



## THE VIRGINIA AVENUE TUNNEL

### CSX Reclaims 8,800 Historical Paving Stones for Reuse September 3, 2015

Archeologists working for CSX have recovered approximately 8,800 original paving stones – more than 12 times the number anticipated – during initial construction work on the Virginia Avenue Tunnel project in the spring and summer of 2015.



The historic Virginia Avenue paving site, buried two to five feet underground and extending 500 feet east from 11th Street SE, represents a significant part of the city's historic roadway network. The site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places

(NRHP) as a contributing element of the L'Enfant Plan, which was established in 1791 by Pierre L'Enfant, the renowned architect and civil engineer chosen by President George Washington to design the layout of the streets in the District. The paving site appears to date to Mayor Boss Shepherd's post-Civil War roadway improvements for the city and would have been laid sometime during the 1880s-1890s.



“Recovering these historical paving stones exemplifies CSX’s commitment to doing this project the right way,” said Chuck Gullakson, assistant vice president - National Gateway / Virginia Avenue Tunnel, CSX. “Respecting the historical significance of the area is an important part of that commitment. In addition to the priority we place on safety, preservation of assets like these stones is another reflection of our intent to leave this great neighborhood even better than we found it.”

CSX will reuse approximately 750 paving stones and more than 400 recovered sidewalk stones in its restoration of the Virginia Avenue Park at the completion of the tunnel project. The paving stones will be reset adjacent to an interpretive panel providing historic information on the L'Enfant Plan and the Virginia Avenue paving site. The sidewalk stones will be incorporated in other pathways and areas in the park. The 8,000 remaining paving stones are being provided to DDOT, which intends to incorporate them into restoration projects throughout the District.

The effort to recover these stones and other historical aspects of the project is being managed by the Clark/Parsons JV on behalf of CSX. The team, led by Susan L. Bupp, a professional archaeologist, is responsible for identifying, evaluating and taking appropriate steps to preserve historic artifacts related to the tunnel project.

“Clark/Parsons has exercised great care and sensitivity in recovering these historic assets,” said Gullakson. “The nature of this discovery required significant hand work to preserve the value of these stones and the team’s performance has been exemplary.”

To learn more about the Virginia Avenue Tunnel reconstruction activities and stay informed about the project, please visit [www.virginiaavenuetunnel.com](http://www.virginiaavenuetunnel.com) or see the [Community Resources Information Sheet](#). We invite you to join our email list, follow us on Twitter (@VATNews) and visit us at the Community Office located at 861 New Jersey Avenue SE.