

Event begins revitalization of Baltimore Street

By Tom Fontana For the Gettysburg Times | Posted: Saturday, October 3, 2015 12:03 am

"Steppin' Out In Lincoln's Footsteps" was more like a soggy stroll down Baltimore Street Friday night, when a group of devoted volunteers and business owners led a kick-off to revitalize the historic avenue.

The Baltimore Street Historic Pathway Revitalization Project, introduced in the spring, is a community effort to enhance the appearance and attractions along the path President Abraham Lincoln took for the dedication of the National Soldiers Cemetery on Nov. 19, 1863.

The event Friday night was affected by the chilly, windy, rainy weather, but many businesses steadfastly remained open late, a sign of their commitment to the project.

"The enthusiasm by the businesses has been inspiring," stated Deb Adamik, president of Main Street Gettysburg. "When we mentioned having a special event night-out along the street, their response and participation was overwhelming. They are really behind what we're trying to do."

Music groups, sidewalk food concessions, and outdoor activities were either cancelled or moved indoors, but many businesses still offered giveaways and discounts to show their support for the revitalization project, from Lincoln Square to the Old Gettysburg Village Shops to the Evergreen Cemetery gatehouse.

"The goal is to make Baltimore Street a vibrant, beautiful, safe place to walk, shop, enjoy arts and history along Lincoln's path," Adamik said. "Main Street Gettysburg is supporting this effort by seeking funding and providing services to help coordinate and execute this vision."

Infrastructure goals include improving safety by adding lighting and signage, replacing walkways, and increasing parking options. Added attractions to entice visitors might include various food choices, historical events, live music and art displays, and "kid-friendly" activities.



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LINCOLN'S FOOTSTEPS - Lincoln Into Art, 329 Baltimore St., hosted "Little Lincoln Land" arts and crafts during the "Steppin' Out In Lincoln's Footsteps" event Friday night. From left are: sitting - Elizabeth Tully, Annie Letendre, and shop owner/artist Wendy Allen; standing - Rachel Chun-Kennedy, Elaine Henderson, and Gettysburg Fire Co. personnel Chief Hurshel Shank, Scott McGonigal and Zuhair Rafiq. (Tom Fontana/Gettysburg Times)

Friday night, Lincoln Into Art at 329 Baltimore St. opened its space for the move indoors of "Little Lincoln Land," hosting crafts and games conducted by volunteers. Gettysburg Fire Company personnel were on hand to assist.

Home Front Sutler Store at the Shoppes was visited by tourists from Australia, who after being fascinated by the period clothing there set off to visit Lola's of Gettysburg gift shop and the Jennie Wade House.

Volunteers on the Rupp House porch encouraged the few passersby braving the weather to fold up their umbrellas, get out of the cold and wet, and visit the free museum inside the historic house maintained by Friends of Gettysburg.

"I'm so impressed by the excitement for the project shown by our amazing volunteers and businesses," Adamik reiterated. "We're anxious to tell the community that Baltimore St. has the potential to be a more pedestrian-friendly, inviting and fun experience throughout the entire year, and we want to make that happen."

Adamik said more events and activities are being planned along Baltimore Street to increase awareness and support of the revitalization project.