



Cultural Trail work: Full speed ahead on the Avenue

THE ARRIVAL OF THE INDIANAPOLIS Cultural Trail has been greeted with joy on the East End of Mass Ave, where a small group of shopkeepers have long clamored for recognition that “Mass Ave doesn’t end at College Avenue.

□ The new public art: Images on pages 3-4.

The trail will help correct that misconception – but not before creating a hurdle of its own. With construction on the way, the 800 block of Mass Ave will be closed to outbound traffic starting perhaps before May 1. Motorists will be able to drive southbound

(toward Downtown), and parking will remain on the west side of the street. Elizabeth Garber, one of those East End shopkeepers, the owner of The Best Chocolate in Town, discounted the short-term pain the construction will cause. Speaking at the April 14 kick-off event to celebrate work on the Northeast Corridor of the Cultural Trail, Garber said, “We see it as an economic boom for our area, which is already vibrant with independent businesses.

“It’s an exciting time for our community,” she added. “We get a front-row seat watching the trail being constructed.”

Work on the Northeast Corridor began about a month ago, as construction crews ripped out the sidewalk in the 300 block of North Street, where the Northeast Corridor will link up with the already completed East Corridor. That work proceeded eastward, turning up New Jersey Street to Walnut Street, and then east toward Mass Ave.

The April 14 event was conducted on a chilly day along the alley which runs behind Chatham Tap and Scholar’s Inn – part of the route of the Cultural Trail. The ceremony included the official unveiling of the three public art projects which will be located along the Northeast Corridor, part of the \$2 million effort to feature art along the trail.

Those installations (first reported in the April issue of Urban Times, but without illustrations which had yet to be approved)



● Historic markers
★ Public art installations
▬ are:
▬ Divided trail
▬ Combined trail

□ “Prairie Modules 4 & 5” by M12, to be located in the 300 block of North Street as the trail passes by the English Foundation Building.

□ “Chatham Passage” by Sean Derry, to be located in the alley in which the kickoff event was staged.

□ “Care/Don’t Care” by Jamie Pawlus, to be located near the Art Bank in the 800 block of Mass Ave.

“After years of reviewing artists’ visions for art along the Cultural Trail, I’m thrilled to unveil these commissioned public art projects,” said Mindy Taylor Ross, public art director for the

Arts Council of Indianapolis. "While all very different, they will capture the attention and imaginations of trail users and challenge them to reflect on our city's history, heritage and attitudes."

Brian Payne, president of the Central Indiana Community Foundation, announced two more major donors for the project, now priced at \$55 million – \$250,000 from the Christel DeHaan Family Foundation and \$100,000 from the Indiana Pacers. Those donations put the fund-raising effort at \$42 million.

Payne also announced that much of the Southeast Corridor will be designated as the "Efroymson Family Corridor" because of that family's strong support of the trail. The Efroymson Fund has given \$2 million to the project. Additionally, the section of the trail which runs behind Chatham Tap and Scholar's Inn will be named "The Efroymson Alley on the Cultural Trail."

Payne, founder of the Cultural Trail, said the project fits well with the city's new emphasis on sustainability and environmentally friendly projects.

"Whenever we get this all connected up," Payne said, "we're going to say, 'wow, this was a great thing to do.'"

Mayor Greg Ballard, whose first half-year in office has shown him to be a strong advocate of sustainability efforts, was on hand to agree. "This is mainstream," he said, referring to the trail and its promotion of walking and bicycling. "This is what we need to do." He added that the trail "will transform the landscape of the city."

When it is completed, the Northeast Corridor of the Cultural Trail will affect daily life along Mass Ave in several ways, including installation of two traffic signals – one at Walnut Street and Park Avenue, where the trail will cross Mass Ave, and the other at the end of "the Avenue," where Bellefontaine Street intersects with East 10th Street. Additionally, left-turns on to 10th Street will be prohibited.

Another traffic change will come at the curve on the East End, where Mass Ave becomes Bellefontaine Street and where a three-way stop sign will be added. ■

Fountain Square leg: Wait until next year

WORK ON THE SOUTHEAST Corridor – down Virginia Avenue from Downtown to Fountain Square – is now on a schedule to begin next year. That marks a change from a recent plan to begin work in 2009, but still well ahead of the original plan which had that segment much further down the timeline.

Last year, Cultural Trail planners decided to move the Southeast Corridor ahead on the schedule, after leaders at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis asked that the West Corridor be delayed so that university officials could better incorporate it into the school's new master plan.

Speaking to a public meeting in Fountain Square on April 15, Cultural Trail officials said they had decided that delaying the bid-letting until February would have very little impact on the construction schedule.

They also announced that the project would be done in segments, so that the entire length of Virginia Avenue would not have driving and parking restrictions at the same time.

The Southeast Corridor will run from the southern end of the East Corridor (now at Alabama and Market streets), down Virginia Avenue, ending at the Woodlawn Avenue intersection in Fountain Square (a block short of the fountain).

The 2009 construction season will also see the beginning of work on the North Corridor, which runs west from the Alabama-North street intersection to Indiana Avenue, traveling along North, Walnut and St. Clair streets, through part of the American Legion Mall and along a short stretch of the Downtown Canal. ■

FROM APRIL 2009 ISSUE

□ Historic markers

SIX HISTORIC MARKERS, COMPLETE WITH photos or illustrations, will be placed along the Indianapolis Cultural Trail as it winds its way through the Chatham Arch and Massachusetts Avenue Historic Preservation District.

Speaking at the March meeting of the Mass Ave Merchants Association, trail spokesperson Gail Payne said the four signs were being installed as a concession to the Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission.

Four of the historic markers will be located at Mass Ave's intersection with Park Avenue and Walnut Street. Their subject matters will be:

- "Morris Memorial Fountain," remembering the fountain which supplied water to pedestrians on two sides and horses on the other two.
- "Transportation Corridor," commemorating Mass Ave's

heritage as a commercial corridor, including days of streetcars, first drawn by mules and later powered by electricity.

□ "Architectural Heritage," celebrating the existing historic structures including some buildings built in the late 1880s and as early as 1865.

□ "The Chatham Block," marking the irregularly shaped 1875 commercial building at the corner of Walnut Street and Park Avenue. The three-story building with a distinctive arcade façade was once home to a harness and saddle maker, as well as a confectioner, a druggist, a cigar manufacturer and a bicycle shop.

Two of the six signs are identical, dealing with the "Mass Ave Commercial District." They will be located at the two points where trail enters the historic district, at East and Walnut streets (next to the Nestle Inn), and at Mass Ave and Davidson Street at the curve in the 900 block (near Indianapolis Stage Sales). ■

Enhancing the Trail

FOLLOWING ARE DESCRIPTIONS OF the three pieces of public art to be installed on the Northeast Corridor of the Indianapolis Cultural Trail, as provided by the Arts Council of Indianapolis:

❑ **“Prairie Modules 4 & 5”** consists of two architectural sculptures, tall grass, solar panels, black reflective pavers and dynamic LED lighting. This combination of references to our agricultural and urban environment is designed to

invite spatial interaction and experiential awareness. Through a partnership with Indianapolis Power & Light, “Prairie Modules 4 & 5” will be the first public art installation in Indianapolis to return solar power to the electrical grid. The project will be located on the north side of North Street between New Jersey and Alabama streets.

❑ The **“Care/Don’t Care”** project resembles a pedestrian signal and functions like the typical “Walk/Don’t Walk” signals. In an increasingly



◀ “Care /Don’t Care” is created by Jamie Pawlus, a graduate of the Herron School of Art and currently a visiting assistant professor at IUPUI.

“Prairie Modules 4 & 5” is the work of M12, a collective of artists and designers who view contemporary art as a vehicle for exploring community identity and as a powerful tool for the enhancement of civic life. Indianapolis native Stuart Hyatt is a lead artist on the project seen in this “fish-eye” illustration.





◀ “Chatham Passage” is the work of former Hoosier Sean Derry, now residing in Pittsburgh. It will be placed in the alley behind Chatham Tap and Scholar’s Inn.

fast-paced world, this project quietly invites users to pause and find joy in a moment of comic relief. The message “Don’t Care” will be programmed to change to “Care” automatically and at random intervals; it can also be changed manually if trail users push the button. The “Care/Don’t Care” signal will be placed for use by those continuing along the trail, as opposed to a tradition pedestrian crossing sign that is located near intersections. It will be located on the east end of Massachusetts Avenue, just north of the intersection of St. Clair Street and College Avenue.

□ “Chatham Passage” is a multi-sensory artwork composed of a sunken concrete scent vault with an ornate steel grate and LED lighting. To be located in the alley adjacent to Metro Bar, the scent vault will release a faint floral aroma recalling a scent historically associated with luxury. Both the luxurious scent and the ornate latticework of the vault cover reference the work of the former Real Silk Hosiery Mill. The vault form also references the historic coal vaults in the area. The ethereal qualities of the vault, grate, light and scent are intended to create an emotional environment that allows trail users to form unique relationships with the Indianapolis cityscape of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

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