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Contact: David A. Kahley
President & CEO
The Progress Fund
(724) 216-9160 Ext. 310
dkahley@progressfund.org

Final phase of Train Station reconstruction along Panhandle Trail

BURGETTSTOWN, PA – August 15, 2016 – Bike rentals and other amenities are coming to Burgettstown, as a decade-long effort to redevelop the historic train station, spurred by the popular Panhandle Trail, enters its final mile.

Last week, Tasz Construction began interior work on a replica of the 133-year-old former Pennsylvania Railroad Company station on North Main Street. In September, a ribbon-cutting will precede the opening of The Shop Along the Way, a general store with a bicycle rental shop downstairs.

For the hundreds of weekly users of the Panhandle Trail, the store will fill a crucial need. There is currently no place to readily get even bottled water between McDonald and Weirton, WV.

For Burgettstown, the project makes the long-empty train station a point of pride again.

Built in 1883, for some eight decades the station was the point of departure for Burgettstown residents heading to jobs and entertainment in Pittsburgh and points east. But for half a century, the site housed only a series of occasional, short-lived businesses, becoming a sagging eyesore until the Burgettstown Area Community Development Corp. bought it in 2008.

“We had to tear it down,” said Pamela Church, director of development for the group. “That’s when we decided to duplicate the original design. “She credits former state Sen. J. Barry Stout, The Redevelopment Authority of Washington County, the Department of Community and Economic Development, The Washington County Tourism Agency, the Valenti family, the late Tom Cassidy and his widow Ellen, Dr. Pete and Sharon Stracci, the Richard King Mellon Foundation and The Progress Fund with providing expertise and the hundreds of thousands of dollars in funding necessary to complete the reconstruction and ongoing fit-out. No local tax dollars were used in the project.

The 24-by-50-foot replica of the original station attracted the attention of Mary Kay Schreiner, of Mt. Washington. Ms. Schreiner had long dreamed of opening a store called The Shop Along the Way, and what better place than a former train station along a bike trail and a Main Street? She signed on to lease the site, which will continue to be owned by the nonprofit Burgettstown Area CDC. She plans to rent bicycles, sell provisions to cyclists, but also offer seasonal items, home décor, Pittsburgh souvenirs and refurbished furniture.

Reporters interested in the development can call the numbers below, or contact David Kahley at The Progress Fund, 724-216-9160. For more information on The Progress Fund, check out www.progressfund.org.

What they're saying:

“If the train station gets up and running and provides a destination space for trail users, it will be a great benefit to the trail and the town.”

– Lisa Cessna, executive director, Washington County Planning Commission, 724-228-6811

“I'm trying to keep everything as locally made as possible. I want it to be a modern-day version of the General Store.”

– Mary Kay Schreiner, future owner of The Shop Along the Way, 412-951-7221

“I really think that the trail definitely made it possible. Because of the location of the train station, our goal was always to house a business that would benefit the trail users and also the entire community. ...The completion of this project and adding a business at this location could spearhead other businesses to want to come to the downtown area.” – Pamela Church, director of development, Burgettstown Area Community Development Corp., 724-947-2894

Burgettstown Area Community Development Corp. Board Members:

President: Adaira Rufer

Vice President: Settimio Carnali

Douglas Barton

Ellen Cassidy

Consultant: Valenti Consulting