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**A sense of
community
builds in**

COLE-NOBLE

OVER THE PAST DECADE, NO URBAN TIMES area has experienced as much change as has the Cole-Noble Commercial Arts District:

The demolition of Market Square Arena, the transition of the former Service Supply Co. buildings into jail space, and the departure of such landmark operations as Alexander Printing Co., Ropkey Graphics, Sink & Edwards heating and air-conditioning, and Nemec Plumbing and Supply.

And the changes will keep coming – with the pending demolition of the Market Street interstate ramp pushing Cole-Noble into yet another era. City planners believe the disappearance of “the ski ramp” will open the Near Eastside to the Downtown area, and revitalize East Market Street as a viable thoroughfare.

Mark Easley, co-owner of Easley Wineries and a long-time Cole-Noble activist, laments the loss of some valued neighbors, but is more than enthusiastic



▲ The Maxwell condominium project is being built in the 500 block of East Ohio Street by Kosene & Kosene Development. It will feature upper-level residential units and street-level commercial space.

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about the new organizations which have moved into the area.

“We’ve gained some very high-profile people who are extremely interested, who want to be involved and improve the neighborhood – not only for their businesses but also for the overall quality of life,” Easley said.

Businesses which have vastly changed the Cole-Noble landscape include Indiana Business College, along with its Chef’s Academy, and Flanner & Buchanan, which renovated several buildings as part of its multi-faceted operation.

The “next big change” will come soon, when The Nature Conservancy either remodels or replaces the Nemec building in the 600 block of East Ohio Street, in either case a \$3.5 million improvement.

Easley is excited about The Nature Conservancy’s plans for a “green” building, “which will be a nice role model for the neighborhood.” He is equally excited about the organization’s potential for education, and because the potential exists for a significant aesthetic improvement in the sizable and highly visible property.

Amid the many changes, Cole-Noble is becoming less the city’s designated “commercial arts district” and more a

Andrews Florist is shadowed both by the soon-to-be-gone interstate ramp and Jail II, located in the former home of the Cole Automobile Co. There is some unease in the Cole-Noble area because of the release of inmates from the Market Street entrance of Jail II. ►

An Ohio Street scene: At left is the new home of the Buchanan Group, a sister company of Flanner & Buchanan, which located its headquarters, crematorium and funeral center a block south. At right is Easley Winery, a long-time Cole-Noble neighbor. In between is the vacant building which will soon become the home to the state office of The Nature Conservancy. ▼

neighborhood – a fact greatly evidenced in January by a series of nine luncheons geared for Cole-Noble stakeholders to get to know each other.

The luncheons were a smash success, with several of them attracting 30 to 45 attendees. They were conducted at nine different venues. Several of the smaller neighborhood firms without the space for such an event teamed up with their larger neighbors. Hosts were:

- ❑ Rowland Design (officially in the Lockerbie Square neighborhood, but adjacent to Cole-Noble).
- ❑ Jail II (with co-host Circle City Pizza).
- ❑ Flanner and Buchanan Funeral Center (with Andrews Florist).
- ❑ RJE Business Interiors.
- ❑ Harms Supply Co. (with Circle City Pizza).
- ❑ Easley Winery (with Design-Aire Engineering).
- ❑ The Chef’s Academy.
- ❑ Buchanan Group (with Kosene and Kosene).
- ❑ Axis Architects and Interiors (with Neighborhood Downtown Zoning Assistance).

Barb Milton, who help lead the planning for the luncheons, said the idea started last year as a progressive dinner





▲The former banking center and warehouse is one of the prime sites remaining in Cole-Noble.

Axis Architecture moved into the former bread company warehouse in 2000. Just before the renovation, the building housed Hoosier Lottery tickets. ►



Indiana Business College has flourished at its West Washington Street site since late 2002. ►



before evolving into its final form. Milton, vice-president of community relations for Flanner & Buchanan, is one of the newcomers who represent the changing face of Cole-Noble.

She said that sharing each others' stories was key to the luncheons. Some Cole-Noble history was disseminated at each event, as well. Milton said that, before the lunch was over, she learned that Jail II was once the place where Cole automobiles were manufactured.

"How often can you tour the jail without a police escort," she added.

Milton counted off some other things she learned during the month: "Eric Rowland has the contract to design the suites at the new Colts' stadium; Design Aire gave us tips on energy rebates the businesses are missing out on. RJE and Buchanan Group shared their core values and vision for the area. Ralph's Great Divide, the Chef's Academy and Downtown Circle City Pizza helped feed us all. Axis and Downtown Zoning provided us with a glimpse into some additional area changes like the possible new neighbors – The Nature Conservancy and the advertising company replacing the Carpenter's Union on Market Street." (See story on this page.)

Milton added that one of the luncheons featured an update by Kosene and Kosene officials on that company's

residential dreams for Downtown. Kosene's latest project, the Maxwell condominium building in the 500 block of East Ohio Street, is one of the prime examples of the area's changes since 1998. A decade ago, city planners' worked with area stakeholders toward a master plan for the redevelopment of the Market Square Arena site – but that effort collapsed when the Cole-Noble businessmen balked over areas designated for residential futures. They saw such plans as incompatible with their businesses, some of which operated second and third shifts.

Today, Cole-Noble stakeholders look forward to incorporating residents of the Maxwell and the nearby Packard condominiums into their association. The Packard was completed in 2003 on former surface parking lots which serviced Market Square Arena.

There are other pending changes, such as a proposed restaurant in the 200 block of New Jersey St., and of course the much-delayed decision on the Market Square Arena site itself. All neighborhood eyes are also on the former Bank One warehouse at East and Market streets, a blighted property which has also been a haven for the homeless.

On another level, the district's relationship with Jail II remains somewhat troubled, as neighbors continue to worry



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- Mark Easley



◀ Students are in their classroom at The Chef's Academy, site of one of the special luncheons.

about the method by which inmates are released without supervision.

Meanwhile, the luncheon series helped to launch a more aggressive program for the Cole-Noble Business Association. Easley said the organization has previously met only as needed. Now, the group will conduct a late-afternoon meeting every other month.

“A lot of it has to do with the changing dynamic of the neighborhood,” said Easley, who is enthusiastic about the new energy brought in by such organizations as Flanner and Buchanan. He is also eagerly awaiting the plans of The Nature Conservancy, envisioning some green space to be part of the makeover of the Nemec property.

Deborah Long of Circle City Pizza is equally enthusiastic. She said 15 years ago, when she and her husband first came to Cole-Noble, the area was dominated by the printing operations and peppered with homeless people. With the gradual evolution, she said, “the neighborhood itself has gotten cleaner, the people have gotten friendlier. You can walk out at night – it’s a huge change.”

Eric Rowland, a principal with Rowland Design, called the changes “great, exciting stuff.” He said the attractiveness of Downtown is evidenced by the evolution of Rowland’s former home in the 400 block of College Avenue. When Rowland outgrew that space, the firm moved a block south to East New York Street. Keramida Environmental took over the Lockerbie site, before moving last year just across the street, making way for yet another smaller firm.

“It’s obviously pretty fertile ground,” Rowland said. “People like to stay in the area.” He also noted the big improvement made by the arrival of Indiana Business College, plus the Kosene developments and the pending Nature Conservancy project.

“There’s not a whole lot left to redo,” he said, noting that the new neighbors “have taken care of a lot of the blighted, underutilized stuff. It’s a real neighborhood.”