

Mayor Fenty Unveils New Columbia Heights Plaza Fountain

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Washington, DC –Mayor Adrian M. Fenty along with Ward-1 Councilmember Jim Graham, District Department of Transportation (DDOT) Director Gabe Klein and DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities (DCCA) Director Gloria Nauden celebrated the new Columbia Heights Plaza located in the heart of the neighborhood's commercial district with an inaugural launch of the new fountain on Monday. The fountain is a central component to the Columbia Heights Public Realm Project (CHPRP) currently under construction.

"It is really a pleasure to...witness the launch of this highly anticipated artwork," said Mayor Fenty. "This is just one more step, a giant one at that, towards realizing the vision of revitalization along this corridor, and I look forward to being a part of future activities held in this public plaza now able to serve this diverse and exciting community."

DDOT worked closely with [DCCA](#) as part of the *DCCA Creates! Public Arts Program*. DDOT conducted the actual plaza work and provided installation of the necessary fountain infrastructure. DCAH coordinated design and development of the fountain.

"DDOT is extremely pleased with the progress and success thus far on the Columbia Heights Public Realm Project and particularly proud of our participation in the fountain and plaza," said DDOT Director Gabe Klein. "It is important today that we recognize all the coordination, hard work and dedication exhibited by the residents and business owners in this community for which we are grateful."

The "Resonance" fountain was designed as a "cultural kaleidoscope" incorporating elements of the community. "Resonance" connects the metro along 14th street to the plaza fountain through the repetition of mosaic medallions. Jann Rosen-Queralt is responsible for the design of the metro and fountain plaza areas. "Resonance" continues with this theme utilizing textiles from different geographic locales (Africa, Latin America, North America and South East Asia) and interlocking concentric rings. Diversity within the neighborhood is represented through the textile images. Otto Condon is an urban planner who designed the landscape architect for the CCPRP. He works for ZGF Architects, the urban design firm contracted for the work. Mr. Condon is also a District resident residing in Columbia Heights.

Each group of rings alludes to a water droplet that has fallen from above and resonates across the ground plane, undulating while leaving impressions, which are concentric becoming faint and thin as energy dissipates. The design reflects this through the size and color of the shapes that compose the bands and the width of the bands. The central textile is abstracted as the resonating rings increase in scale and size. Collectively the patterns, textures and colors create a kaleidoscope of images.

The nozzles in the fountain have been designed to interface with the mosaic. All nozzles are accompanied by mister jets and have the ability to ramp up or down as well as be actuated individually by means of a computer program.

"Resonance is a beautiful representation of the diversity in Columbia Heights," DCCA Director Gloria Nauden said. "As the water resonates across the ground plane, so does the ongoing activity of this neighborhood. The repetition of the mosaic medallions will connect the streetscape in this revitalized area."

The completion of the plaza signifies the completion of Phase 1 of the CCPRP. Road construction on Phase I of the project began on Park Road in Dec. 2008 which included the area of Park Road from Mt. Pleasant Street to 14th Street and the Civic Plaza with Fountain. Phase I work included signal and safety improvements, reconstruction of the roadway, installation of pedestrian amenities, and upgrades to the sidewalks, curbs and gutters, waterline and drainage, landscaping and street lighting.

DDOT has begun Phase II of the CCPRP, and is currently working along 14th Street south of Kenyon to install new storm drain inlets, curb and gutter. This phase also includes more extensive road reconstruction work on 14th Street, from Newton Street to Columbia Road, which is scheduled to begin in Nov. DDOT will also be reconstructing Irving Street (Phase III), between 14th and 16th Streets, and the entire project is expected to be completed in late spring, 2010.

The CHPRP project team includes DDOT, DCCAH, council and staff, the ANCs and other local leaders working together through a Community Relations Team. The job of the Community Relations Team is to work to anticipate and resolve problems, and to keep the community informed about the construction.

For more information about the project, residents can visit the project website at www.columbiaheights-streetscape.com or the field office at 3247 Mt. Pleasant Street, N.W., Monday through Friday, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

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WHEN : 2009-09-29 13:04:47
WHERE :

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