

WYLIE STREET LANDSCAPING UPDATE

As discussed before, the original Phase One (circa 2008) of the Cabbagetown Initiative 501c3 Community Development Corporation's subcommittee, "Wallkeeper's", was the proposed landscaping, cut-back and reveal of original Steve Seaberg / Esther Peachey Lefever tile mosaic pieces from the 80's. They hidden by trees and shrubs, which had also overtaken the sidewalk. (see attached slides)

Three specific mosaics are the focus for 2019. These are obscured by overgrowth, and we would like to propose the following (for late August 2019):

1. Raise tree canopy directly adjacent Seaberg/Lefever mosaics (Wylie between Tye & Estoria)
2. Remove and/or cutback shrubs adjacent to Seaberg/Lefever mosaic near Tye Street, and shrubs adjacent and between Seaberg/Lefever mosaics near Short Street.
3. Add a modest solar lighting kit at one mosaic site, as proof of concept (similar to Laura Calle memorial).
4. Paint captions (title & attribution) and framing murals around sides, top, and underneath (on or before September 14) each mosaic.

See attached photos with colored lines designating the area: Mosaics are red squares, Blue lines are undergrowth, for removal or cutback. Also attached: 2008 overgrowth, 1987 Seaberg installation documentation & press clippings, Esther Lefever obituary, and 2018 Krog entrance photos.

Goals:

1. Safety: better lighting, more pedestrian visibility (CSX Safety/Lighting grant), and arguably wider pedestrian walking area.
2. Reveals the historical art, and re-establishes Cabbagetown's commitment to them.
3. Creates space for new art, in harmony with the initial spirit.
4. Mitigates graffiti. (tagging is occurring almost *exclusively* in shrub areas)
5. Reduces garbage, & makes it easier to pick up (people throw stuff in the bushes).
6. Saves Forward Warrior a nominal amount of money on scaffolding, as some efforts can be focused on pedestrian-level street beautification.

Future improvements needed:

1. Sidewalk repairs
2. Accessibility ramps on Northside sidewalk
3. Bike lane, Share lane on Wylie west of Krog/Estoria Street
4. Permanent lighting solutions
5. Replace holly shrubs with attractive and hardy native foliage of shorter stature.
6. Repair and restore Cabbagetown Arboretum.

Steve Seaberg & Esther Peachey Lefever

1. The Fiddler (Westside Krog entrance at Wylie)
2. Reynoldstown (Eastside Krog entrance at Wylie)
3. Piggyback Yard (Short & Wylie)
4. The Railroad (Short & Wylie)
5. Port of Savannah (Tye & Wylie)
6. Steam Locomotive (Powell & Wylie)
7. Building the Wall (Savannah & Tennelle)
8. Cotton Mill & Oakland Cemetery
(Savannah & Tennelle)







Background

The Cabbagetown Wall Mural project grew out of an interest expressed by the Atlanta Urban Design Commission to have art on the concrete wall which buffers the CSX Transportation Hulsey Intermodal Facility from the Cabbagetown Historic District. Steve Seaberg, a local artist was selected to do the designs.

The theme for the art to be placed on the "piggyback wall" was selected by Seaberg after considerable research concerning the communities and the industries which the art was to represent. It was decided that this art project could do more than hide the rail-truck activity from the community or "decorate" the wall. It was felt that this art could serve to connect community and industry in a way that past and present cultures could be appreciated.

The selection of Georgia red clay tiles as the medium was a significant decision. A tile manufacturer and artisans were available in the community. Esther Lefever of The Patch, Inc. was selected by the artist to assist in the production. Lefever was assisted by Joyce Brookshire, Samantha Browning and Gary Roden.

There are eight 12 x 16 feet art panels. Each art panel contains 192 handpainted tiles. Each tile measures 12x12 inches. The tiles are made of red clay from Lizzella, Georgia mines. Witkowski & Associates are the tile setters.

Time span - 18 months

Estimated cost: \$65,000.00

Cabbagetown Historic District & The Patch, Inc.

Cabbagetown is a cotton mill village community located near downtown Atlanta. The earliest houses were built shortly after 1881 by the Fulton Bag & Cotton Mill to provide housing for mill operators. Many of these operators came from communities in the south which were devastated by the Civil War. The community was first known as Factory Lot, later as Fulton Mill Village, and now as Cabbagetown. Cabbagetown was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976.

Like a magnet, the cotton mill drew hundreds of families to Atlanta seeking employment. They brought with them a strong work ethic and a dream of a better life for themselves and their families. Contrary to the popular belief that cotton mills employed only "lint-heads", Fulton Bag at one point in its history had more than 3,000 employees, which included clerks, buyers, engineers, accountants, tradesman, salesmen, managers and operators.

In 1971, Esther Lefever was working in Cabbagetown as a volunteer when some community mothers expressed concerns about their children. In response, the mothers and Lefever began community activities in a rented house that the youth called their "Cabbage Patch". A year later the group incorporated as The Patch Inc., a non-profit corporation which serves as an advocate for youths and for the revitalization of the neighborhood.

In 1974, due to an economic recession, the cotton mill experienced large reductions in its work force and eventually closed. When the mill closed, it meant hardtimes for Cabbagetown residents. A way of life had ended.

Over the years the program emphasis has been modified to meet demands made by the community and by changing times, however The Patch, has been steadfast to its original goal of supporting Cabbagetown residents, young and old, in the areas of education, self-help, employment, supportive services and community revitalization.

In 1981, a decision was made to manufacture ceramic tile giftwares in order to become self-sustaining. Today, community residents are employed and trained in this specialized trade. Only Georgia red clay is used for our products.

John L. Carson is chairman of the board of directors. Other board members are Leon Little, Joyce Brookshire, Mero Schoenbach, Robert Price and Neil Shorthouse. Esther Lefever is director. The Patch, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation.



7. Reynoldstown





8. The Fiddler





CSX Wall at Krog and Wylie streets (above)
The Patch Inc. at Boulevard and Carroll (below)





13. Removing tiles from kiln.
14. Finished tile.





Panel #4 during installation.
Panel #4 - Port Savannah - at Tye street.

















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Atlanta BeltLine





Seaboard's wall back on the drawing board

By Carolyn Grant

Staff Writer

Seaboard System Railroad officials have been forced to go back to the drawing boards to come up with a new design for a noise retention wall proposed as a barrier for their \$25 million piggyback rail/truck facility at Inman Yard.

Officials from the railroad company met a wall of opposition from members of the Urban Design Commission last Thursday when they appeared before the group seeking approval to demolish the small frame of a building at 100 Powell St. that was once used to store coal.

Though the commission granted approval for this action, it expressed disapproval of the preliminary plans Seaboard presented to construct a 25-foot high barrier between their 65-acre facility and homes in the Cabbagetown community.

At the commission meeting, Seaboard officials said the wall would extend along Wylie Street in the Cabbagetown area. But due to opposition from commission members about the wall, which would have been a combination of concrete, fence and screens, railroad officials have already begun to redesign and alter their plans.

"We're going to make a thorough study of it and consider design and landscape," said A. C. Jones, vice president for engineering and maintenance at Seaboard.

Once Seaboard has completed this study and redesign, Jones said they will present it to the commission. He said they expect to be completed by the end of this week.

Members of the commission called the wall "unattractive" and recommended concerns for the design of

by construction and operation of their piggyback facility in southeast Atlanta.

Steve Seaberg, a sculptor and painter on the commission, called the wall "a big, monolithic thing that people will be looking at."

"The wall could be something visually stimulating," said Seaberg, who first raised the question of the aesthetic concern.

"A 25-foot wall of that length is going to have a very strong visual impact on the delicate quality of surrounding neighborhoods," said commission member Betty Dowling.

For the Cabbagetown community where the wall will be located, Seaberg said "the wall could raise its level of aesthetics a couple of notches. Seaboard should consider hiring an artist or consultant to see how they can work with the wall."

Mrs. Dowling, an architecture history instructor at the Georgia Institute of Technology, said a plain wall of the sort Seaboard is creating will be uninteresting and will add nothing to the character of Cabbagetown.

"We have been concerned about the scale of elements in that neighborhood," she said. "That's an element that is totally out of scale in the neighborhood. They are replacing a derelict landscape with a modern imposition of boring concrete. One is no better than the other."

Mrs. Dowling, who opposed the piggyback facility when it was introduced, said Seaboard has treated its operation as an industrial complex. "They don't take into consideration that this is an historical district. They see it as a function that has no major effect and have not been concerned with the aesthetics of what they are creating."



The Hulsey Yard wall now on the drawing back boards at Seaboard System Railroad is designed to serve as a noise barrier for piggy-

back operations like this one at Inman Yard (Staff Photo — Neil McGahee)

boards at Seaboard System Railroad is designed to serve as a noise barrier for piggy-

back operations like this one at Inman Yard (Staff Photo — Neil McGahee)

As well as presenting prelimi-

nary plans Seaboard officials presented also called for a storage area on Wylie Street for trucks, a fire protection plan and lights for night operation.

According to Jones, Seaboard has not finalized any plans for use

study from a marketing and a public use standpoint to see who benefits the city and the location he said.

However, he said, Seaboard is making every effort to locate more of its officials at the facility.

In the past weeks, Seaboard officials has been facing concern from city council members about it

Ms. Esther Lefever, artisan, activist in Cabbagetown

By Lyle Harris
STAFF WRITER

Ms. Esther Lefever, an artisan, former Atlanta councilwoman and activist who founded a once-vibrant Cabbagetown community center, died of breast cancer Friday at Georgia Baptist Hospital. She was 60.

A wake will be held Monday at Patterson & Son Funeral Home. The body will be cremated.



Esther Lefever

and settled with her family in Candler Park.

However, she found a kinship with the largely Appalachian community of Cabbagetown, which had been devastated by the economic troubles of Fulton Mills, where many of its residents worked.

Their desperation moved her to open The Patch Inc., initially as a day-care center in an abandoned storefront in 1971. As the mill's fortunes declined and it finally closed, The Patch expanded into a community-based organization helping residents find jobs, providing financial advice, and serving as a focus for cultural events. The Patch has since closed.

After Councilman Nick Lambros resigned in 1976, Mrs. Lefever was elected by the council to fill his unexpired term. One of her first acts was to vote in favor of a measure allowing audience members to speak at council meetings.

Although her tenure on the council was brief and she lost a bid for re-election, she once explained her political philosophy this way: "I had become very emotional during the mid-'60s. I decided that you do what you can, dig in and deal with government on a local basis. Ranting and raving about what is wrong does no good."

A skilled tilemaker and potter, in 1983 she opened her own business, Cabbagetown Pottery, on Boulevard in southeast Atlanta, selling ceramic crafts to gift shops across the nation while employing local residents.

The store is still in business, a testament to Mrs. Lefever's boast that she would one day "blanket the nation with Georgia mud."

Among her most lasting and visible legacies are giant tile murals that grace the walls of a CSX railway building in Cabbagetown.

She remained active in Cabbagetown, and was an ally of Mayor Maynard H. Jackson during his first term in his efforts to save an elderly widow from eviction.

She later served as a member of the Atlanta Urban Design Commission and the Atlanta Economic Development Commission.

Her eldest daughter, Kristina, said her mother's life was devoted to helping the city and its people.

"She wanted to make sure everybody had the same chance to make something of themselves and make a better life," Kristina Lefever said. "She was a very caring person and had a way with people that made them feel open with her. She brought out the best in a person no matter who they were."

Besides Kristina Lefever, Mrs. Lefever is survived by a son, Dimitri Lefever of Atlanta; two other daughters, Carla Lefever of Atlanta and Erika Patrick of Ellenwood; three brothers, Paul Peachey of Harper's Ferry, W.Va., Laban Peachey of Harrisonburg, Va., and Urbane Peachey of Ephrata, Pa.; five sisters, Lois Yoder of Washington, Rhoda Moore of Silver Spring, Md., Ruth Peachey of Florence, Ala., Anna Shenk of Boston, and Jane Lind of Canada; and two grandchildren.





