

DEKALB COUNTY

ITEM NO.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

HEARING TYPE

Preliminary

BUSINESS AGENDA / MINUTES

MEETING DATE: October 13, 2015

ACTION TYPE

Resolution

SUBJECT: Arabia Mountain National Heritage & Recreational Tourism Development

DEPARTMENT: Board of Commissioners

PUBLIC HEARING: YES NOATTACHMENT: YES No

INFORMATION CONTACT: Commissioner Mereda Davis Johnson

PAGES: 8

PHONE NUMBER: 404-371-2159

PURPOSE:

To create a capital project of Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Wayfinding Signage not to exceed \$986,520.00 funded through the Tourism Product Development Project; and to authorize the CEO to execute all necessary documents.

NEED/IMPACT:

The Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area is a 2500⁺ acre preserve that includes Arabia Mountain, one of the oldest granite outcroppings in the State (older than Stone Mountain), wetlands, pine and oak forests, multiple streams, two lakes, bike paths, walking/hiking trails (paved and natural) and a nature center. The wayfinding signage will direct travelers to the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area from the interstate as well as nearby state routes. The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) will be installing Directional Signs for Recreation and Cultural Interest Areas that indicate the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area is located off of Exit 74 (Evans Mill Road/Lithonia Industrial Boulevard/Lithonia Exit).

The proposed system of signage will increase visibility of the area, help visitors navigate the different heritage and eco-tourism sites and enhance the overall Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area experience. The Hotel/Motel tax is an 8% charge on hotel rooms within DeKalb County's unincorporated area. Part of the distribution of can be used for tourism related efforts. The wayfinding signage will achieve the goal of increasing tourism (eco-tourism) in the County and serve to promote one of the crown jewels of DeKalb County.

This action will allow the CEO or his designee to set up the Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Wayfinding Signage Project of up to \$986,520.00. The budgeted amount of the project may not exceed the actual amount of funding collected by the Hotel/Motel tax for this effort.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

Create a capital project of Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Wayfinding Signage not to exceed \$986,520.00 funded through the Tourism Product Development Project; and to authorize the CEO to execute all necessary documents.

FOR USE BY COMMISSION OFFICE/CLERK ONLY

ACTION : 2015-10-13 Item H3

MOTION was made by Mereda Davis Johnson, seconded by Stan Watson and passed 7-0-0-0 to approve with amendment by Commissioner Davis Johnson, to create a capital project account for Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Wayfinding Signage not to exceed \$986,520 funded through the Tourism Product Development Project **by approving the initial request of \$563,700 (for Phase I and three items of Phase II)**; and to authorize the CEO to execute all necessary documents.

ADOPTED: OCT 13 2015

(DATE)

Larry Johnson

PRESIDING OFFICER
DEKALB COUNTY BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS

CERTIFIED: OCT 13 2015

(DATE)

Baker B. Rader

CLERK,
DEKALB COUNTY BOARD
OF COMMISSIONERS

FOR USE BY INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER ONLY

APPROVED: OCT 22 2015

(DATE)

Lee May

INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEKALB COUNTY

VETOED: _____

(DATE)

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
DEKALB COUNTY

VETO STATEMENT ATTACHED: _____

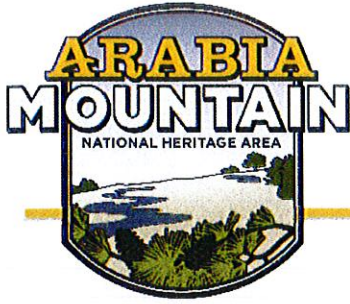
MINUTES:

FOR : Larry Johnson, Mereda Davis Johnson, Jeff Rader, Nancy Jester, Kathie Gannon, Stan Watson, Sharon Barnes Sutton

AGAINST : None

ABSTAIN : None

ABSENT : None



Heritage & Recreational Tourism Development within the AMNHA

Building a sense of identity through interpretation and wayfinding

Overview: Dominated by granite outcrops, the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area (AMNHA) offers visitors heart-pumping recreation, pastoral landscapes, rare ecology and compelling history. These experiences combine to form an unparalleled attraction for travelers, adventure seekers and history buffs traveling in Georgia. To enhance the quality of these experiences, the AMNHA is seeking support to complete its professional-designed, comprehensive signage program which captures and shares the unique history, welcomes and directs visitors to venues of historical & natural importance and highlights gateways to recreational activities.

The AMNHA is one of only 49 areas across the country to have this “National Heritage Area” recognition. However, many visitors to the area may not realize they are so close to exceptional beauty and wonder. As an extension of the National Park Service approved 2006 management plan for the AMNHA – a public planning process that was supported by DeKalb County both financially and politically - the locally managed Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance (The Alliance) has developed a program of coordinated wayfinding and interpretive signs. These signs were developed by the Georgia-based Signature Design firm to guide visitors through the area and encourage them to stay longer, including overnight stays in hotels at Stonecrest Mall.

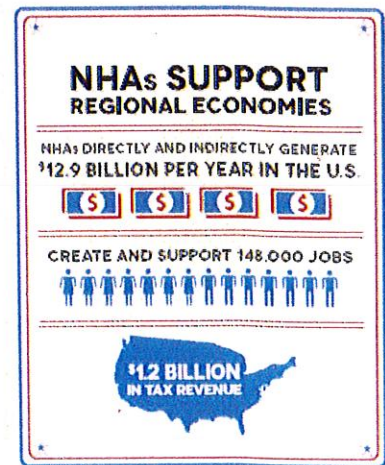
Within DeKalb County, this program can be executed in three phases detailed in the attached scope and maps.

A Sense of Place: Travelers need to know there is a reason to get off the interstate. This system of signs increases visibility of the area, helps visitors navigate to different heritage and eco-tourism sites and enhances their experience, thereby encouraging them to extend their stay or return to the area.

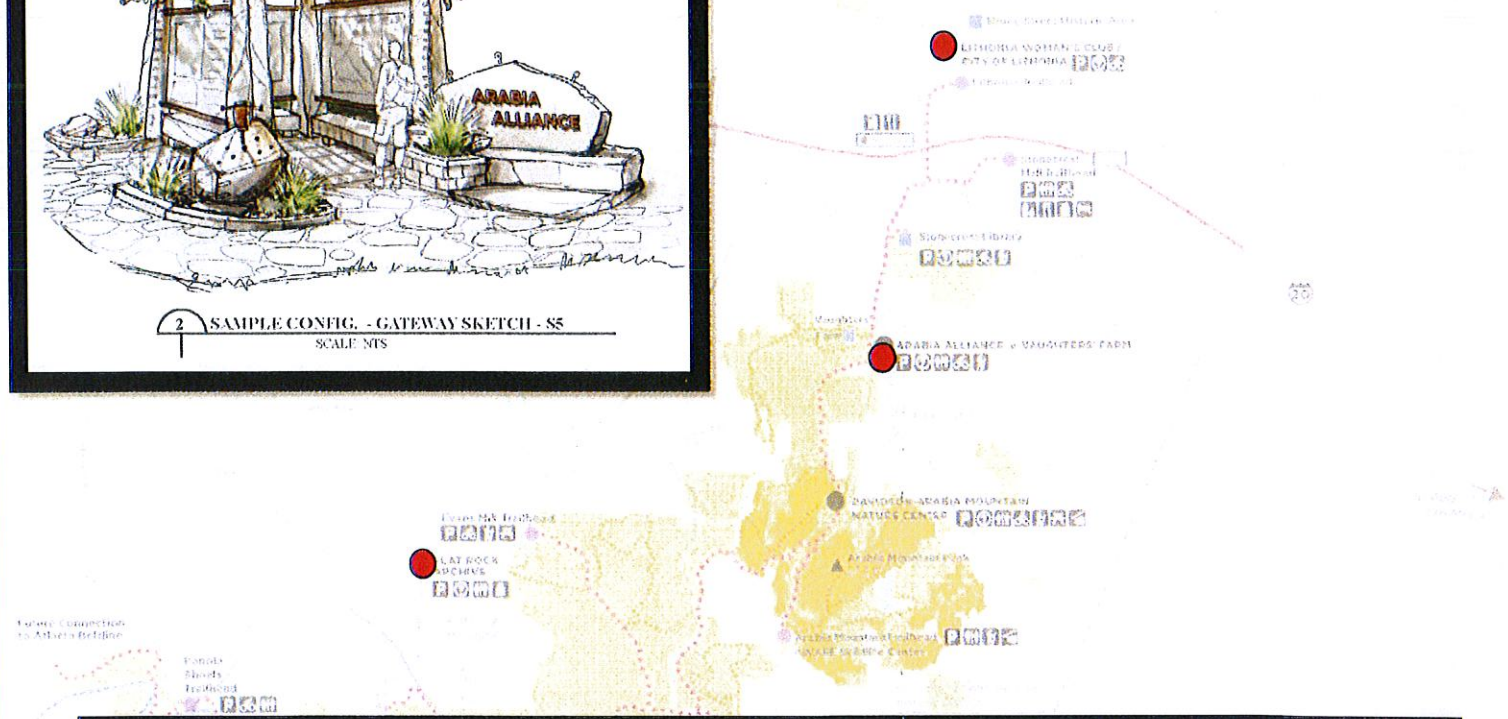
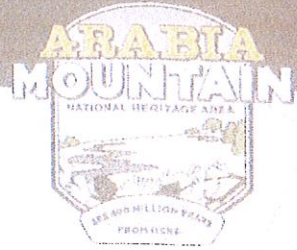
Why Heritage Tourism? Economic development studies show that heritage tourists – those seeking unique, authentic experiences – have a significantly greater per-trip economic impact. Overall, they tend to stay longer, visit more sites in an area and spend more money per day than general tourists. The AMNHA draws well over 100,000 visitors annually to its venues.

National Heritage Areas as Economic Engines: The impact of the nation’s 49 National Heritage Areas to local economies is significant. A 2012 reports shows that these public-private partnerships can generate substantial revenue in support of local businesses and taxes.

Public-Private Partnerships: The Alliance is supported by a network of public jurisdictions and private partners working towards the goals outlined in the NPS approved management plan and the adopted strategic plan. Partners collaborating on this signage project include DeKalb County, the City of Lithonia, the Stonecrest Business Alliance and Hanson Aggregates, which donated a portion of the granite materials.



NHA Visitor Gateway



FRONT VIEW

PLAN VIEW

1 GATEWAY WITH SHADE STRUCTURE - TYP. ENTRY - S5
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

FRONT VIEW

PLAN VIEW

2 GATEWAY WITH SHADE STRUCTURE - TYP. INFO PANEL - S5
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

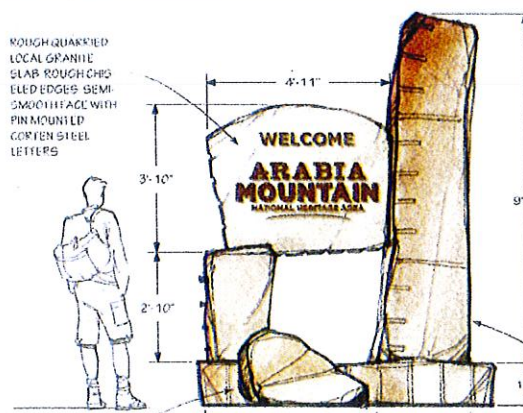
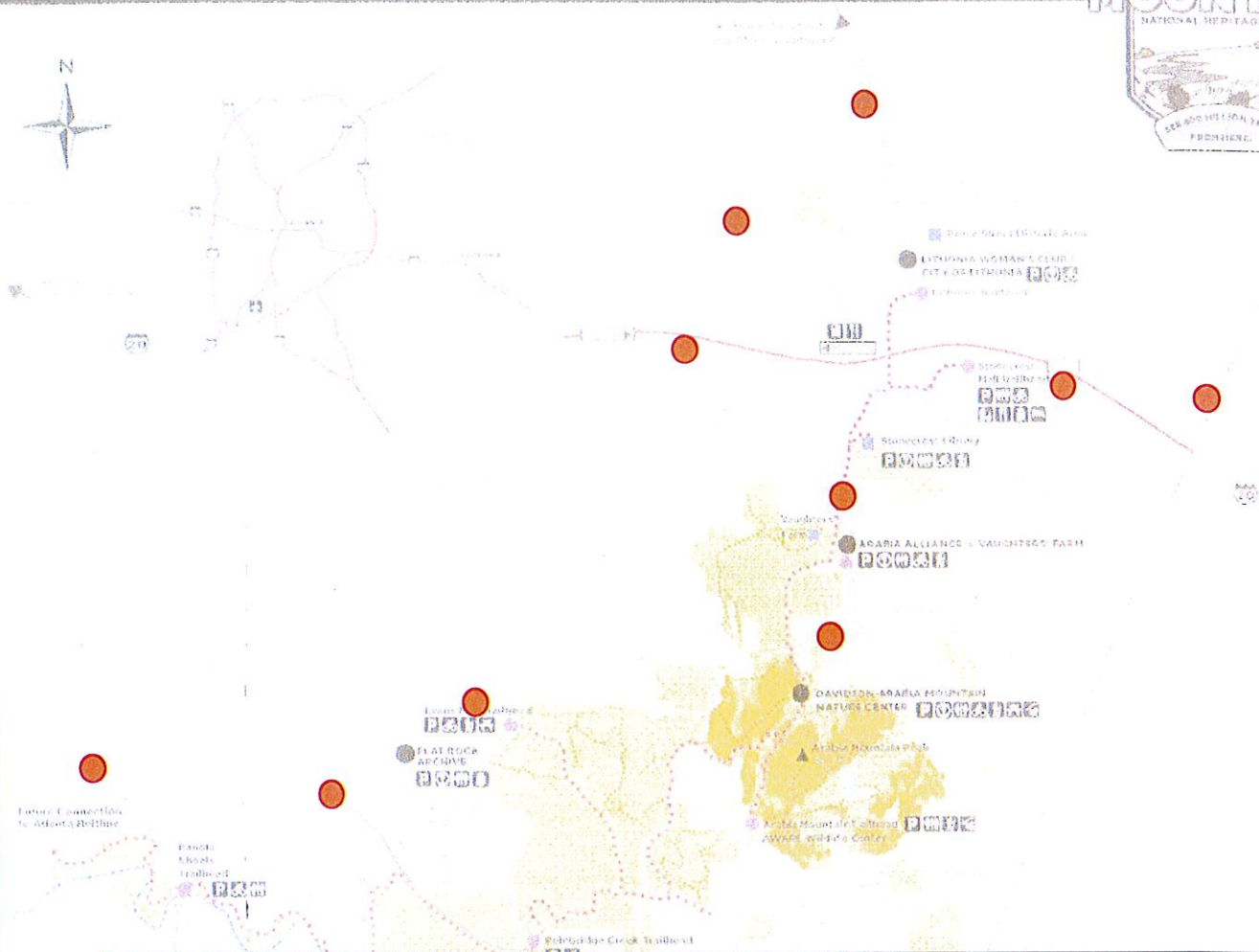
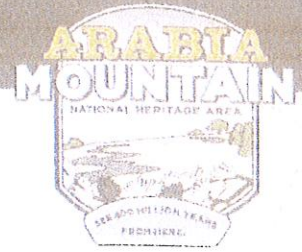
PROJECT: ARABIA MOUNTAIN MESSAGE PROGRAM
SIGN TYPE: XXXXXXXX
DATE: 09/18/11
SCALE: AS NOTED

SIGNATURE DESIGN

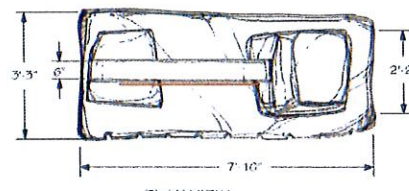
S5B

GATEWAY SYSTEM

NHA Entrance Marker

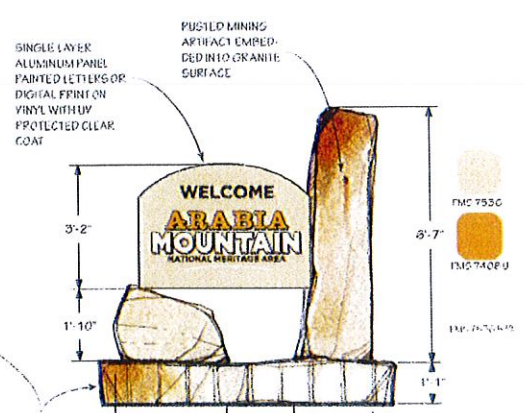


FRONT VIEW

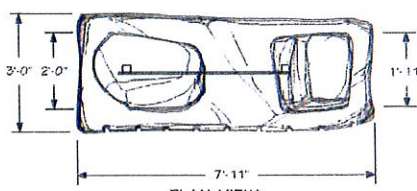


PLAN VIEW

1 LOCAL ROAD SIGN - S2A
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"



FRONT VIEW



PLAN VIEW

2 LOCAL ROAD SIGN - S2A (ALTERNATE)
SCALE 1/2" = 1'-0"

PROJECT: ARABIA MOUNTAIN SIGNAGE PROGRAM
SIGN TYPE: HERITAGE AREA MARKER
DATE: 06/28/13
SCALE: AS NOTED

SIGNATURE DESIGN



S2A

HERITAGE AREA MARKERS

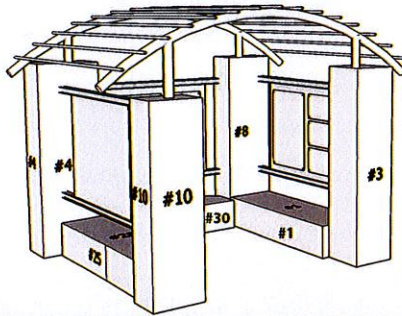
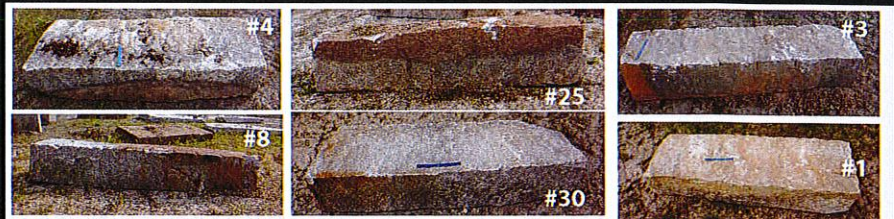
Visitor Gateway @ Vaughters Farm

The NHA has 7 proposed gateways, 4 located in DeKalb County. The retrofit of kiosks at the Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve with the support of a grant from Park Pride marks the completion of the first gateway. The second is proposed for the Alliance Headquarters at Vaughters Farm on Klondike Road. Components include a gateway structure (seen at right) a roadside trailhead marker and a welcome sign.

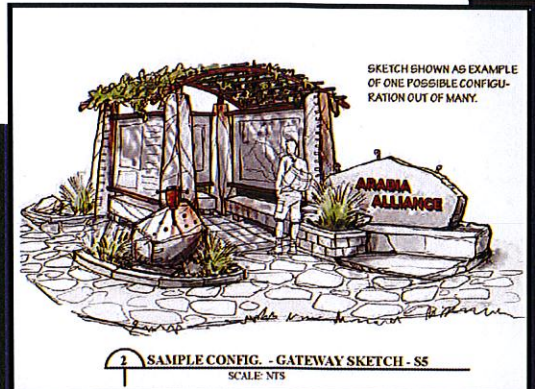
Configurations and engineering documents using donated historic granite are already complete. Planning would include siting of the signs and amenities, which are part of another project.

Welcome sign, Gateway & interpretation:
\$59,040

Timeline:
 Planning: 60 days
 Construction: 30 days
 Interpretation: 4 months



Construction documents
(above) based on concept
designs.



Heritage Area Markers

Entrance markers are designed to welcome visitors to the AMNHA and direct them to cherished places. This may be the first encounter visitors have with the area and the invitation to explore is implicit in the welcome.

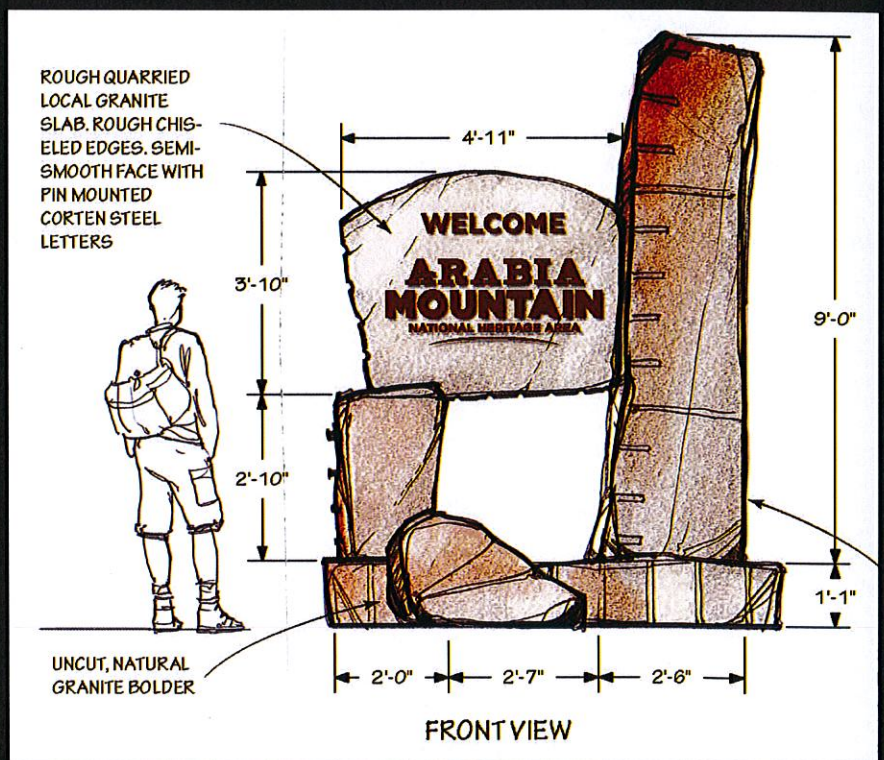
There are three locations for entrance markers in Phase 1A:

Turner Hill Interchange / Stonecrest: Planning for arrival signage at I-20, Exit 75 in partnership with the Stonecrest Business Alliance would support siting and design documents. \$10,200

Rockland / Klondike Roundabout: This marker would serve the dual purpose of welcome and directional signs as well as beautification. \$10,200

Intersection of Woodrow / Klondike: This is the first encounter of visitors exiting I-20 at Exit 74. Cost includes planning, design and construction. \$28,800

Timeline for completion: 3-6 months



Concept Design

Trailhead Guide

Many visitors to the NHA are coming to explore the 30+ miles of the Arabia Mountain PATH. However, there is not a consistent way to help visitors get around the area and navigate the trail. Both trailheads and directional signs are needed. We would begin with planning a trailhead marker at Stonecrest Mall, a common area for visitors to access the trail with the intention of completing additional trailheads in future phases.

Trailhead siting & design: \$10,200

Trailhead construction & interpretation: \$28,800 (future phase)

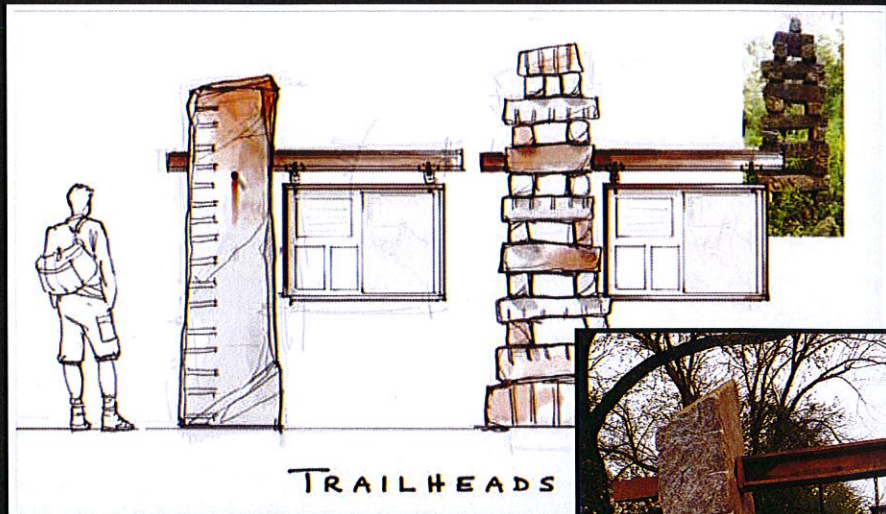
Timeline:

Planning: 60 days

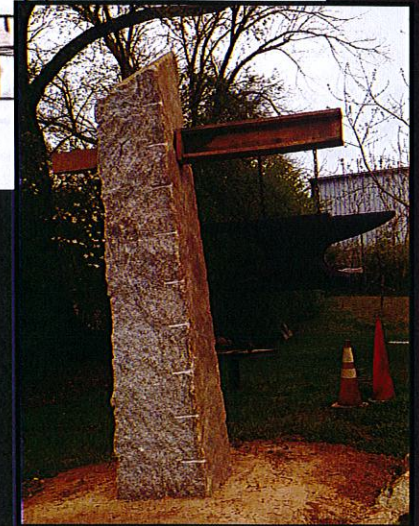
Construction: 30 days

Interpretation: 4 months

Total cost for Phase 1A: \$118,440



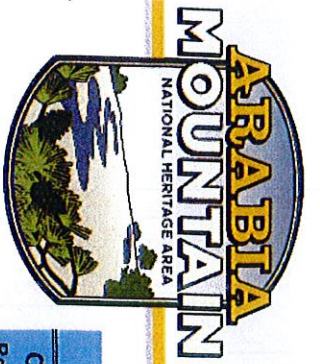
Inspiration, concept design (above) and prototype (right) based on concept.





Heritage & Recreational Tourism Development within the AMNHA Interpretation & Wayfinding Examples and Associated Costs

Phase I			
Concept Reference	Sign Type	Location	Project Phase
Phase I Est			
S2A	NHA Entrance Marker	Turner Hill Interchange / Stonecrest Mall	Initial Planning, Location and Design
S2A	NHA Entrance Marker	Rockland / Klondike Roundabout	Initial Planning, Location and Design
S2A	NHA Entrance Marker	Intersection of Woodrow & Klondike	Planning, Design and Installation
S5, S5B	NHAVisitor Gateway	Arabia Alliance Center / Vaughters' Farm	Component Site Planning
S5, S5B	NHAVisitor Gateway	Arabia Alliance Center / Vaughters' Farm	Construction & installation
S5, S5B	NHAVisitor Gateway	Arabia Alliance Center / Vaughters' Farm	Lettering and Interpretation
S5, S5B	NHAVisitor Gateway	Flat Rock Archives	Site Planning & Structure Design
S5, S5B	NHAVisitor Gateway	Lithonia Woman's Club	Site Planning & Structure Design
S6A, S6B	Interpretive Sign	Historic Vaughters Farm Trailmarkers	Structure & graphics installation
S6A, S6B	Interpretive Sign	Historic Lyon Farm	Structure & graphics installation
S6A, S6B	Interpretive Sign	Ruins of Bethel Baptist Church	Structure & graphics installation
S6A, S6B	Interpretive Sign	Stephenson Creek Headwaters	Structure & graphics installation
S6A, S6B	Interpretive Sign	Bruce Street African American District	Structure & graphics installation
S4D	NHA Trailhead Guide	Panola Shoals Trailhead	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S4D	NHA Trailhead Guide	Evans Mill Trailhead	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S4D	NHA Trailhead Guide	Pole Bridge Creek / Flat Rock Trailhead	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S4D	NHA Trailhead Guide	City of Lithonia Trailhead	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S4D	NHA Trailhead Guide	Stonecrest Library Trailhead	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3	NHA Roadside Wayfinding	Intersection of Klondike / Browns Mill	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3	NHA Roadside Wayfinding	Covington Hwy / Main Street Lithonia	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3	NHA Roadside Wayfinding	Covington Hwy @ Turner Hill	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3	NHA Roadside Wayfinding	I 20 Exit 74 West	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3	NHA Roadside Wayfinding	I 20 Exit 74 East	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3	NHA Roadside Wayfinding	Intersection of Mall Parkway / Klondike	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3	NHA Roadside Wayfinding	Mall Parkway / Evans Mill (Woodrow)	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3	NHA Roadside Wayfinding	Klondike Road @ South River	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3	NHA Roadside Wayfinding	Intersection of Browns Mill / Snappinger	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3	NHA Roadside Wayfinding	Panola Road & Snappinger	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3	NHA Roadside Wayfinding	Intersection of Lyon / Browns Mill	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3	NHA Roadside Wayfinding	Intersection of Evans Mill / Rockland	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3-Alt	NHA Site Locator	Vaughters Farm Trailhead	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3-Alt	NHA Site Locator	DAMNIP North Entrance / Nature Center	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3-Alt	NHA Site Locator	DAMNIP South Entrance / Nature Center	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3-Alt	NHA Site Locator	Flat Rock Archives	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S3-Alt	NHA Site Locator	Lithonia Woman's Club	Site work, graphic design, & construction
Phase I Total			\$381,540



Heritage & Recreational Tourism Development within the AMNHA Interpretation & Wayfinding Examples and Associated Costs

Phase II			
Concept Reference	Sign Type	Location	Project Phase
S4D	NHA Trailhead Guide	Stonecrest Mall Trailhead	Site work, graphic design & construction
S4D	NHA Trailhead Guide	Murphy Candler Trailhead	Site work, graphic design & construction
S2A	NHA Entrance Marker	Rockland / Klondike Roundabout	Installation & graphics
S2A	NHA Entrance Marker	Turner Hill Interchange / Stonecrest Mall	Installation & graphics
S5, S5B	NHA Visitor Gateway	Flat Rock Archives	Construction & installation
S5, S5B	NHA Visitor Gateway	Flat Rock Archives	Lettering and interpretation
S5, S5B	NHA Visitor Gateway	Lithonia Woman's Club	Construction & installation
S5, S5B	NHA Visitor Gateway	Lithonia Woman's Club	Lettering and interpretation
S6A, S6B	Interpretive Sign	Historic Flat Rock Church & Cemetery	Structure & graphics installation
S6A, S6B	Interpretive Sign	Horace King Memorial Bridge	Structure & graphics installation
S6A, S6B	Interpretive Sign	South River	Structure & graphics installation
S4A	AMP Directional Trail Signs	Arabia Mountain PATH - see map	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S4A	AMP Directional Trail Signs	Arabia Mountain PATH - see map	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S4A	AMP Directional Trail Signs	Arabia Mountain PATH - see map	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S4A	AMP Directional Trail Signs	Arabia Mountain PATH - see map	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S4A	AMP Directional Trail Signs	Arabia Mountain PATH - see map	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S4A	AMP Directional Trail Signs	Arabia Mountain PATH - see map	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S4A	AMP Directional Trail Signs	Arabia Mountain PATH - see map	Site work, graphic design, & construction
S4A	AMP Directional Trail Signs	Arabia Mountain PATH - see map	Site work, graphic design, & construction
Phase II Total			\$432,180
Phase III			
Concept Reference	Sign Type	Location	Project Phase
S2A	NHA Entrance Marker	Stone Mt / Lithonia Road	Planning, design, construction & graphics
S2A	NHA Entrance Marker	Browns Mill @ NHA boundary	Planning, design, construction & graphics
S2A	NHA Entrance Marker	Covington Hwy NW	Planning, design, construction & graphics
S2A	NHA Entrance Marker	Covington Hwy NE	Planning, design, construction & graphics
S2A	NHA Entrance Marker	Salem & Crossvale Roads	Planning, design, construction & graphics
S2A	NHA Entrance Marker	Snapfinger & Hwy 155	Planning, design, construction & graphics
Phase III Total			\$172,800