

◆ MRC LIVE/WORK SPACES ◆

Concept

Live/work spaces have been an important element of community and economic development for many years. These spaces, essentially single family dwellings in their basic nature, typically provide accommodations for individuals who can simultaneously live and conduct work activities in the same setting. In some cases, people live upstairs and work downstairs. In other situations, basic living quarters and work spaces might be separated by a corridor, a furniture configuration or simply walls. Such settings are ideal for start-up businesses, Internet-based enterprises or various types of arts studios. Live/work spaces rarely serve as retail outlets or businesses that disrupt the residential character of the neighborhoods within which they exist.

Live/work spaces developed originally as spaces for artists. Prominent among such artists were painters, photographers, artisans who worked with various types of paper and fabric, authors and musicians. More recently, live/work spaces emerged as ideal residential options for entrepreneurs. Indeed, information technology ventures are particularly suited for these spaces.

Process

At such time as selected properties are identified as appropriate for development as live/work spaces, and the conditions under which such spaces will be made available are determined, a partnership among the Neighborhood Investment Committee, Building Better Communities at Ball State University and the Innovation Connector will ensue. These three organizations will collaborate on a process toward getting the spaces occupied by individuals who are most likely to be successful. The process begins with the identification and selection of prospective residents. Such prospects must have a completed business plan in hand and commit to an ongoing relationship with the Innovation Connector. This relationship will involve business counseling, periodic training and professional development and evaluation.

The Neighborhood Investment Committee will oversee the physical property aspects of this program and the conditions under which this is occupied. Building Better Communities will be responsible for identifying appropriately qualified entrepreneurs and connecting them to the other organizations involved. The Innovation Connector will be involved in assisting prospective residents with business plan development and providing training and counseling along the way.

This program is expected to begin in September 2015.

For more information, please contact MRC Neighborhood Investment Committee, City Hall, Office of Community Development, 300 N. High Street, 3rd Floor, Muncie, Indiana 47305, Phone (765) 747-4825, Fax (765) 747-4898, Email zbishop@cityofmuncie.com, Website: www.cityofmuncie.com/mrcresidential