

Date: December 18, 2007

To: Erika Zynda, Contracts and Grants Coordinator  
Academic Affairs, Adm 246C

From: Micheline Nilsen, Assistant Professor of Art History  
Ernestine M. Raclin School of the Arts

Re: Curriculum Development Grant Report for "Exploring the City with GIS Documentation of Architectural Structures," on account #22-568-33.

1. Description of grant-supported activity.

The necessary GIS software was purchased and installed on my office computer. I worked my way through the tutorials provided with the software to refresh and enhance my GIS skills. Over summer and fall 2007, I made over 400 photographs of different types of South Bend vernacular structures. Some are listed in the 1993 City of South Bend Summary Report, Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory, others are simply representative types selected in various areas of the city. In addition, each of the 23 students enrolled in FINA-A190 this fall semester documented a structure with digital photographs, elevations and plans compiled in PowerPoint presentations. The files used for this project were submitted as part of the assignment. The collected data is stored on the thumb drives and CD's purchased with grant support.

2. Were you able to complete the project? Describe any difficulty you had.

I was unable to get access to a usable map to link the digital images as attributes. I searched countless sources of GIS maps and the only one I could find that would enable completion of the project was the GIS map provided on the City of South Bend web site:

<http://southbend.in.schneidercorp.com/gis/disclaimer.htm>. I contacted the city several times to request permission to use the map. I received a prompt response prior to the elections but it was obvious that the city official responding to my query considered the map as proprietary. My requests after the elections simply remained unanswered.

In my attempts to track a suitable interactive city map, I enlisted the help of the UITS GIS specialist and of a State employee with GIS applications expertise. None of the map sets they suggested were usable for this purpose. It is my intention to enroll in the next IU GIS training course to both further enhance my GIS skills and ask the instructor for assistance in locating a map similar to that compiled by the City (there may not be one). I also plan to try to continue attempting to gain access to the City map by enlisting the help of my local representative.

3. Did, or will, the project result in a specific product?

I remain convinced that the project is an exciting approach to develop an understanding of the vernacular fabric of the city in its various neighborhoods. I am scheduled to teach a 400-level course on Vernacular Architecture during Spring 2009 and plan to make this project a component of the course. By then, I hope to have enhanced my GIS skills and obtained access to a suitable map. If such a map is not available, I plan to become familiar enough with the programs to develop my own. I also continue

to photograph suitable structures, especially during the winter months when absence of vegetation provides better visual access.

In summary, although I was unable to add the layer of image attributes on a GIS map of the South Bend area as intended, I considerably enhanced my familiarity with the software and gathered all the components required for the project. The photographs I made were used in my FINA-A190 lectures during Fall 2007. I have laid out an agenda to continue working on this project in preparation for FINA-A407 in Spring 2009.