

A RECREATIONAL HUB ON THE SUSQUEHANNA RIVER



BILL CROWELL/THE EXPRESS

From left are, JS Councilman Ken Scheesley; Susquehanna Greenway Partnership Executive Director Trish Carothers; Alice Trowbridge, Susquehanna Greenway Partnership coordinator; Jennifer Wilson, president of First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania; Jersey Shore Councilman Paul Garrett; state Sen. Gene Yaw, R-Lycoming; Jersey Shore Mayor Dennis Buttorff; Tammy Gunsallus, Jersey Shore State Bank representative and River Town Team member; JS Councilwoman Barb Schmouder; JS Councilman John Pisarcik; Regional Recreation and Parks Advisor for DCNR Wes Fahringer; Jersey Shore borough manager Joe Hamm and state Rep. Garth Everett, R-Lycoming.

Jersey Shore to begin new river access work next week

By LAKESHIA KNARR
lbauman@lockhaven.com

JERSEY SHORE – Come this time next year Jersey Shore will have a new, improved river access.

Yesterday morning, about 35 community members, borough officials, state legislators and representatives of partner organizations gathered at the current launch area to hold the official groundbreaking ceremony.

After almost four years, the borough has awarded the river access project to Mid-State Paving.

Phase I of the project will begin as soon as next week, borough manager Joe Hamm said.

The first phase of the plan is to increase parking in the area by paying a small lot near the gazebo located on the corner of South Main and Smith streets.

After the winter months, the project will come back to life as the second phase of work begins.

Phase II includes the renovations of the actual access area.

All phases of the project will be completed by late spring, Hamm said.

The project will take

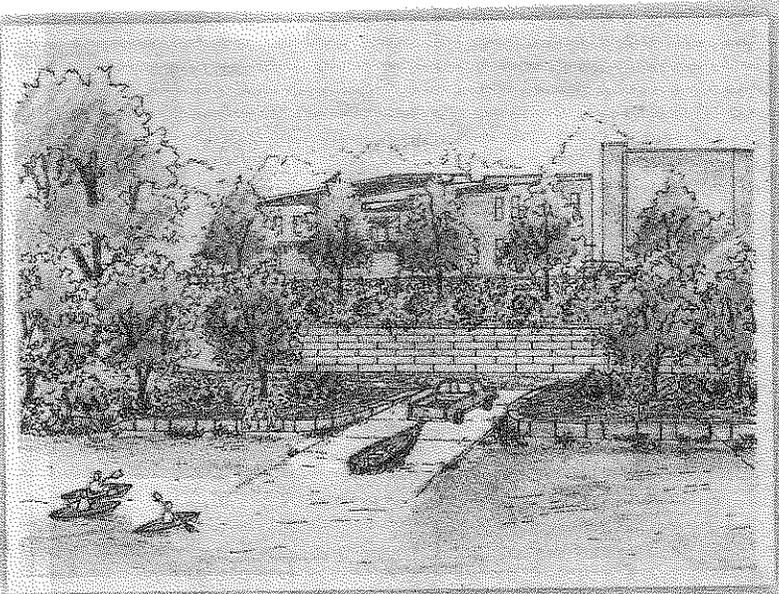


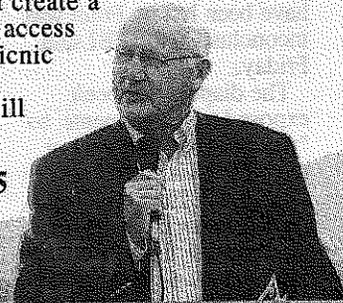
PHOTO PROVIDED

This artist's rendering shows the completed launch.

what is currently a stony, muddy and broken up area along the river, and create a paved and cobblestone-looking access point, which will also feature picnic tables.

And, it is hoped that work will have significant benefits for

See **RECREATIONAL, A5**



Susquehanna
GREENWAY
LET THE
RIVER
BE YOUR
GUIDE

www.susquehannadgreenway.org

A recreational hub on the Susquehanna River

Continued from A1

community members, area natives, as well as tourists to the area.

Goals for the project include promotion of sustainable economic development by recreational and cultural tourism, increased outdoor activities, personal connections to the Susquehanna River which would promote stewardship over the waters, and improved access for functional purposes as well, such as use by firefighting equipment.

Throughout the course of the project, a lot of work must be done.

Preparation of the site includes removal of concrete and rebar from the river bed, as well as removal of invasive species along the banks, widening and resurfacing of the vehicle access ramp down to the river, as well as a turn-around space, stabilization of the riverbank, providing ADA compliant accessibility for viewing the river and basic native landscaping to improve the habitat and reduce stormwater runoff.

Jersey Shore has been known as a hub of sorts since 1800, Jersey Shore Mayor Dennis Buttorff said, as people would make their way into town to purchase clothing, tools and food.

With a number of recreational trails moving into the area, the area is becoming yet another type of hub, Buttorff said — a recreational hub.

"I hope someday people come in to the community, put their kayaks and canoes in, or make a choice of what type of trail they want to bike on or walk on," he said.

State Sen. Gene Yaw, R-Lycoming, and State Rep. Garth Everett, R-Lycoming, were also on site to praise the efforts of the Borough of Jersey Shore and the community members

who have dug in their heels to make sure this project comes to fruition.

"It's really great to be at an opening like this," Yaw said. "I love the water. I've often thought the biggest problem we have in Lycoming County is we don't have a big enough body of water."

Yaw said he thought one of the most significant things about the project is the list of people and organizations involved — from the borough, to the county, to private citizens, companies and governmental and nonprofit organizations.

"That's the part of this that is really unique," he said. "I congratulate the people for what you're doing here."

Everett echoed Yaw's sentiments. "I do want to congratulate everyone who is involved with this," Everett said. "I want to congratulate Jersey Shore for persevering through the process. This is a perfect example of P3s — what we call in Harrisburg — public-private partnerships."

Everett reminisced about the time when the Rails to Trails was heading into the Jersey Shore area and the skepticism that surrounded it. Now, he said, everyone sees the wonderful outcome.

"It'll be great to bring bikes and kayaks and intersect here," he said. "When it opens here in the spring, I will be here with my kayak."

Wes Fahringer, Regional Recreation and Parks advisor for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, spoke of the feat that has been, literally, decades in the making.

He said he has been involved with Jersey Shore since he began working with DCNR about 11 years ago, but the public access goal has existed much longer than that.

A 1972 article by Jerry Walls, for-

mer Lycoming County Planner, indicated the same goal — to upgrade the river front, Fahringer said.

"This kind of thing has been discussed for a long time and it's really neat to see it happening now," he added.

"Trails are where it's at," he said. "Trails are part of economic development."

Jennifer Wilson, president of First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania, also briefly spoke.

The river access point will provide limitless recreational activities to both the old and young, she said.

"The river ties our community and it breaks barriers," she said.

"This community wants economic development that is sustainable and based on the environmental and cultural resources available to it," said Susquehanna Greenway Partnership Executive Director Trish Carothers. "If you don't dip a toe into this river... if you don't walk along the banks of this river... then you probably don't care about the river."

Carothers also thanked Buttorff for being such a great advocate for the river access project.

"We're looking forward to economic development and giving the community and natives of this area a chance to use the water trail and other trails that are connected here in the borough," said Jersey Shore Borough Manager Joe Hamm.

Organizations that helped fund the project include the National Park Service — Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources — Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, First Community Foundation Partnership of Pennsylvania, Lycoming County Visitors Bureau, Chesapeake

Bay Foundation, Susquehanna Greenway Partnership, Chesapeake Conservancy, and many local individual and business donors who donated almost \$50,000 toward the project.

Pledged sponsors for the project include Anadarko, C&E Containers, The Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network, Chesapeake Conservancy, David Shultz, EXCO Resources (PA), Jersey Shore Area Lioness Club, Jersey Shore Borough, Jersey Shore Moose Lodge 214, Jersey Shore Revitalization Team, Jersey Shore State Bank, Jersey Shore Steel Company, Jim and Betty Allen, Klein and Rizzo Certified Public Accountants, Nittany MinitMart, Norcen Industries Inc., Oakes Insurance Inc., Pa. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Pennsylvania General Energy, Pete and Linda Shultz, Process Control Specialties Inc., Rauchtown-Nippenose Lions Club, the Raup family in memory of John D. Raup, Santino's Italian Quisine, South Avis Realty, Susquehanna Greenway Partnership, Susquehanna Trailways, Tom and Sarah Gehret, West Pharmaceutical Services, Williamsport-Lycoming Community Foundation and Williamsport-Lycoming Visitors Bureau.

Fundraising efforts to reach the goal of \$50,000 have been very successful, Carothers explained.

An additional \$1,750 is still needed to complete the project, a handout at the groundbreaking ceremony noted. The Borough of Jersey Shore and the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership are seeking tax-deductible contributions from those who wish to see the completed project.

A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held by the borough at the completion of the project.