

River Town volunteers take on a new event

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LOCK HAVEN — The city is now officially a River Town through the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership, and the local River Town Committee is already planning Arts on the River, a new event, for fall 2015.

Arts on the River is envisioned as a two-day celebration of artistic talent, allowing local residents and arts-related business owners to showcase what they have to offer. It also can be a new way to draw visitors to the community and to celebrate Lock Haven's river heritage and access.

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The River Town volunteers include Downtown Manager Natasha Gorham, Downtown Lock Haven Inc. Board members, other businesspeople, City Council Vice President Steve Stevenson, Chamber/Tourism Director Pete Lopes and Lock Haven City Planner Leonora Hannagan. They shared ideas at a meeting Tuesday morning for Arts on the River, with a view to using the Riverwalk on top of the levee as much as possible.

Ideas included sidewalk chalk art by children on one of the entrance ramps to the Riverwalk, an art class at the beach overlook, hanging pictures on one or more railings, music at the

Corman Amphitheatre along the river, food sales at one of the walkway's main points, a dance performance, canoe rides and more.

The activities should involve the full Riverwalk, Hannagan said, so people are drawn to the Heisey Museum and the Piper Aviation Museum.

Downtown businesses and restaurants will be invited to become a part of the celebration. Vendors also will be invited, with Downtown Lock Haven Inc. receiving the vendor fees.

The partner organizations for the event include the two museums, the Clinton County Arts Council, Lock Haven University, Lock Haven Outfitters and Avenue 209

Coffee House. More will be invited to get on board, including Clinton County and Ross Library.

The celebration may be held in late September or early October.

The River Town volunteers also have their eye on a bike-pedestrian link from LHU to the downtown and on the need for more campsites along the river to attract canoe and kayak enthusiasts.

The city's Peddie Park, between the river and Renovo Road, may be a good site for passive campsites, the city planner said, if it is just a matter of cutting back vegetation.

Any plans to add to the park should consider the fact that vehicle traffic from Renovo Road must drive over an unmarked

railroad crossing to enter the park, she said. Some years ago, Norfolk Southern Railroad had communicated that it would not recognize a need for crossing signals just because the city adds to the park's use, she said, but that may have changed.

LHU students in the Recreation Management class taught by Lenny Long presented a plan for Peddie Park in 2012 that included costs of railroad crossing signals. Students taking the course this semester may be involved in planning for passive campsites along the river and may want to take another look into the railroad crossing issue.

"Never say no, say how," Hannagan said. Geology students at

LHU may be interested in another river project, similar to one from Bucknell University, said Robert Rolley, Express publisher and Downtown Board member. At Bucknell, students went out onto the river to assigned spots where they explored and took photos. Later they researched their spot's history, and their photos and

research were made available to that county's GIS office.

Lock Haven received its River Town designation only a few weeks ago, and the committee talked about hanging a sign at the Paul Mack Boulevard entrance into the city, as well as one at the amphitheatre, welcoming visitors to a true River Town.