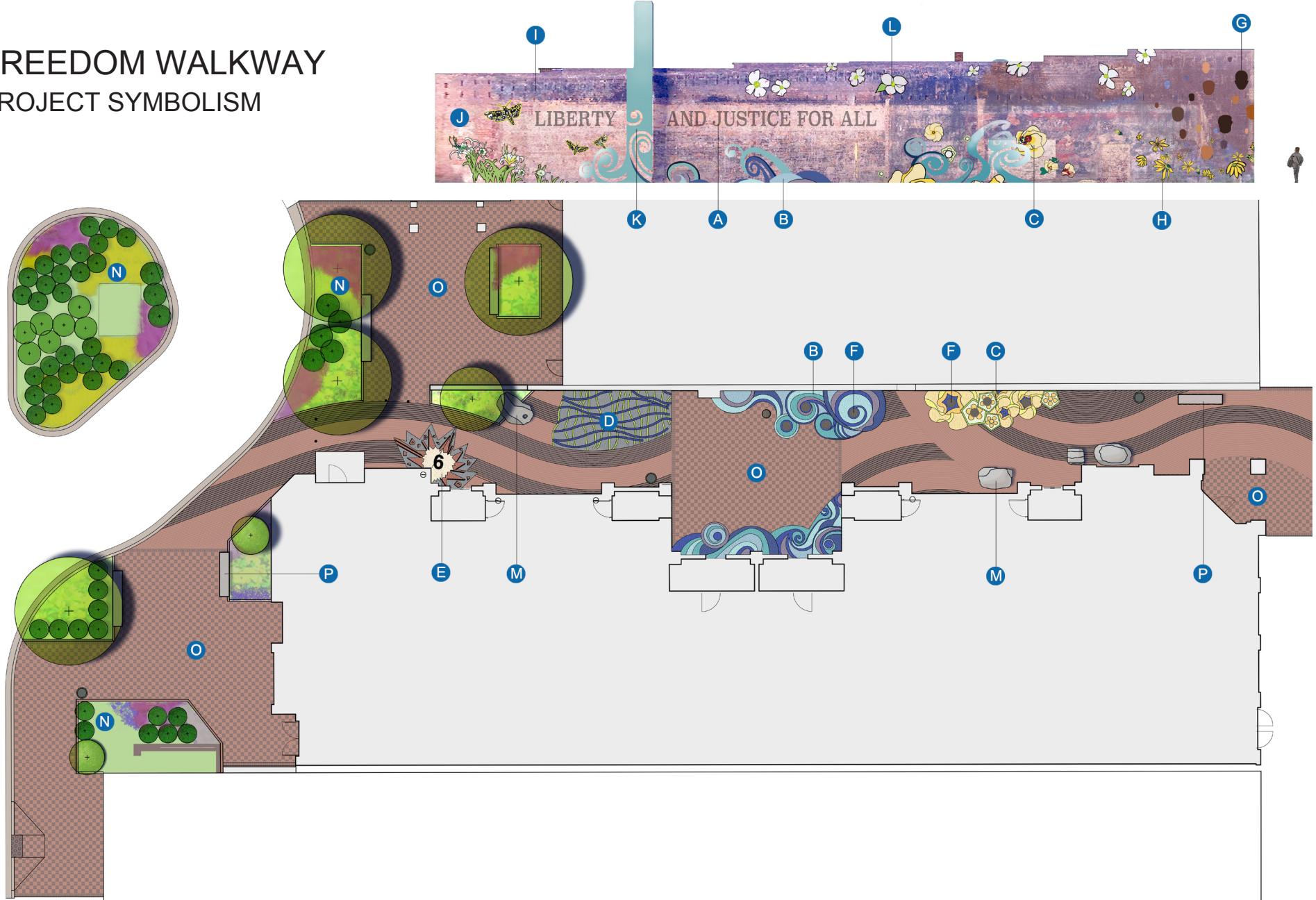


# FREEDOM WALKWAY

## PROJECT SYMBOLISM



### LEGEND

- |                                      |                                |   |                      |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| <b>A</b> LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL | <b>E</b> FRIENDSHIP 9 MOSAIC   | <b>I</b> BRICK WALL                     | <b>M</b> OBSTACLES   |
| <b>B</b> TURBULENCE                  | <b>F</b> 9 STOOLS              | <b>J</b> SPIDER LILIES AND SPHINX MOTHS | <b>N</b> PLANTS      |
| <b>C</b> OKRA                        | <b>G</b> HEADS OF HUMANITY     | <b>K</b> THE BEACON                     | <b>O</b> BASKETWEAVE |
| <b>D</b> TEXTILE MOSAIC              | <b>H</b> SCHWEINITZ SUNFLOWERS | <b>L</b> DOGWOODS FLOWERS               | <b>P</b> SEATWALLS   |

# FREEDOM WALKWAY

## PROJECT SYMBOLISM

### DESIGN CONCEPT

The design was inspired by the reopening of the court docket book in 2015 to vacate the trespassing convictions of the Friendship 9, the nine African-Americans who were jailed by integrating a whites-only lunch counter at the McCrory's Five and Dime on Main Street in January 31, 1961. The sit-in was important in the civil rights movement as time was served in jail rather than to pay the fines of an unjust system, which was replicated throughout the south. While the impetus of this project was to honor the Friendship 9, the space is seen as a space that lives on to promote social justice. Curving brick patterns flow through the walkway, leading one through a dynamic journey rich with symbolism. Ideas of hope, freedom, change, turbulence, obstacles, and friendship are integrated within the walkway. Plants significant to Rock Hill are exuberantly painted and planted within the walkway with hopes of inspiring all who that visit.

#### A LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

During the early 1960's, protesters of discrimination against African-Americans marched along Main Street. The civil rights slogan, LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL, written on one of the protester's signs, has been emblazoned high up on the brick wall.

#### B TURBULENCE

Swirling blue spirals reflect the turbulent times of the civil rights era. Turbulence is represented in two churning mosaics within the field of bricks in the middle of the walkway. Turbulence climbs up the brick wall near the chimney with blue painted swirls.

#### C OKRA

Native to Africa, okra is a historically important plant to African-American people. Cream colored flowers and pentagonal cross sections of the fruit are depicted in the OKRA mosaic and painted on the brick wall.

#### D TEXTILE MOSAIC

Inspired by a visit to the fabric library at Springs Creative, the TEXTILE mosaic is an homage to the textile history of the city. Blue and green threads weave together and speak to the tight knit nature of the Rock Hill community.

#### E FRIENDSHIP 9 MOSAIC

The design team conducted civil rights workshops with Rock Hill students in the spring of 2015. The Friendship 9 mosaic, placed at a corner of the 139 Main Building within the walkway, was inspired by an art project from a 5th grade team from Ebinport Elementary. The notion of freedom is expressed by the exploding bricks in this dynamic design.

#### F 9 STOOLS

Nine cylinders of grey granite are embeded within the TURBULENCE and OKRA mosaics along the brick wall of the walkway. They symbolize the stools that the Friendship 9 sat in during the McCrory Building sit-in of 1961.

#### G HEADS OF HUMANITY

Heads of humanity, depicted as painted human heads at the Main Street entrance wall, symbolizes the diverse coalition of people striving for positive change during the civil rights movement to the present day. This area recognizes the contributions of the men and women on the ground and behind the scenes who are often unrecognized in history.

#### H SCHWEINITZ SUNFLOWERS

The Carolina Piedmont region once contained large expanses of prairie, dotted with trees and shrubs within fields of grasses and wildflowers. The Schweinitz

ARTISTS: Laurel Holtzapple and Juan Logan

sunflower is a remnant of this historic landscape type. The plant is now designated as federally endangered. This drought tolerant plant grows between 6'-14' in height and flowers yellow in October. It grows in shallow clay soils along road sides and in a few remaining prairies. This pioneer plant has persevered through adversity and parallels the struggles of those fighting for social justice. Schweinitz sunflowers on the wall near the Main Street entrance welcome visitors into the walkway.

## I BRICK WALL

The first Woolworth's store in Rock Hill opened in 1916 and was once one of downtown's main shopping destinations. A fire destroyed the original building in 1934 and was rebuilt in 1935. This building was demolished in 2014 due to significant roof damage and to make way for a new building and walkway. Remnants of painted advertisements along the east brick wall were revealed once the building came down. A dry goods sign along Main Street, a Coca-Cola sign, and the words RELIEVES FATIGUE are visible. In addition to the advertisements, the wall contains a chimney, bricked in window, building buttons, beam imprints, wooden pegs, and markings of repairs. A coating of soot from the fire remains on the brick wall. The design team took care to preserve it, as well as the other noted features, as not to erase this important history. A new mural intertwines with the historical features of the wall and will eventually weather and become yet another layer of the tapestry.

## J SPIDER LILIES AND SPHINX MOTHS

Once abundant throughout the Catawba River, the hydroelectric damming of the river has decimated the population of the rocky shoals spider lily. One of the largest stands of the rocky shoals spider lilies in the world occur along Landsford Canal State Park. Witnessing the profusion of spring blooms in the river is breathtaking. Along the brick wall at the White Street Parking Lot entrance, the green threads of the TEXTILE mosaic flow up the wall and form the stems of a grouping of flowering spider lilies. The spider lilies represent resiliency and wonder. Above the lilies are three glowing sphinx moths, their nocturnal pollinators.

## K THE BEACON

The original chimney that is part of the brick wall is painted a dark blue, a color that has historically symbolized protection in the African-American community in South Carolina. Illuminated at night, this feature is a beacon of hope.

## L DOGWOOD FLOWERS

White dogwood flowers float at the top of the wall, recalling the spring time blooms of the forest understory. Dogwood flowers symbolize peace.

## M OBSTACLES

Boulders are placed within the walkway to symbolize obstacles. Obstacles to progress were ever present during the civil rights movement and are still present today.

## N PLANTS

Plants are represented in both living and painted forms. The native and historic plants of Rock Hill - dogwoods, okra, sunflowers, and spider lilies are exuberantly depicted within the mural on the brick wall. A grouping of black tupelo trees provide shade, structure, and color within the Old Town Market. Drifts of shrubs, ornamental grasses, and perennials provide year round texture and color.

## O BASKETWEAVE

Bands of curving running bond patterns of red and cocoa brick pavers flow at each end of the walkway, encouraging movement through the walkway. Inspired by the basket making tradition of the Catawba Indians, the pattern changes into basketweave at gathering spaces. Red and cocoa brick bands come together into an interlocking pattern within these social spaces. Basketweave represents reconciliation and connectedness.

## P SEATWALLS

The seatwalls are comprised of salvaged materials from Main Street. The granite coping stones are curbs removed during the construction of Fountain Park. The bricks were saved from the Woolworth Building when it was demolished. These materials have found new life as seating elements.