

Wabash Avenue Neighborhood

Boundaries

north & east – Norfolk Southern RR tracks
south – north drive into ReNew water department
west – Wabash River

Historical Highlights

Established in 1835, the historic Wabash Avenue district became a critical industrial center. Dating back to the 1820s, immigrant families provided much of the labor for the mills, factories, and whiskey distilleries, which contributed to Lafayette’s successful and rapid growth.

Construction for the nearby Wabash and Erie Canal began in Lafayette in 1840. Some of the Irish immigrant canal laborers chose to stay in the neighborhood after its completion, and many of their descendants continue to live in the historic district. The Irish Catholic character of the neighborhood inspired the building of St. Ann’s Catholic Church in 1870.

Soon the area became the central hub for railroad trains. While traveling by train to his inauguration in 1861, Abraham Lincoln stopped and gave a speech at The Railroad Junction located east of Wabash Avenue. A few years later many would be called by their president to serve in the Civil War. The large meatpacking warehouse at the foot of Chestnut Street became a makeshift prison for over 750 Confederate soldiers. In 1865, residents again gathered near the railroad to pay respects as Lincoln’s funeral train traveled through the neighborhood.

Additional Neighborhood Features

Wabash Ave residents host “Cornstock”, an annual block party for neighborhood residents. The Junction House is also home to many summer activities including outdoor movie night and outdoor concerts. In 2018 Wabash Ave was host to “Wabash Walls”, a public street art project with local, national and international mural artists.

Lafayette headquarters of Habitat for Humanity

Junction House Neighborhood Center

Fairfield Township Trustees office

Sacred Grounds Christian Coffee House

Harvest Chapel Church and St Ann Church

Businesses: Butler’s meat processing, Cargill, Kirby Risk, American Steel, Korty’s, Ferrell’s

Refrigeration, The Crossing, Hammer Down Construction, Ephesus Contractors

Shamrock Park/Dog Park

Neighborhood Association

Habitat for Humanity began neighborhood revitalization in the area in early 2000. Habitat volunteers and employees have built several new homes and continue to repair existing one. The organization has assisted residents in building community gardens and forming a neighborhood association.

Harvest Chapel Church has also helped in the revitalization efforts. After members started an evangelical church in the neighborhood, the church renovated an old strip club turning it into Sacred Grounds Christian Coffee House, a busy hub of resident activity in the neighborhood.

For more information about the association, contact:

Mark Holtsclaw – president, contact information:

- m.holtsclaw@comcast.net
- [Wabash Neighborhood Assoc. Facebook page](#)