

'Ann Dancing' is Cultural Trail's first art installation

MASS AVE HAS LONG BEEN HOME to some of the city's most interesting public art. Thanks to the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, the Mass Ave "urban art gallery" got quite a bit richer on a recent, very cold January day.

Numerous Mass Ave stakeholders and Cultural Trail observers gathered in front of the Old Point tavern on Jan. 22 to see the first illumination of "Ann Dancing," a sculpture by British artist Julian Opie created specifically for the Cultural Trail installation.

The \$150,000 installation is part of a \$2 million program of public art which is part of the Cultural Trail budget. Several more installations, many by internationally known artists, will adorn the 7½-mile trail by the time it is completed in 2009.

"Ann Dancing" is a new version of "Sara Dancing," Opie's sculpture which stood at Maryland and Illinois street during the year-long exhibition of Julian Opie works throughout the Downtown. That exhibition, mounted by the Indianapolis Cultural Development Commission, brought another Opie work, "Sisters," to Mass Ave on a temporary basis. "Sisters" adorned the wall of the Survive Alive House at Mass Ave and St. Clair Street.

Patti Perrin, who co-owns the Old Point with her husband, Chic, said the couple was delighted when they learned the Cultural Trail would sweep right past the Old Point's door. "And now we're thrilled the plaza will be home to a permanent art installation easily in view for all of our customers and employees." ■



Cultural Trail: The next phase

Northeast and north corridors to take shape later this year

THE PAVERS ARE LAID, THE BENCHES PLACED and the lights are on. All that remains to be done to the first leg of the Indianapolis Cultural Trail is the landscaping and special intersection treatments to help motorists understand the pedestrian-friendly terrain they are passing through.

Those improvements await spring, while construction work on the next two legs of the 9½-mile trail won't begin until mid-summer.

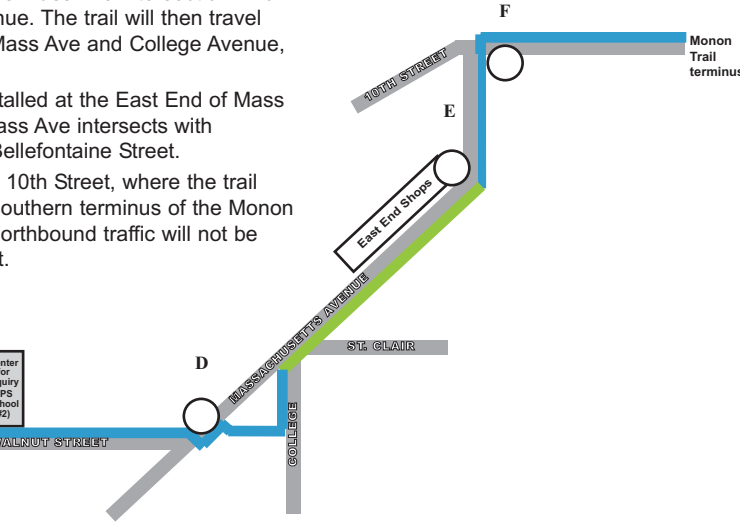
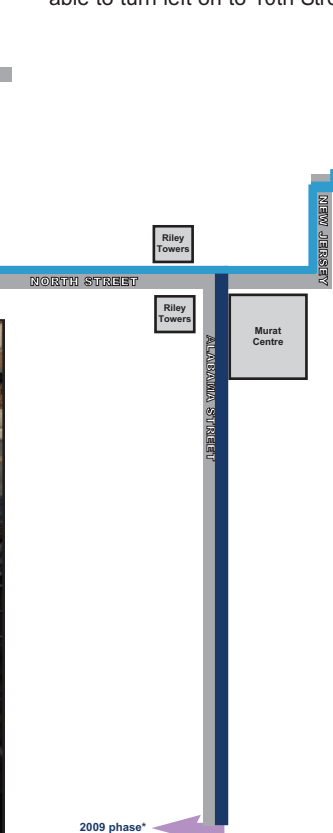
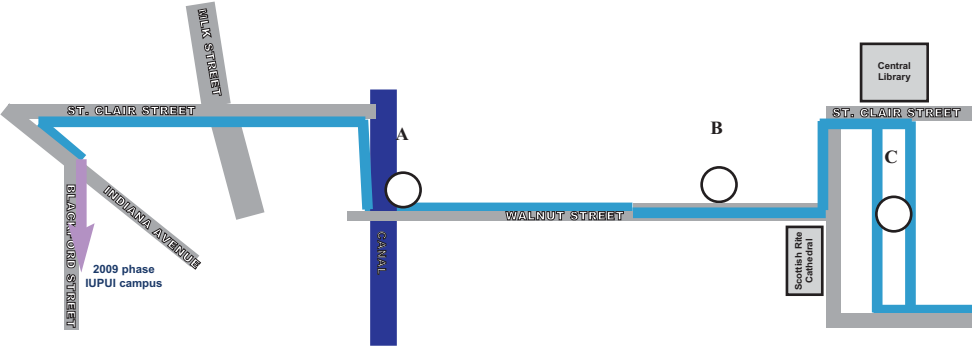
But that brief interlude won't keep Cultural Trail godfather Brian Payne from continuing the effort to finance the \$50.35 million project. Recent major grants have pushed the bank account up to \$40.35 million – and Payne understands that the half-mile leg which has come to life along Alabama Street will serve as a "model home" for other funders.

"We have 10 million dollars more to raise," Payne said, pointing out that some potential donors have stood back, to make sure the trail was actually going to be built. As the head of a funding organization himself, Payne understands that reasoning.

"Sometimes we're willing to be the first in, and sometimes we're

- A - Trail crosses the pedestrian bridge at the U.S.S. Indianapolis Memorial, then heads north over new terrain to St. Clair Street. (Walkways along the canal will also be designated as part of the Cultural Trail, although no new pavement will be laid.)
- B - Trail goes down center of the wider stretch of Walnut Street between two lanes of traffic, creating a boulevard. That two-block stretch will feature a special memorial to humanitarians.
- C - Trail goes through the American Legion Mall from North to St. Clair Street.

- D - A traffic light will be installed at the Mass Ave intersection involving Walnut Street and Park Avenue. The trail will then travel along an alley which connects Mass Ave and College Avenue, behind the Scholar's Inn.
- E - A three-way stop sign will be installed at the East End of Mass Ave (next to R Bistro), where Mass Ave intersects with Davidson Street and becomes Bellefontaine Street.
- F - A traffic signal will be installed at 10th Street, where the trail crosses and heads east to the southern terminus of the Monon Trail just east of Interstate 65. Northbound traffic will not be able to turn left on to 10th Street.



- Separate pedestrian / bicycle lanes
- One combined lane
- East Corridor / Substantially complete



Park benches ▲ are featured at several spots along the trail.

Signage indicates which parts of the trail are divided for pedestrians and bicyclists. ►



◀ Bicycle racks are also one of the amenities aimed at making the trail user-friendly.



Pedestrians can activate the audible signals by hitting the push buttons at Cultural Trail intersections. ►

2009 phase*
*South leg may travel either Market or Washington street, depending on pending traffic studies.
Southeast Corridor to Fountain Square / 2009 (via Pennsylvania Street to Virginia Avenue)

not,” said Payne, president of the Central Indiana Community Foundation. “There have been a lot of funders who were not convinced this could be pulled off. Now, they’re becoming convinced,” he said, noting that he has recently been invited to submit proposals to some other major funds.

He knows that the proof is in the pavement. “When people walk on the trail and feel it and experience it – it’s real and they like it, and people are buzzing about it. And it’s worth making happen.”

Payne, the original booster of the trail, stood proudly at the corner of Alabama Street and Massachusetts Avenue in December for the formal illumination of the vertical-tube lights which make the Cultural Trail a 24-hour amenity.

At the ceremony, he told a shivering crowd about two recent additional grants – \$1 million from Myrta Pulliam and \$500,000 from the Indianapolis Foundation, matching an earlier grant from that organization.

Meanwhile, the Cultural Trail team continues to plan on phases two and three:

- the Northeast Corridor, from the corner of Alabama and North streets through Chatham Arch and Mass Ave to the southern terminus of the Monon Trail on 10th Street.

- the North Corridor, across North Street through the American Legion Mall to Walnut Street, then St. Clair Street to Indiana Avenue.

Kevin Osburn, project designer with Rundell Ernstberger Associates, said construction documents on those two legs are nearing completion. After the required review by state officials, bidding is expected to take place in April or May. Construction work on the 1½-mile Northeast Corridor should begin in June, with work on the 2-mile North Corridor starting about a month later. Neither leg will be completely finished in 2008.

Before that, however, the finishing touches will be done to the East Corridor. Ornamental trees will be added between most of the trail lights. Landscaping will be added to areas which already have the infrastructure required to handle daily watering. Those areas feature recessed stormwater planters which act as “raingardens,” taking rainwater from the street, filtering out pollutants and using that water to service the landscaping. As a byproduct, that process lightens the load on the city’s storm sewers.

The intersection crosswalks will be marked with a thermoplastic material typically used for pavement markings on asphalt streets. These markings, however, feature cus-



Illustration courtesy of Rundell Ernstberger Associates

- LEGEND:**
- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 – Slateface concrete paver. | 8 – Medallion |
| 2 – Asphalt paver. | 9 – Plant bed. |
| 3 – Cast-in-place concrete | 10 – Pedestrian/bicycle signal |
| 4 – Pressed concrete paver. | 11 – Stop sign. |
| 5 – ADA domed paver. | 12 – Thermoplastic. |
| 6 – Duratherm. | 13 – Plant bed rail. |
| 7 – Bollard. | 14 – Pedestrian pathway lights. |

▲ This spring, the crosswalks along the Alabama Street corridor will be clearly marked to aid both pedestrians and motorists. A thermoplastic material featuring custom patterns and custom colors will be applied through an embossing process so that the thermoplastic is laid into depressions in the asphalt, rather than on the surface, helping durability.

tom colors and are embossed so the thermoplastic can be laid into depressions in the asphalt, rather than on the surface of the asphalt, ensuring longer durability.

The important factor, Osburn emphasized, is pedestrian safety. “The trail has to be safe,” he said at one of the monthly Brown Bag Luncheons the trail organizers are conducting to spread the word to neighbors. Motorists need to be very aware they are approaching a pedestrian trail, he said. “You will see a lot of things at the trail intersections you don’t see at other intersections,” he said.

Those amenities include buttons pedestrians and bicyclists can push to speed up the signal change, plus audible signals for the visually impaired. All corners at Cultural Trail intersections are being “bumped out” to shorten the

pedestrian crossing.

At several Brown Bag Luncheons, organizers have been asked if the trail will bring any other amenities such as additional park space. The response has been twofold: First, that the trail itself is a linear park. Second, the trail organizers have decided to put all of the funding into the trail itself (including a \$5 million endowment for future maintenance), leaving it to adjoining property owners and stakeholders to provide the embellishment.

“Hopefully, the trail will inspire,” said trail consultant Gail Sifferlin. “We are calling it a canvas,” waiting on others to create more greenspace.

Payne and his team take pride in knowing they are creating an urban amenity unique throughout the world, one which



has attracted attention before the first paver was laid.

“We’re building something here that does not exist anywhere else in the world,” Payne said. “We think it is going to become an icon for Indianapolis, internationally, as well as nationally. It will transform how people react to our great city and our great Downtown.”

TRAIL NOTES

❑ Individual parking meters have not returned to the Alabama Street curbs of the Cultural Trail. Instead, those blocks are now posted for two-hour parking. Department of Public Works officials said they wish to install the multi-space meters which were tested at several city sites last year. Such meters, although money-saving in the long run, cost more to install, and DPW officials decided to wait until the mayoral transition was complete to allow the new administration the change to review the plans.

❑ The trail’s route down a historic alley in Chatham Arch has been approved by state historic preservation officials. The Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission earlier approved the plans, after they were revised to include part of the existing historic brick as part of the design. The alley runs between Mass and College avenues, behind the Scholar’s Inn.

- Bill Brooks ■

▲ Much of the East Corridor along Alabama Street features separate paths for pedestrians and bicyclists.