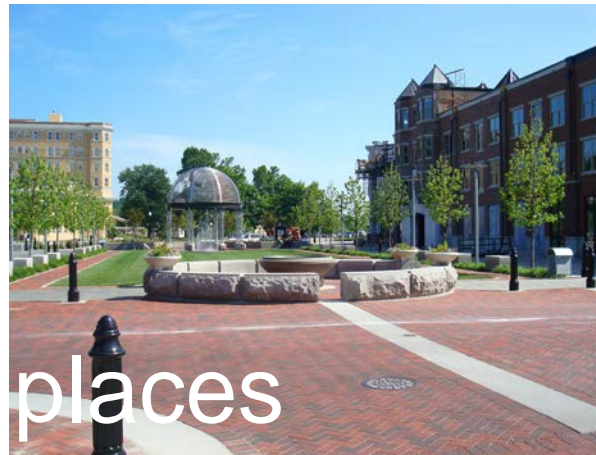


the role of parks and open space planning as a context for economic development planning

French Lick|West Baden Springs Implementation|2004-2014



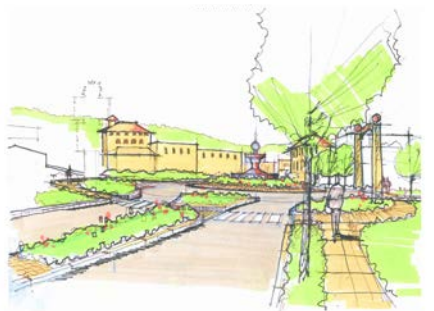
A tour of implemented planning and urban design work in French Lick/West Baden Springs guided by parks and open space principles | Presented at the *2016 Indiana Bike & Walk Summit: active transportation for our next 200 years.*



storow | kinsella associates

planning urban design landscape architecture for strategies | places | connections

State Road 56 Corridor Study
with considerations of larger initiatives
 A joint study for the Towns of French Lick and West Baden Springs
 in Response to INDOT Road Reconstruction Plans
 Interim Report/December 13, 2004



Enhanced SR 56 roundabout concept

Planning and Design Team
 Hannum Wagle & Cline Engineering/Engineer of Record
 Storrow Kinsella Associates/Planning & Design
 Banning Engineering/Drainage Study

French Lick Design Guidelines **DG**

French Lick Town Center Plan
 Redevelopment Plan Design Guidelines

December 12, 2007



Planning and Design Team
 Hannum Wagle & Cline Engineering/Lead Engineer
 Storrow Kinsella Associates/Planning & Design
 Urban Initiatives/Redevelopment Economics

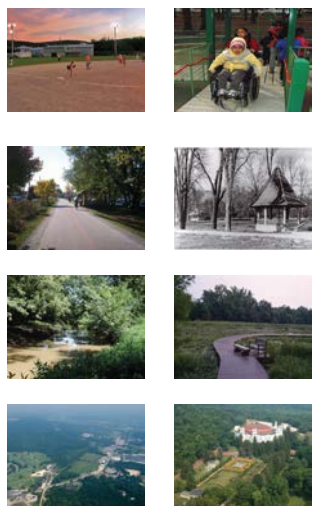
West Baden Springs Master Plan
 Community Ideas for Future Development

2007/April/24 2007



Planning and Design Team
 Hannum Wagle & Cline Engineering/Engineer of Record
 Storrow Kinsella Associates/Planning & Design
 Urban Initiatives/Redevelopment Economics

2009-2013 Park and Recreation Master Plan
 Town of West Baden Springs, Indiana
 Park Board



Planning and Design Team
 Storrow Kinsella Associates/Planning & Design
 Banning Engineering/Drainage Study

Storrow Kinsella Associates was planning and urban design lead for these coordinated plans for the Towns of West Baden Springs and French Lick.

The plans and resulting implementation projects were developed between 2004 and 2014. They leveraged impending INDOT road improvement projects and anticipated casino development to position to achieve the vision to become a world class resort destination in the Springs Valley of Orange County, Indiana.

\$10M of projects identified and carried out by the planning and design teams have been implemented. The result has dramatically transformed the towns' character and economic performance.

This is a case study in the value of continuity in planning and design.

It illustrates the strategy of leveraging infrastructure investment to achieve open space connectivity and the importance of that connectivity to quality of life.

It also illustrates that the quality of design matters in realizing a vision. A high level of design and execution of consistent elements, including landscape, identity/wayfinding/interpretive graphics, site furnishings and site structures, cross jurisdictional boundaries to create a sense of one highly engaging place.

The last study of the series, the 2009 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, is notable for having gone beyond basic parks facilities and programs to envision [and implement] a linear parkway and trail system that not only vastly expands access to recreation but also creates a positive front door image in support of tourism, the lifeblood of the communities and the Orange County region.



Gateway Towers at Lost River bridge

The SR 56 corridor was studied as a system to establish overall context.

Character Zones A-C were established for projects within each jurisdiction beginning at the approach to the Lost River bridge and continuing past the historic resort hotels into French Lick.

Panel D [Flooding Issues] brought life-safety demand and leveraging potential to infrastructure project discussions.

The corridor study identified the Lost River bridge [Character Zone A2] as a potential gateway into the Springs Valley. INDOT had planned to replace the existing concrete arch bridge with a new four-lane bridge with no pedestrian facilities. Extensive discussions resulted in preserving the existing bridge and retrofitting it for two travel lanes and a protected shared use path, a reduction of the speed limit to allow incorporation of elements that otherwise would have required design exceptions, and construction of these gateway towers and overhead truss within State Road 56 right-of-way.

The trail adjacent to the right tower leads into town and is intended to continue north into rural Orange County in the future. Banners celebrating seasonal events are deployed from the towers along a track on the underside of the truss. The tower design is a contextual reference to the architecture of the historic resort hotels of the two towns. SKA designed the towers, constructed as full height-precast concrete panels set on piling to bedrock, and assisted in procuring grants toward their construction.

A1 PROSPECT INTERSECTION

CORRIDOR STUDY IDEAS

Concept Plan

Goal
Maintain and nurture "Hamlet" Character as an asset to the valley experience and economy.

- Incorporate into gateway experience
- Consider alternate configuration for the 150/56 intersection - roundabout?
- Consider historic structures, scenic byway and greenway/bikeway connections.

Character Sketch

CURRENT INDOT PROPOSAL

1" = 50'

FRENCH LICK/WEST BADEN

A2 LOST RIVER BRIDGE

CORRIDOR STUDY IDEAS

Concept Plan

Goal
Create the new Lost River Bridge as a *signature gateway entry feature* while addressing difficult budget, schedule and environmental issues.

- Relocate the *permanent* bridge further westward to eliminate a costly *temporary* bridge phase, preserve and celebrate the last active spring, and improve the Abydel Pike intersection.
- The new location and alignment provides staged views for the West Baden Springs arrival experience, and creates opportunities for a river-edge/Abydel Pike trail.

Character Sketch

CURRENT INDOT PROPOSAL

1" = 50'

FRENCH LICK/WEST BADEN

B1 SCARLET TERRACE & WEST BADEN HOTEL

CORRIDOR STUDY IDEAS

Concept Plan

Goal
Support the identity of an historic small town through the development of SR 56 as the valley's Main Street.

- Consider a refined alignment for SR 56 that is sensitive to Scarlet Terrace and development/initiatives on the West Baden Hotel property.
- Consider an alignment that allows for improved pedestrian systems and activity/experiences in West Baden.
- Consider an alignment and design that emphasizes the West Baden Town center and entrance to the historic hotel.
- Recognize the existing retaining wall as a character-defining feature of the valley during design development.

Character Sketch

CURRENT INDOT PROPOSAL

1" = 60'

FRENCH LICK/WEST BADEN

B2 STREETScape IDENTITY & DEVELOPMENT

CORRIDOR STUDY IDEAS

Concept Plan

Goal
Provide a SR 56 streetscape that is sympathetic to the historic towns/springs valley and encourages and supports new development and redevelopment along the corridor.

- Provide comfortable separation of sidewalks/pedestrian systems from SR 56 and at intersections.
- Examine the center turn lane for median and/or alternative material options.
- Organize necessary signs, walls, railings, signal poles to create a traffic calmed vehicular and improved pedestrian corridor.
- Design street furnishings and elements as integral components of the valley landscape/streetscape.

Character Sketch

CURRENT INDOT PROPOSAL

1" = 30'

FRENCH LICK/WEST BADEN

SKA was the Towns' Consulting Party to INDOT resulting in incorporation of context sensitive design principles for traffic calming and walkability. These public engagement panels initiated discussion about the corridor's relationship to development concepts for both towns. Many of the roadway concepts were implemented by INDOT, facilitating the towns' parallel initiatives.

C1 SR 56 AND SR 145 ROUNDABOUT

CORRIDOR STUDY IDEAS



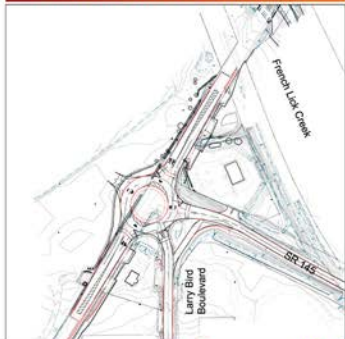
Goal
Redesign this core intersection to connect visitors to important destinations in a safe, historically sensitive, and visually coherent way.

1. Move vehicles **and** pedestrians more efficiently and safely through the congested multi-legged intersection.
2. Simplify the existing visual clutter to create more intuitive wayfinding and better sense of place.
3. Create a landmark gateway for both towns, the Historic Hotel, and the Gaming Complex.

Character Sketch/view south towards French



CURRENT INDOT PROPOSAL



C2 FRENCH LICK RESORT, CASINO & DOWNTOWN PLAN

CORRIDOR STUDY IDEAS



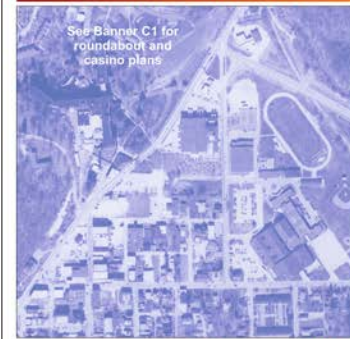
Goal
Create a connected, integrated and consistent master plan that captures the character of the valley and supports local business.

1. Connect the French Lick Resort to downtown - visually and physically.
2. Provide connections across SR 5.
3. Consider parking and other uses in downtown as a draw to tourists and visitors.
4. Study reuse of Bottling Plant/Waiters Quarters.
5. Develop an urban design plan that encourages infill, adaptive reuse and development complementary to the valley character and world-class destinations.

See Banner C3 for Character Sketches



CURRENT DOWNTOWN



C3

CORRIDOR STUDY IDEAS

Character Sketches



D1 FLOODING ANALYSIS

FLOODING & ALTERNATE ROUTES

Overall Drainage Analysis



Goal
To reduce impacts of flooding upon the community and develop a strategy for addressing flooding impacts when it occurs.

1. Develop a short-term plan for alternate local and regional "flood routes" into and out of the valley.
2. Encourage INDOT to address flooding issues along SR 150 and SR 37 that impact access to the valley.
3. Encourage INDOT to address flooding issues along SR 56 by raising key intersections, especially at SR 56/SR 145.
4. Develop long-term flooding solutions including: (1) installation of a dam/pumping system at the French Lick Creek/Lost River confluence to prevent backwater floods; and (2) installation of one or more flood control reservoirs on French Lick Creek.

State Road 56 Floodplain Analysis





Sprudel Park Trailhead

This new hillside park, a short distance into town from the gateway bridge, was identified as a community need in the Parks Master Plan. It provides a pavilion with visitor information and map display cases, a parking court, a gazebo shelter, and an overlook with a view of the historic hotel dome across the valley.

It is across the street, via a median crosswalk, from the gateway trail that starts at the bridge and continues from here to West Baden Springs Hotel and the trail network beyond. In addition to a being a point of beginning for trail users, it has also become a popular picnic and wedding venue.

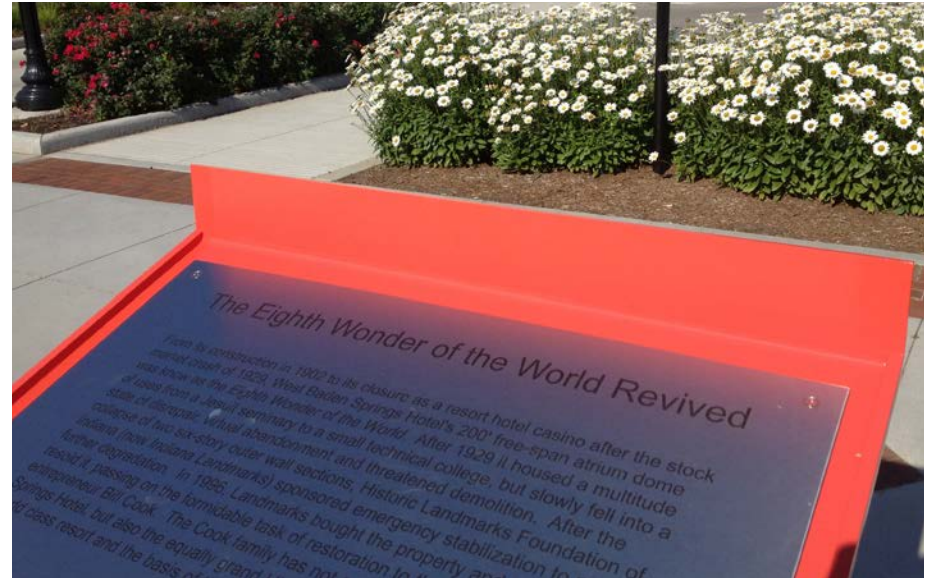
Materials and structures reiterate those of the gateway bridge towers. The limestone, brick paving, and landscape elements are repeated along the trail to create a continuum of related places linking the two towns and the resorts as one place.



The entry to the historic West Baden Springs Hotel, far right in the photograph above, is accessed by the Gateway Trail. The extensive flood plain owned by the resort is a visually shared open space.

Gateway Trail as Streetscape

The trail, accessed from the Sprudel Park Trailhead, parallels SR 56 through the valley, capturing the broad panorama across the flood plain to the hills beyond. This section of the extensive trail system performs as a linear park with shared open space. The trail, lighting, enhanced retaining walls, and reduced speed limits along a narrowed roadway. It represents design integration of multiple projects and blended funding sources: INDNR, INDOT, local TIF funds, regional economic development grants, and shared cost collaboration with the resort complex.



Historic Hotel Entrance Trailhead

The restored historic West Baden Springs Hotel's entry area off the SR56 corridor has become a trailhead along the Gateway Trail, replacing gravel parking lots and [now underground] power lines.

Repetitive interpretive graphics panels, set within the iconic limestone seating nodes, mark special places and recount valley history.

The trail continues beyond to intersect with the corridor promenade to French Lick and a shared use trail following a new trolley line linking the two resort hotels.

Storrow Kinsella worked with hotel ownership and the town to establish a perpetual trail usage easement across the property, while the overall improvements through the area were cost-shared.

6

FRENCH LICK TOWN CENTER

PUBLIC MEETING
DECEMBER 13, 2005



The historic Pluto building with Italianate roof and tower forms, and French Lick brick, echoes the scale of the Hotel to establish a context for the Town Center.

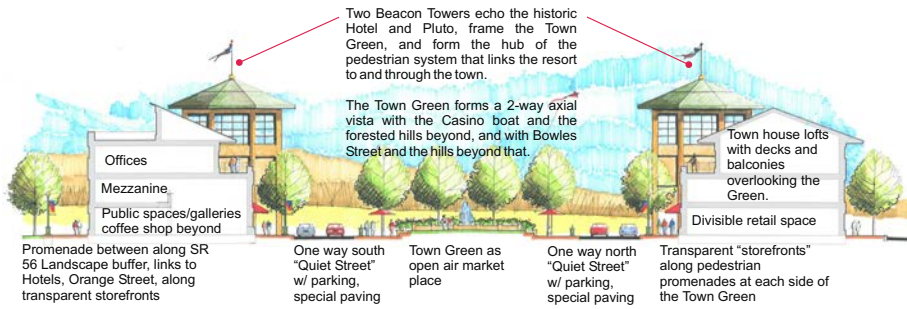


Bowles Street, on axis with the Boat across the proposed Town Green can become a key pedestrian connector as a "quiet" or shared use street, and extension of the Town Center.

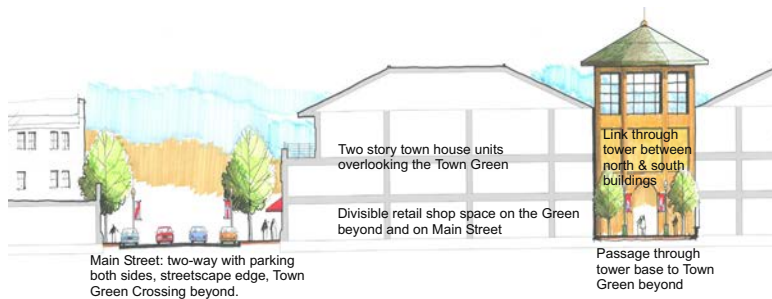


Key Downtown Building Mirrors the Scale and Materials of the Hotel

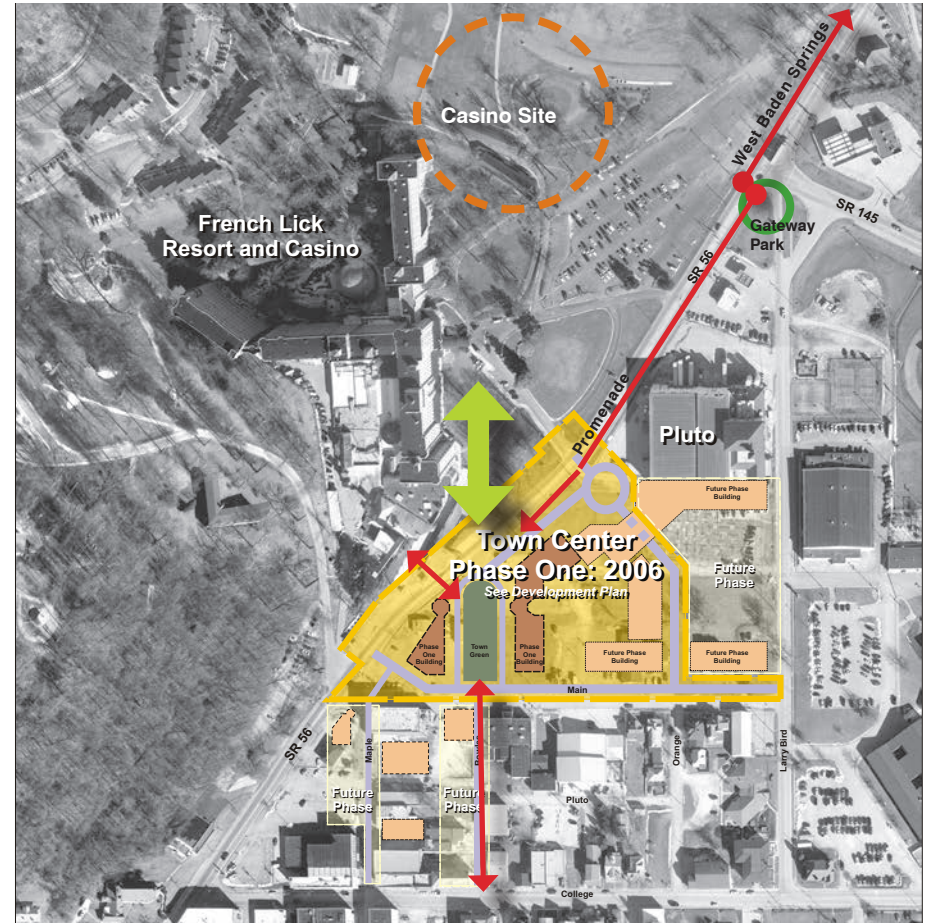
Contextual basis for form and character of the Town Center



Cross Section at the Town Green; view north towards the Hotel, Casino



Cross Section at Main Street; view west towards SR 56



The French Lick Town Center project purpose was to create an activated open space linkage between the resort [and then future casino] and the historic downtown by replacing a dead zone of fast food parking lots with new mixed use infill development fronting a town green. The development concept above has largely been implemented and has achieved the intended economic development results.

The SR 56 negotiations with INDOT overcame the barrier of State Road 56 traffic by speed limit reduction and by replacing a traffic lane with crosswalk medians. Extension of wide walkways from West Baden Springs Gateway Trail to the French Lick Gateway Park and Town Center Promenade completed the connectivity network between the towns and the resort.



French Lick Promenade

Broad walkways, sufficiently wide to function as shared use paths continue to the French Lick Gateway Park to become the French Lick Town Center Promenade. The curvilinear path morphs into the rectangular pattern of the new town green's bordering quiet streets. The traffic calming landscaped median along SR 56 is mirrored along the path where it brackets limestone block seating crescents. The open space character of French Lick Springs resort hotel across SR 56 is carried over to the town center for visual association between resort and town as an economic development strategy.



French Lick Town Center/Town Green

The Town Center has replaced desolate fast-food parking lots with a public space bordered by new mixed use residential and retail development. Convenience parking along the green is supplemented by parking courts behind new buildings, accessed by an arcade aligned with the gazebo.

The Town Green, a festival site, is an active linkage between the formerly isolated historic downtown and the resort hotel. The formerly economically depressed area has enjoyed a surge of private investment following public space and infrastructure improvements.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7

1	2	3
4	5	6
7		

Design Matters/Details Matter

- 1 Wayfinding/signage common to both towns but with distinguishing symbols [Fleur-de-Lis and Sprudel icons]
- 2 Informational signage: the valley, the town
- 3 Rock face limestone Blocks
- 4 Interactive fountain play animating space
- 5 Whimsical gazebo referencing the mineral springs temples of the resorts
- 6 Play: the attraction of water
- 7 The essential landscape as a defining element of the public space continuum

End Note

A community is by definition a place composed of multiple places that contribute to the whole.

The quality of the public space continuum, its streets, its parks, and its streets as parks, that link those many spatial entities establishes the sense of the overall place, its defining quality, its economic well being and its attractiveness to an engaged population, employers and visitors.

This is our strategy for places and connections.