Mason-Dixon Line of Indianapolis. And we can’t forget Indy’s Southside has never been welcoming to Black folks. SEND’s policies, in the guise of rehabbing houses to improve Norwood, only sustain racism.