

The Northside Voice

Fall 2016 : Issue No. 5

A Look at Northside's Artlet Project

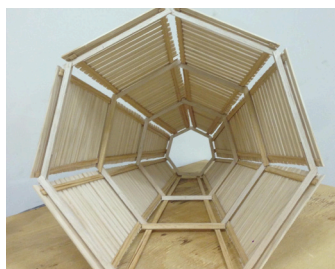
Artist Eli Blasko's vision and inspiration, *By: Bre Lillie*

Artist Eli Blasko was commissioned to create four Artlets, gazebo-like structures that can be used for creative gatherings such as concerts, poetry readings and exhibitions, for the Northside neighborhood. Blasko was able to briefly participate in the planning process before leaving to complete a six-month residency in Texas. When he later heard that the Northside was seeking a skilled artist and woodworker to create the pieces for the project, he jumped at the opportunity to return to Spartanburg and be a part of the neighborhood's revitalization.

Arts Partnership through the Chapman Cultural Center, which is the lead arts agency for this project and holds the grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, is a community partner and stakeholder. Other partners include YouthBuild, Spartanburg Community College, The Northside Development Group, Wofford College, the Northside Voyagers, the South Carolina Historic Review Commission, Milliken Foundation, Art-Force and Art Works, as well as a generous, anonymous donor who funded the creation of the art studio where work on the Artlets continues to take place. The inspiration for the Artlets as a whole began with the concept of the front porch and its importance as a meeting place where localized culture is created, a place where music is played and a place where friends and family spend invaluable time together. It is also a private space where one can read, write, reflect or spend some time away from the world.

'Home' is the concept of the first Artlet that's based largely upon the National style architecture that is historically common among Northside residences. This historic style is slowly being demolished and replaced. One beautiful thing about using this style of architecture as a starting point for the project is that, insofar as its design is simple, it allows for decorative elements to easily be added. 'Nest' is the theme of the second Artlet. The construction parallels that of the Carolina Wren, taking bits and pieces of the materials in its immediate environment to create a comfortable sanctuary. The Nest Artlet will be built from wood that will be repurposed from Northside homes as they are demolished as well as natural materials sourced from the area. Blasko hopes this will further preserve the history of Northside by utilizing the material memory of the properties. The third Artlet will be located across the street from Harvest Park and will function as a place to host performances while also providing shade and shelter for community members. The shape of this Artlet will be heptagonal, and is designed to work as a natural amplifier for any kind of performance going on in the space. This shape also references the seven railroads that made Spartanburg into Hub City.

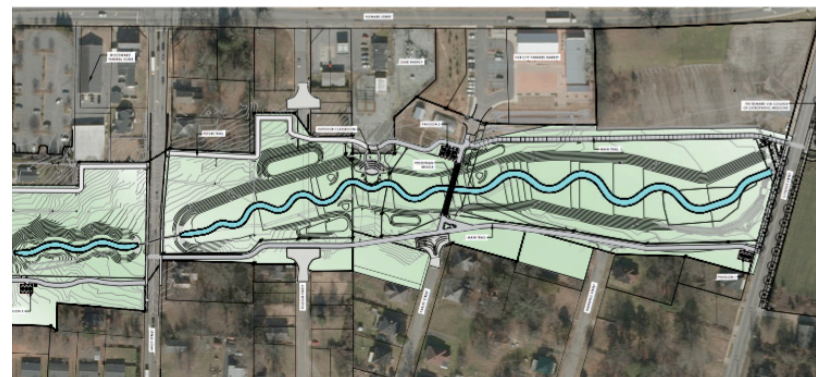
The design of the fourth Artlet is still underway. Blasko's favorite part of working on the project so far has been hearing the stories of the Northside from residents and learning about how the culture of the area developed. He says, "I hope residents of the community will gain a sense of pride and ownership about where they live and where they come from through the creation of these Artlets... that they will feel like they've helped make this project through sharing stories and giving feedback."



Photos provided Courtesy of Art-Force.

Butterfly Creek Update

The city has begun the condemnation process of the land and surrounding area included in the Butterfly Creek update project. The city will begin the engineering process in November 2016.



Seeing Spartanburg In A New Light

On October 4, 2016, residents across Spartanburg rejoiced during the celebration of the City's Annual National Night Out event. This year's celebration was unique in that Spartanburg was also celebrating the beginning of City-wide initiative entitled "Seeing Spartanburg in a New Light". The City of Spartanburg was awarded a grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies, an organization that awards four \$1 million grants to cities addressing critical issues through public art projects. Spartanburg will focus their efforts on the City's dedication to crime prevention and the safety of its residents. Art installations are located in 10 neighborhoods across the City, all of which debuted during the National Night Out celebration.

The lead artist for the Seeing Spartanburg in a New Light project, Erwin Redl, is working with the Chapman Cultural Center to install the art and inform local residents of the movement. So far, the project has been a catalyst for sparking conversation amongst Spartanburg neighborhoods and communities. For more information, please visit the project's website, <http://seeingspartanburg.com>.

Brawley Street Phase 2

Many residents may have noticed several new housing units close to completion on Brawley Street. Homes of Hope developed 8 new rental units, to be complete by November 1st. These new mixed income rental units will serve families earning 50%-120% of the area median income. They expect to offer rents from \$575-\$895 for the 3 bedroom 2 bathroom units. NDG is also working with Homes of Hope to plan for a third Phase to begin early 2017. Although NDG is spearheading the project, Homes of Hope will be managing the properties.



Neighborhood Initiative Program Update

The NDG has continued to partner with the City of Spartanburg which has received funding as part of the South Carolina State Housing Finance and Development Authority's Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP). As mentioned the last few issues of Northside Voice, the aim of this program is to help stabilize communities through the elimination of slum and blighted properties, most of which have been condemned for some time and have been hotspots for crime. The hope is that, with the removal of these properties, crime will decrease, and the neighborhood will be more stable. NDG is responsible for the purchasing, asbestos abatement, and demolition of each home. Each home is tested, and cleared of hazardous materials prior to demolition. Currently, a total of 20 homes have been demolished.



Start Me: Micro Business Opportunity

The Northside Development Group will be piloting an entrepreneurship accelerator program in the spring of 2017. It is based on a model active in two similar communities in Atlanta. Entrepreneurship accelerator programs work with aspiring small-business owners in their early stage of development to grow their business and business plan.

Since Start:ME, the Atlanta model, began in 2013 it has helped more than 80 individuals kick-start their businesses. It develops the small business environment in its communities, by identifying promising local entrepreneurs, providing them with 14 weeks of business training, connecting them with a robust business network, and financing those with most promising businesses.

The George Dean Johnson Jr. College of Business and Economics at USC Upstate is a key partner in this effort providing support for the 14 week training session and pairing mentors with business owners. Interested individuals are invited to attend one of the two Info sessions in October or the Intro to Entrepreneurship workshop in November (details below) or to request more information online at www.spartanburgNDG.com

Info Session Details:

- [Intro to Entrepreneurship Workshop Details: November 7th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th 6-8PM. Location Cleveland Academy of Leadership 151 Franklin Street in the Library.](#)

Apprentices Needed for Northside Artlet Construction

Through a partnership with Spartanburg Community College artist Eli Blasko has completed a National Center for Construction Education Research (NCCER) certification, and will be teaching six fully sponsored apprentices who will gain job skills while helping to construct artlets in the Northside neighborhood. Apprentices will complete a total of 80 hours of work and will receive training from mid November 2016 to mid March 2017. The skills that will be taught are basic jobsite safety, introduction to construction math, power tools, construction drawing, materials handling, basic communication skills, and basic employability skills. Scheduling is flexible and there are still open spots!

This opportunity is unique because it provides certified job skills training through the creation of art that will be a part of the Northside neighborhood for years to come. Apprentices will have the opportunity to reflect on what they learned and their impressions from the experience of working on the artlet project.

Anyone who is interested in applying can contact: Janet at 919-599-7000 or Eli at 724-303-4920. Or can stop by the Fremont School Apartments Annex at 600 Magnolia Street - Monday through Friday between 9 AM and 12 PM.

Cleveland Heights Homeowner Repair Program Updates

Last year, The Northside Development Group initiated an owner occupied rehabilitation program to support emergency and minor repairs needed by existing homeowners in the Cleveland Heights area.

The Northside's Cleveland Heights Neighborhood Improvement Program (CNIP) provides opportunities for home repairs for homeowners. The program started on Howard and Leonard streets and has moved over to include Fulton, North Vernon Fremont and the

eastern side of Aden street.

Northside Voyagers serve as CNIP Field Coordinators helping to connect with residents wishing to begin the application process and as a central point of contact to access information about the program.

As of October 2016 seventeen homes have been approved for repairs.

Community Partners Spotlight

Northside Partnership with Spartanburg Regional

The Northside Development Group is still encouraging Northside residents to seek job opportunities at Spartanburg Regional Medical Center. If you are interested in applying, please contact Kesa Whitner via phone or email, and she will notify the HR and Hiring Manager at Spartanburg Regional.

Available job descriptions can be found online on Spartanburg Regional's website: <https://www.spartanburgregional.com/careers-opportunities/>.

Spartanburg Community College Northside Scholarship

\$25,000/year for 5 years scholarships

If you are a high school student, recent high school graduate or adult currently living in the Northside Community, you can now attend college or train for a career tuition-free at Spartanburg Community College (SCC)!

Through this partnership, six Northside residents have begun classes at SCC. The scholarship program is still accepting applications for the upcoming academic semester. For more information, please contact Northside Development Group Case Manager, Kesa Whitner to set up an appointment.

Butterfly Foundation

Don't forget that the Monarch Café's food store accepts SNAP benefits! Anyone that receives SNAP can spend their benefits locally on fresh, healthy foods! So stop by the Monarch Café today to see their wonderful programs, have a snack in the café, and take home some fresh produce for dinner!

Be sure to stay up-to-date on events sponsored by The Butterfly Foundation. Check their website for more information on upcoming events: <http://www.butterfly-sc.com/events.html>.

Green Street Baptist Finds Salvation as Future Outreach Center

This is an excerpt adapted from an article written by Alyssa Mulliger and originally published in the Spartanburg Herald Journal on May 20, 2016.

New life awaits the historic Green Street Baptist Church, which was recently dissolved due to declining membership. First Baptist of Spartanburg has absorbed the church and plans to reuse the building for an outreach center.

Green Street Baptist held its last service April 24, just shy of its 125th birthday May 3. Now, plans are being developed for the next chapter

HUB City Farmers Market

The Hub City Farmer's Market is looking for volunteers to assist with the maintenance of their Urban Farm. The Urban Farm exists to connect Northside residents to fresh and locally grown produce products. The Farm's mission is to educate people to the potential of small-scale, sustainable farming, while growing produce for the Mobile Market and select retail and restaurant outlets. Anyone interested in volunteering can contact Meg Whitley via email at mwhiteley@hubcityfm.org.

in the storied church's life. Several of Green Street Baptist's members said they believe turning the church into a community center will be a big, and necessary, asset to the Northside.

Ideas for the outreach center include a food pantry, clothing closet, job training services and after-school programs. "This is going to be the salvation of our church," said Bobby Martin, a former Green Street Baptist deacon, "We didn't just want to leave the building and let it deteriorate. We knew if we could partner with First Baptist, it would be good to use it for different things that can benefit the whole community..."

"We want a place in the Northside where we can come in as a faith-based organization and be a part of the transformation happening there," First Baptist of Spartanburg Missions Minister Steve Wise said. "We're thinking this is wonderful. We can begin to make some real positive change for people."

V From The Voyagers

Voyager Spotlight: Debby Moore

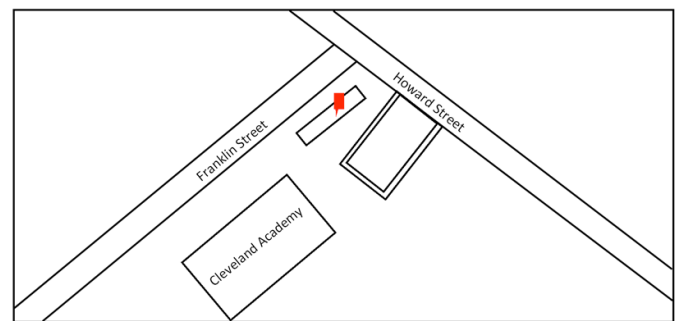
Northside Voyager Debby Moore has plenty of experience helping members of her community share their stories. Through her role as a production assistant for the Northside Voyagers, her goal is to coordinate dates, time, and schedules to pull together residents of the Northside neighborhood to discuss what it was like to grow-up in the community. She partners with White Elephant Enterprises as an intern, a job that she finds very rewarding. According to their website, White Elephant is a recording group featuring "bold and compelling stories brought to life." Debby participates in sessions with White Elephant to interview residents of the Northside and gather information regarding the community's history. The Northside Voyagers and those involved in the history have found it fascinating to learn new things that occurred before they came to the Northside. Looking forward, Debby would like to get young people at Cleveland, Carver, Spartanburg High, to understand the pride that existed and the blessing that came out of being a part of such a close-knit community.



C Changes at NDG

New Office

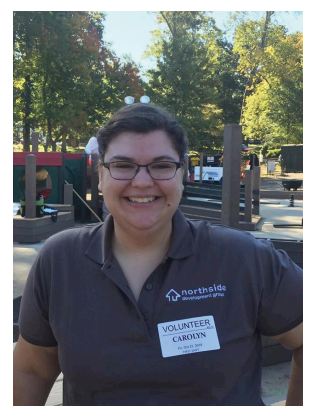
As of September 1, 2016 the Northside Development Group moved to a new location. The NDG will now be located in the District 7 Special Services building in front of Cleveland Academy of Leadership. The new location is on the corner of Franklin and Howard streets. Signs will be posted to help you find us, and you can always call our office at 864.598.0097 or visit our website at www.spartanburgndg.com if you need assistance. A special thanks to VCOM for providing our previous office space for 3 years, and to District 7 for allowing us our new space.



Welcome to Carolyn

We are excited to welcome Carolyn Smith to the Northside Development Group staff as a Project Coordinator. Carolyn served as an AmeriCorps VISTA Volunteer with the Spartanburg Housing Authority and the Northside Development Group through the United Way of the Piedmont. During her time as a VISTA Volunteer, Carolyn helped develop and kick start the Cleveland Heights Neighborhood Improvement Program (CNIP), which currently provides repairs to homeowners in the Cleveland Heights Neighborhood. Carolyn has been an invaluable member of the NDG Team since she began her work with the VISTA program.

Carolyn's new position with the NDG, effective August 2016, will allow her to continue to focus on the CNIP and coordinate with contractors, volunteers, and community partners on Owner Occupied or NDG owned rental properties, in addition to other ongoing projects planned for the Northside revitalization process. Carolyn is "excited to start [her] career with such a great non-profit with such a holistic view of helping this community, and [to] have the opportunity to learn many new skills along the way."



C In The Community

Oakview

In our last issue we discussed the City of Spartanburg taking possession of the Oakview property. As part of the Northside Redevelopment Plan, the Oakview Apartments have been identified as the future site for the Dr. TK Gregg Community Center. The City is now managing the property through the Vista Capital Management Group, and will continue to operate Oakview Apartments as a multifamily site through the end of the year.

In December 2015 the Northside Voyagers and NDG team members spent several days at Oakview Apartments, hosting informational meetings and working with residents to define what support they will need to move forward. Residents are working with Kesa, NDG's Case Manager, and the case management staff at the Spartanburg Housing Authority to identify a new housing option using their Housing Choice Voucher, as well as developing a successful family plan that meets their short and long-term goals.

Oakview is not taking any new residents, and it is still important that current residents of Oakview Apartments maintain good standing and meet all lease requirements, including the payment of rent and utilities. Several buildings have already been vacated and approved by the City for demolition, which will begin later this fall.

AFL Global and Advent Service Day

AFL Global recruited several hardworking volunteers in early September and again in October to begin construction and clean-up as part of the Cleveland Heights Neighborhood Improvement Program. On September 11, 2016, The Church of the Advent also helped homeowners with minor repairs and painting as part of their annual Day of Service.



P Our Partners



Hope Ministries

H.O.P.E. Ministries of the Upstate is a nonprofit ministry that works with disenfranchised individuals to guide them through discipleship training, recovery from life's hurts, habits and hang-ups and re-integrating into the community as a productive Christian citizens. The organization is partnering with the Spartanburg Housing Authority to offer low cost or no cost transitional housing for men in the Spartanburg community. The City of Spartanburg is providing funding for this new program directed at alleviating homelessness and drug-addiction within our community. When asked about the inspiration for this new partnership, Shawn Parker, the President of H.O.P.E. Ministries, states that "God has been so gracious we are actually ahead of schedule and things are going will. It looks like if we stay on the pace that we are on we should be moving [program participants] in by December." The NDG is looking forward to the positive impact H.O.P.E. Ministries will continue to have in The Northside Community.

Upcoming Events

Monarch Café - Open Daily at 498 Howard Street

Northside Advisory Committee Meeting - January 18, 2017 at 8:30am

Cleveland Park Northside Neighborhood Association Meeting - Every second Thursday at 6pm at the Cleveland Academy of Leadership.



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