

New Montour recreation plan in play

Signs at fields, levee entrance improvements among first possible goals, chief says

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DANVILLE — Montour County now has a master plan on how to improve and link its recreational resources.

Next, it must decide what projects are worth pursuing — like a new trail — then find the money for them.

The easiest and possibly

least expensive job would be installing “way-finding” signs to guide people to and from recreational areas such as the soccer fields and Hess Field, said Montour Area Recreation Committee director Bob Stout.

The most likely project, he said, would be improving the entrance to the levee along Grand Street between Iron

and Railroad streets.

Next year

The levee is open to the public for walking, Stout said.

But the white picket fence and gate at the Grand Street entrance often confuse people, making them unsure if the area is open, he said.

If borough council agrees, the area could be improved to

make it more welcoming and obvious it is open for public use, Stout said as the Danville Riverfront Plan was unveiled at a public meeting last week.

Improvement could start as early as next year if all the pieces fall into place, he added.

Up to \$500G

Improving the levee itself
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and making it an official trail is also part of the master plan.

But if more people start using the levee, that would wear down the grass and make it more susceptible to erosion.

And that would put the borough in a tight spot with state Department of Environmental Protection and Army Corps of Engineers.

So the top of the levee would have to be paved or covered with crushed stone, which has been done in several other communities.

It would cost \$200,000 to \$500,000 to pave it from the Grand Street entrance to the soccer fields near the water treatment plant, said Stout.

Stone may not be a good option, he said, due to mowing which may cause stones to hit nearby houses.

Support

The plan also calls for improvements around Riverfront Park and the Route 54 corridor to make walking and biking in the areas safer.

The Route 54 project may be the largest.

It calls for a trail along the creek levee to connect with the

Robbins Trail at Hess Field.

It also includes a lower fence to replace the chain-link fence along the roadway, plus improvements to the crosswalk across Route 11.

All projects are on borough land and would need the permission of council, Stout said, and in some cases PennDOT.

Council President Richard Johns liked the Route 54 project, and he believes council will also support it.

Stout asked council Tuesday to tell him what it likes about the plan so he can proceed on those aspects, and what it doesn't like so time isn't wasted.

Council didn't seem to grasp the question and just voted to show support for the master plan.

'Can-do'

Stout hopes grant money and donations will be enough to fund the projects deemed worthy of completion.

Tom Grbenick of SEDA-COG noted that Danville has a “can-do spirit.”

The plan was created by SEDA-COG with the support of the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership and MARC.