

Former BTNA President Announces Council Bid

JOHN COUNTRYMAN
BTNA TREASURER

Former BTNA President John Barth recently announced his candidacy for an at-large seat on the Indianapolis City-County Council. John ended his two-year stint as BTNA president on December 31st, and continues as a board member through 2010.

"I think Butler-Tarkington can serve as a model of how neighborhoods in Indianapolis can thrive. More than anything, I think my time as BTNA President showed me that we can do so much when we work together as neighbors with a specific aim, such as supporting our local businesses or preserving our history."

John held a kick-off event for the campaign in October at the Melody Inn Reception

Hall, which was attended by people from across Butler-Tarkington, Midtown, and all of Indianapolis.

"My aim is to have as many people from all walks of life involved in this campaign as possible" he said.

The theme of his campaign is "Strong, Healthy Neighborhoods" and his proposals are pulled directly from his experience as neighborhood association president. For example, working with local business owners for improvements at 38th and Illinois inspired a focus on neighborhood-driven economic development.

"I think in many ways having strong business centers is the cornerstone for strong neighborhoods," he said. "Ev-

erything else can be built or rebuilt on that foundation."

Other areas of focus for his

campaign parallel the work of BTNA over the last few years—building neighborhood connectivity through more walking and biking options; addressing problems

such as abandoned housing, as well as encouraging neighbors to be involved.

"In a lot ways my main inspiration for all of this work the last few years has been the book 'The Death and Life of Great American Cities' by Jane Jacobs," he said. "I think what Jacobs figured out in 1961 is still true today—vital, robust neighborhoods are the key to a strong city."

Because John is seeking an

at-large seat, he has begun his campaign very early in an effort to secure one of the four seats. Two years in advance of the 2011 election, he already has a campaign web site (vote-barth.com), a strong group of campaign volunteers (including some of our Butler-Tarkington neighbors) and a campaign plan for 2010.

"I have what I think is a good plan for outreach, but every day reminds me that I have a big learning curve and I need to be flexible."

John lives on North Kenwood with his wife of thirteen years, Jessica, and their two children, Nora (age 7) and Miles (age 5), who attend St. Thomas Aquinas School. Jessica reports that the Barth kids are enjoying the campaign so far, "especially seeing their last name on a button."



BARTH

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