Spartanburg in new light

Thomas Edison has nothing on Erwin Redl

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Erwin Redl and the Arts Partnerships of Greater Spartanburg have come together to bring the community benefit through arts. Nine projects throughout several neighborhoods all focusing on light will be put into place with the help of other volunteers, city leaders, and residents.

Spartanburg was chosen along with three other cities to be given $1 million from the Bloomberg Philanthropies Public Art Challenge for light installations in a temporary art project. The other cities were located in California, New York, and Indiana.

According to Kate D. Levin, Spartanburg was chosen due to its potential to create excellent art and the potential it had to impact the community. All nine of the projects are aimed towards community benefit.

Redl was born in Austria and is currently living in New York, NY. During this project, he has been living in Spartanburg and interacting with the community.

Sophomore Corbin Bradley appreciates the artistic creativity that the project brings.

“It’s nice to see someone bring art into Spartanburg. The artist is attempting to bring more art into the city and light up communities considered problematic,” Bradley said.

Beaumont Village, Andrews Farm, Converse Heights, downtown Spartanburg, Hampton Heights, Forest Park, Maxwell Hills, Duncan Park, and Northside and South Converse have had installations brought into the neighborhood.

More specifically, installations will be located at the smokestacks at Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine, in the former Beaumont Mill in Beaumont village, the vacant Cammie Clagett apartment units, the Denny’s Plaza, the C.C. Woodson Recreation Center, the National Beta Club headquarters, Duncan Park Lake, the picnic shelter in South Converse, and the Cottonwood Trail.

On the annual campaign promoting police-community relationships, National Night Out, the installations were switched on. An opening ceremony was held at 4:30 p.m. at Denny’s Plaza.

Each site hosted public parties with refreshments and music. The closing ceremony started at 8:30 p.m. near the smokestack at VCOM, including a fireworks grand finale.

The primary goal of this project is to promote crime prevention, build police-community relations, and encourage neighborhood relations.

Senior Reneesha Hopkins is impressed with the primary goal of this project.

“The idea of using art to improve community relations is a new take, and I’m looking forward to seeing it help,” Hopkins said.

Installations will be lit until April 1, 2017 and plan to remain for a number of years after.

Senior Harrison Carmichael, Vice President of Yex’s Valet Parking business, parked cars for the light showing at the Cottonwood Trail.

“It was really awesome to see how many people participated in the viewing. We had cars parked all over the fields at Cottonwood, and it was all citizens looking forward to the light project kick off at Cottonwood Trail,” Carmichael said.