



# April Update

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## Irvington Development Organization Helps Ossip Optometry Secure New Irvington Location, Repurpose Historic Building



*by Jason Hathaway*

Thanks to the combined efforts of Irvington Development Organization (IDO) and Ossip Optometry, a vacant, historic building is receiving a new life and Irvington residents will soon have a neighborhood provider of eye care and stylish eyewear. The 15<sup>th</sup> location of Central Indiana's largest independent eyecare provider will be a restored 120-year-old business building at 5606 E. Washington St. Previously occupied by Dave's Tire & Auto Service, the 3,800 square-foot building is currently undergoing an extensive renovation, but is expected to be ready in time for the new Irvington Ossip location to open during the last week of June.

"We're happy to be able to renovate this historic building and bring a piece of Irvington architecture back to life," said Beth Young, managing director of Ossip. "At Ossip, we like to think of ourselves as 'your neighborhood optometrist' - we're very committed to the communities we're in, and we're always looking for better ways to serve them."

Ossip began its search for possible Irvington locations last spring.

"We looked at a map of Indianapolis and realized that we didn't have any locations in the Irvington area, so it was a natural area for us to explore," Young says. "Plus, we found that we already had number of patients living there who were going to other Ossip locations throughout the city for their eyecare needs. Irvington is a very charming community, and we felt that the people there would welcome us and be able to support us."

Ossip CEO Dr. Gregg Ossip was drawn to the building at 5606 E. Washington St., which was then vacant and up for sale. Looking past the building's rough exterior and its four auto bays on the side, marks that would likely stifle the interest of most business owners outside the auto repair field, he was excited at the possibility of giving it a total makeover, Young said.

"Pardon the pun, but Dr. Ossip has great vision," Young said. "He stood out there and got all kinds of ideas for what we could do to restore this building. It's going to be a beautiful building when we get done with it."

With the location chosen, Ossip's commercial real estate broker Jacque Haynes, of Cassidy Turley, approached IDO for assistance in making the deal a reality. One concern was Layman Avenue, the one-way residential street just west of the building. Since Layman only ran south

avenue, the one-way residential street just west of the building. Since Layman only ran south at the time, Ossip customers wouldn't have been able to turn north off of Washington to get to the building's 12 parking spaces. IDO advocated the conversion of Layman to a two-way street and helped get it approved by the City-County Council, eliminating this potential dealbreaker, and updated the Washington Corridor Streetscape Project design to allow for better access to the site.

IDO was also able to secure a \$10,000 façade improvement grant for Ossip to create a more visually appealing exterior for the building. Since Irvington is a city-designated historic district, these exterior renovations are being done under the approval and guidance of the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission. The renovations will include a restored brick and wood façade and new windows and black awnings, with the west wall reserved for an Irvington-themed mural.

It was a pleasant experience working with the IDO to bring Ossip to Irvington, Haynes said.

"We loved working with the Irvington Development Organization and all of the business owners throughout the community," Haynes said. "This was the first time I'd done a deal in Irvington, and I can't remember the last time I've enjoyed a project so much."

"We're really grateful to IDO for helping us get done what we needed done for our new location," Young added. "We've received such a warm welcome, and we're very excited to get the location up and running and do business with the neighborhood."

Ossip will soon close its 7773 E. Washington store, near Washington Square Mall, and is moving that location's staff and optometrist - Dr. John Shackle - to the Irvington location. With Irvington's Washington Street Corridor on the verge of a massive revitalization project, the addition of a popular local company like Ossip to the business district is quite a windfall.

"We are thrilled about Ossip's decision to open a new location Irvington," says Margaret Banning, interim executive director of IDO. "With a strong reputation throughout Central Indiana and its broad selection of quality, stylish eyewear, Ossip will not only help draw more people to Irvington, but will also give the east side access to better eyecare. We're happy to have them as our new neighbor."



## Q&A with Doug Stuart, IDO President

**What street or neighborhood do you live in Irvington?** I live on North Bolton Avenue in the PAR-10 area of Irvington.

**How long have you lived in Irvington?** 10 years

**Tell us about your family, please.** I am married to Stefanie and we have a 2-year old daughter and 13-week old son.

**What do you do for a living, and where do you work?** I'm an environmental consultant for Hull & Associates, Inc., an engineering and consulting firm.

**What things do you like best about IDO, and what led you to get involved in its programs?** I like working with a great group of energetic and dynamic neighbors focused on improving where we live, play, and work. I got involved because I was asked by a fellow IDOer!

**What do you like about living in Irvington?** I like the older homes with lots of character, and especially appreciate all the architectural diversity in the neighborhood

and especially appreciate all the architectural diversity in the neighborhood.

**What's one of your favorite childhood memories?** Playing in my grandfather's greenhouse off the back of his house is definitely one of my favorite childhood memories.

**What's your favorite pastime?** Playing with my kids, and playing golf (when I actually have the time). **Any hobbies?** Home improvement projects and anything outdoors.

**If you could watch only one hour of TV a week, what would you watch?** That's a tough question, as I don't watch much TV. It's a toss-up between *Survivor* and just about any sporting event.

**What was the last good book you read, and why did you choose it?** I just finished *The Last Lecture*, which my wife bought me for my birthday. Fortunately it's a pretty quick read, since with two young children, I haven't had much time for reading lately.

**What is something you have not yet done that you would like to accomplish in your lifetime?** I hope to some day be able to hike the entire Appalachian Trail.

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## **Bacon Cheeseburger and Fries Our Way**

*Dufour's in Irvington*

Serving up delicious breakfasts, lunches and brunches and catering events since 1997, Dufour's has long been one of Irvington's favorite neighborhood eateries. Over the years, this cozy, friendly café has become known throughout the community for its gourmet sandwiches, soups and salads and delicious

baked goods. With a last name meaning "from the oven" in French, it seems that Dufour's owner and head chef Maria Dufour was made for her line of work.



In honor of Dufour's 15<sup>th</sup> year in business, we are happy to share with you one of the restaurant's customer-favorite recipes for our inaugural Recipe of the Month column - Bacon Cheeseburger and Fries Our Way.

In Maria's words, "This is one of Dufour's luncheon features. You never know when it's going to be on the menu, but that's what makes us so unique. Our lunch menu changes weekly, and there is plenty to choose from. The following recipe is easy to make, and it seems to be a hit whenever we run it on our menu for the day."

### Ingredients:

1 pound ground beef or pork  
½ cup chopped onion  
¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese  
½ cup shredded Swiss cheese  
1 egg  
¼ teaspoon Tabasco sauce  
1½ teaspoon salt  
2 tablespoons minced parsley  
Bisquick

### Instructions

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Cook meat in skillet till brown, stirring to break it up as it cooks. Set meat aside and cool. Mix the rest of ingredients and add to cooled meat. Follow directions on

a box of Bisquick to make biscuit dough - we add some dried spices to the dough for flavor. Spread dough on bottom of 13x9 baking pan, add meat filling and top off with the rest of the dough. Bake in 400-degree oven until brown (35-40 minutes).

"We cut this pie into squares, top it with our own cheese sauce, finish it with bacon crumbles and serve it with a side of home fries," Dufour says. "Sometimes we switch it up and substitute a creamy mushroom sauce for the cheese sauce. It's a sell-out every time! We recommend you enjoy it with a nice, tall glass of ice tea or Coke and finish it off with one of our desserts. Delish!"

*Located at 5648 E Washington St., Dufour's offers breakfast, lunch, catering services, specialties "from the oven" and an espresso bar. For business hours, updates and weekly lunch menus, visit the restaurant's [website](#) or its [Facebook](#) fan page.*

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### **Why Do I Donate to Irvington Development Organization?**

"As a previous board member of IDO, I know firsthand about the important work this organization is doing to lead improvements along our most visible neighborhood corridor. This



group brings together local professionals who are spearheading the Washington Streetscape Project, attracting businesses and coordinating facade grants for our historic store fronts. I gladly donate to IDO to help fund their projects and full-time director. We all benefit from the work IDO does - they truly are the driving force that helps make Irvington a destination."

- Christina Bennett-McNew

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## **SAVE THESE DATES!**

### **The Irvington Streetscape Groundbreaking!**

When: Tuesday, May 1, 2012, 11:30am to 12:30pm

Where: Outside the Irvington Library (Rain location TBD)

After seven years of planning, pushing, and patience, we will begin Phase One of the Irvington Streetscape with this groundbreaking event. Join us for this one hour celebration of our community and the donors who are making this transformation possible. Irvington is still making history!

### **Irvington Spring Swing**

'Cause Spring don't mean a thing if it ain't got that Swing!

Join IDO for the annual Irvington Spring Swing! Enjoy flowing beverages and tasty treats. You won't want to miss the lively swing music and dancing! There will also be lawn games, door prizes, etc. If spectating is more your sport, there's room to just mingle, too. However you play, we want to see YOU there! Add flavor to your wardrobe by coming in swinging style (think 1930's and 40's)!

Experience the vibrancy of Irvington through this festive soiree for friends of IDO.

When: Friday, May 11, 7:00 pm - 10:30 pm

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Where: Bona Thompson Memorial Center (<http://bit.ly/bonathompson>)

Dress: Business Casual or in Swinging Style

Come at 7:00 pm for a free swing dance lesson!

Advance tickets are only \$10! Tickets at the door will be \$15. Proceeds from this event benefit the Irvington Development Organization (IDO). <http://irvingtonspringswing.eventbrite.com/>

## **Energize Irvington**

It doesn't take a lot of energy to help your 'hood.

The Irvington Development Organization (IDO) has teamed with the statewide Energizing Indiana initiative to provide free home energy assessments to residents. It's a program with an exciting twist: *For every household that participates, Energizing Indiana will donate \$25 to the nonprofit IDO, Irvington's economic development organization.*

Through these free energy assessments, Irvingtonians will find out exactly which "energy crooks" are stealing energy from their homes, receive freebies like compact fluorescent light bulbs and shower heads, and learn ways to save money on utility bills.

"If a thousand households participate, that's an amazing \$25,000 contribution to Irvington development," notes Doug Stuart, president of the IDO board. Twenty-five thousand dollars is the maximum amount any organization can earn in this campaign. "There is no easier way for Irvingtonians to give to IDO, and considering what our residents will get back, it's a true win-win for everybody."

Energizing Indiana is an effort by the local utility companies, the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC), the Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) and consumer organizations.

More information is available at [energizingindiana.com](http://energizingindiana.com). Irvingtonians can also follow the campaign on Twitter (@Energizing\_IN) and Facebook ([Facebook.com/energizingindiana](https://www.facebook.com/energizingindiana)).

The fine print: Eligible homes must be owner-occupied single family detached, condo, duplex, or mobile home. Rental properties qualify with landlord approval. Homes must be 10 years or older and have not had a utility-sponsored assessment in the last three years.

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## **IDO Lately**

It's been a whirlwind time for your Irvington Development Organization in these last few months.

In case you missed it, we:

- Said farewell to Amandula Anderson and welcomed Margaret Banning as interim director and Doug Stuart as the new president of the board.
- Put Streetscape out for bid and received several viable bids.
- Were granted tax credits for the redevelopment of the former Indy East Motel.
- Partnered with the Energizing Indiana program to get Irvingtonians free energy assessments (and raise money for IDO at the same time!)
- Hosted a broker's bus tour of Irvington's available commercial real estate.
- Saw one of our efforts come to fruition in the opening of Black Acre Brewery! <http://bit.ly/xTAnDS>
- Initiated the much-needed overhaul of the IDO website.
- Were covered in the Indianapolis Business Journal

• were covered in the Indianapolis Business Journal.  
<http://media.ibj.com/ibj/mobile/article.php?articleId=33336>

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"WORKING TO ENHANCE THE BEAUTY OF HISTORIC IRVINGTON... WHILE LEADING THE CHARGE FOR POSITIVE NEW GROWTH."

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