Clayton Connector

This public art concept is an effort to enhance the soon-to-be renovated streetscape of Clayton Street from North Lumpkin to North Thomas Streets with an interactive and durable intervention, while respecting the street’s existing character and the needs of business owners, residents and visitors, channeling the creative cultural spirit of Athens, and working within a limited budget of $50,000!

The work is designed to complement Clayton Street by providing a form that connects all blocks within the site through a simple thread of powder-coated galvanized metal pipe that bends in multiple ways, stops and starts, and creates functional shapes, as it moves along the sidewalk within a narrow area that avoids disrupting pedestrian traffic.

Every street needs a basic level of furnishings to feel comfortable and accommodate all types of visitors. In reviewing the construction plans for the Clayton Street, I did not see benches, bike racks, trash receptacles, or other necessary amenities. The public art is designed to provide these amenities and can be tailored to meet the desires of individual businesses, which may have differing desires for the type of public art they would like to see along the street. I was also inspired by Athens’ recent Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and the ethic this projects for the city. I reflected on what a 3-block long, 2200 linear foot, bike rack might look like. This was some of the original inspiration for the concept. But this direction quickly shifted to simply looking at the types of spaces that would seem suitable to accommodate public art along the new streetscape. Most of these spaces are “bump-outs” in the sidewalk that serve as bookends to the parking areas. I began to think about how to connect these “bump-outs”. The Clayton Connector emerged from these lines of thinking and ultimately the need to find an economy of form to activate 2200 linear feet of sidewalk within a limited budget.

While this is only a preliminary concept developed without any community input, it is an honest representation of how I approach public art and the opportunities it affords to enhance the public realm.
CLAYTON CONNECTOR

PRELIMINARY CONCEPT FOR CLAYTON STREET PUBLIC ART
ERIC LESHINSKY
OCTOBER 2018
Build Your Own Crosswalk Workshop at Austin Design Week, 2017
Clayton Street is already a place!
And it has been a place for a long time!
How do you improve or enhance a place with public art?

Creek Speak, 2016
Commissioned by City of Austin Art in Public Places
Where are the spaces that can accommodate public art on Clayton Street?
Where are the street furnishings that will complete the streetscape?
2200 linear feet!
THANK YOU

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