

Why We Should Preserve Brick Streets

Lafayette, Indiana

October 2016



This presentation was created using publicly available sources for the residents of Highland Park Historic Neighborhood and the citizens of Lafayette, Indiana. It is intended to help guide our community's discussion around developing a brick street preservation ordinance.

The author is Ken Jones, assisted by Sean Lutes. Questions, comments or concerns regarding any aspect of this presentation should be directed to Ken via email at joneskp0124@gmail.com

Tradition

- Brick streets are the most visible evidence of a community's sense of tradition.
- Although brick streets are more expensive to construct, they can last over 100 years and more with little or no maintenance, while their concrete and asphalt counterparts need continuous attention.
- In the long run, brick streets are far more economical than any alternative.



Bricks Streets are Part of our History

- The streets help to define the historic character of older neighborhoods, and their durability speaks for themselves. In some communities, ordinances have been enacted to protect the integrity of their streets and others have developed comprehensive brick street restoration plans.



Prosperity and Progress

- Imagine in the late 1800's, dirt streets filled with horses
``Main Street is a disgrace to a civilized community. The odor arising from the filth and mud is simply terrific."

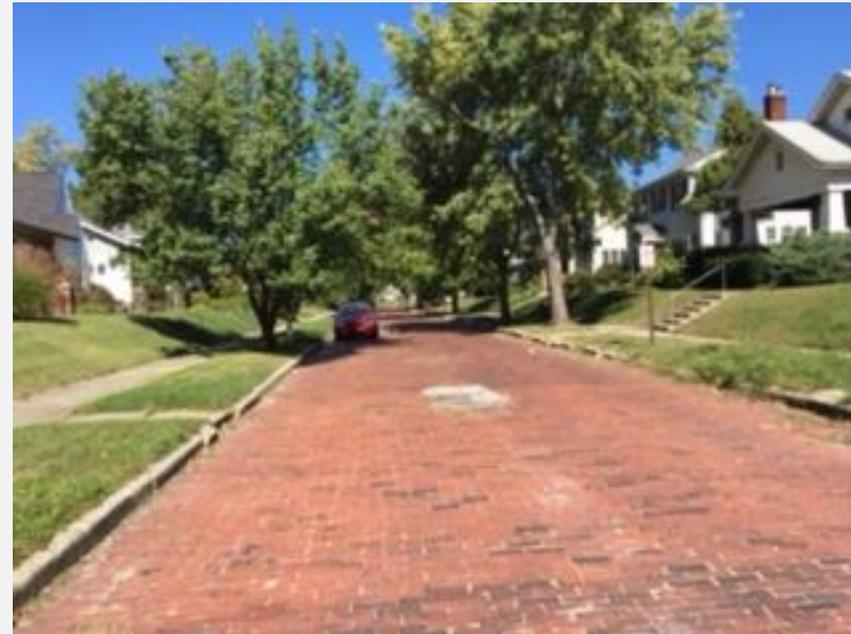
At times, downtown resembled a lake. Referring to the intersection of two streets, one newspaper demanded in 1895, ``Either fill it up, dig a dam, or run a ferry boat!"



October 13, 2016

Clean, Well Drained Neighborhoods

Brick was the answer. By 1900, technology had developed a type of paving brick that was cheap, impervious to water and nearly indestructible. Manufacturers created vitrified brick by heating kilns to such intense heat that the clay and minerals turned to liquid and then hardened when cooled.



Our Brick Streets are at Risk

Preservationists lament the loss of a historic downtown Lafayette touch, call out city for double standard

Journal & Courier

Aug 26, 2016

In spite of original plans to repair the brick street in downtown Lafayette, the bricks were removed and replaced with asphalt paving.

This destruction occurred in the middle of a local historic district.

There is currently no ordinance that protects brick streets in Lafayette. They can be removed, dug-up and patched or simply covered with asphalt at any time.



Photo: Journal and Courier

Ten and Counting

- Lafayette is down to approximately ten historic bricks streets. They are located at:
 - 170' of N 11th and 96' of Main St. at the intersection,
 - 674' of S 12th Street,
 - 338' of N 5th Street,
 - 327' of N 7th Street,
 - 628' of Adams St.,
 - 196' of Central Ave*,
 - 290' of Miami St.*,
 - All of North Street,
 - 807' of Pontiac St*.

* Brick streets in Highland Park Historic Neighborhood

Why Should We Preserve Our Brick Streets?

1. Brick streets help to define the character of historic neighborhoods.
2. Over the life-cycle of a street, brick streets cost less.
3. Historic brick streets improve property values.
4. The streets are in and of themselves historic – representing the prosperity and progress of our city from frontier settlement to urban center of higher learning and commerce.
5. Water run-off from brick streets is less.
6. Brick streets calm traffic. They lower driving speeds and thus reduce accidents.

Character Study – 6th Street

Sixth Street – Brick



Sixth Street – Asphalt



How would you describe the character of this street – before and after?

Property Values

- Historic Brick Street Preservation Increases Property Values
 - In a study of National Register districts in Philadelphia, homes in historic districts received a sales price premium of 131% over comparable properties in undesignated neighborhoods.
 - Brick streets have considerable aesthetic appeal and enhance property values. Studies find that brick streets may increase property values of developed adjacent properties by 25 to 33 % and undeveloped lots by 200%
- Historic Preservation Conserves Resources and Leverages Existing Public Investments
 - We are driving on roads funded by taxpayers in 1890.
- Historic Preservation Attracts Visitors
 - Heritage tourists are more likely to dine in local restaurants and shop in local stores, bringing money into the local economy.

Historic Streets

- Generally, properties eligible for listing in the National Register are at least 50 years old.
- Lafayette's brick streets were laid in the late nineteenth century and are now over 120 years old.
- By any definition, these are historic streets

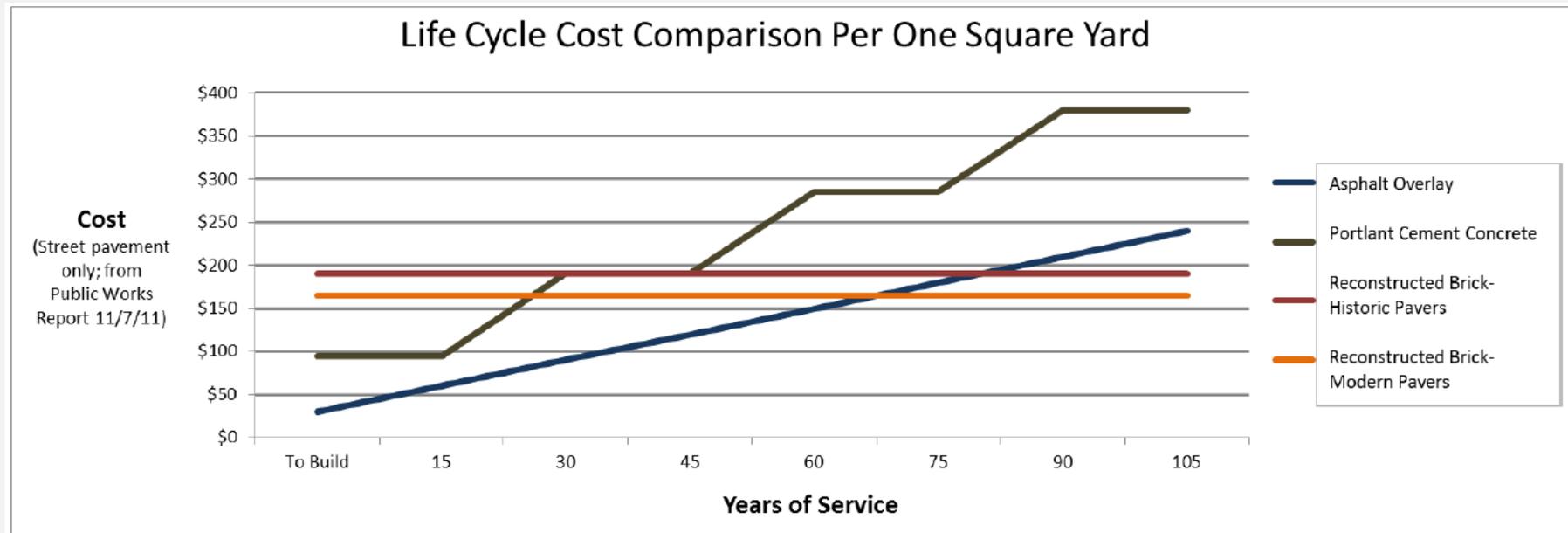


The Economics of Brick Streets

- According to a study by the city of Columbia, Missouri:
 - On a per square foot basis, over a large area, new or salvaged historic brick is more expensive than asphalt. However, because asphalt must be replaced every 15 years (+/-) and bricks will last more than 100 years, the bricks are less expensive over the life-cycle of the street.
 - Cost to remove and replace any street with Portland cement
 - \$95 / sq. yard
 - Cost to remove a brick paved street (with or without asphalt overlay) and reconstruct a brick paved street to the correct elevation and grade on an improved base:
 - Using historic brick pavers, \$190 / sq. yard
 - Using modern brick pavers , \$160 / sq. yard

Breakeven and Recovery

- Maintenance costs for brick streets are relatively flat over their life-cycle
- Concrete streets require maintenance and replacement, giving them a 30 year breakeven
- Asphalt overlay streets are lower cost but also require maintenance and replacement, giving them a 70 year breakeven



Wilmington, North Carolina

- Brick streets are very cost effective long term. A properly laid brick street can last 150 years or more with minimal maintenance, while an asphalt street, especially those in high traffic areas, may last as little as 12 to 15 years and may require extensive maintenance.
- In the 1970s, when Wilmington began covering its decades old brick streets with asphalt, most were still very serviceable. The aggregate long term costs associated with the construction and maintenance of brick streets are substantially less than the aggregate long term costs of construction, maintenance and periodic resurfacing of asphalt streets.
 - (J. Bedard, "Follow the Red Brick Road," Masters of Urban Planning Program, University of Buffalo, 2008, pp.10-11; Columbia OH, "Brick Street Policy Resolution FAQs," 2011, pp. 1-2.)

Traffic is Calmer

- Brick streets are commonly cited to be an excellent traffic calmer because they look and feel different than other streets.
 - A case study of Winter Park, Florida showed a drop in average speed from 29 mph from 41 mph after a brick restoration project was undertaken in 1996.
- The Federal Highway Administration notes:
 - The use of paving materials such as brick, cobbles, concrete pavers, or other materials that create variation in color and texture reinforces the identity of the area as a traffic-restricted zone.

Environmentally Friendly

- Brick streets are more environmentally friendly than asphalt streets. They are more permeable and thus mitigate storm water runoff. (J. Bedard, pp. 4, 8-9.)
- They also are cooler than heat generating asphalt
- With their very low maintenance requirements, the carbon footprint of a brick street is significantly lower than a concrete or asphalt (petroleum based) street

Moving Forward

- The economics, aesthetics and environmental impact of brick streets are clear.
- Rather than throw away the 19th century investments in our city's infrastructure, these streets should be aggressively preserved and maintained.
 - The loss of Sixth Street was a mistake which should not be easily repeated
- 30% of the city's brick streets are in the Highland Park Historic Neighborhood
 - Our brick streets are part of the character and charm of the neighborhood
- No ordinance currently protects our brick streets and that must change.

What We Need in a Brick Street Ordinance

1. The broadest possible preservation requirement.
2. Maintenance practices that maintain the historical appearance and integrity of the streets.
3. A mechanism to restore brick streets covered by asphalt.
4. Ability to use historic or modern pavers.
5. An advisory role by an appropriate historic preservation group to advise the city on changes or alterations to brick streets.
6. Construction standards for brick streets and curbs.

Plan of Action

1. Using a collaborative discussion approach, we will develop the framework for a brick street ordinance for the city of Lafayette.
2. A variety of stakeholders including city government, historic preservationists, neighborhood associations, business owners and individual property owners will be asked to engage in the process.
3. Once a general consensus is achieved, we will work with the city council to draft formal ordinance language for introduction into the normal ordinance process.

What You Can Do?

- Engage
- Make your thoughts and opinions known
- Talk to your elected officials

Contact Ken Jones via email at joneskp0124@gmail.com with your questions or comments.

Cities With Brick Street Ordinances

- Ft. Wayne, Indiana
- Rockford, Illinois
- Columbia, Missouri
- Wilmington, North Carolina
- Bloomington, Illinois
- St. Petersburg, Florida
- Topeka, Kansas
- Winter Park, Florida

Raw Materials and Experts

Salvage Brick Paver Suppliers

- Gavin Historical Bricks
 - Iowa City, Iowa (319) 354-5251
www.historicalbricks.com
- Chicago Antique Brick, Inc.
 - Chicago, IL 60608 (312) 666-3257
www.chicagoantiquebrick.com
- Schloss Paving Co.
 - Cleveland, OH 44125 (614) 416-8269

Brick Street Consultants

- Royce Baier Brick Street Restorers
 - 440 East Pells Street Paxton, IL 60957 (217) 379-3832

Sources and References

- Sixth Street Destruction
 - <http://www.jconline.com/story/opinion/columnists/dave-bangert/2016/08/26/bangert-sixth-st-bricks-theyre-history/89267992/>
- Columbia, MO FAQ Document
 - <http://www.como.gov/community-development/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2015/09/brickstreetsFAQ.pdf>
- Wilmington, NC – Save Our Brick Streets
 - <http://www.historicwilmington.org/save-our-historic-brick-streets/>
- Ft. Wayne – The Benefits of Restoring Brick Streets
 - <http://www.westcentralneighborhood.org/BrickStreetBrochure.pdf>