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'A BEAUTIFUL VIEW'



Ribbon-cutting ceremony held for new river access in JS

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JERSEY SHORE — “We’ve got a beautiful view of the Susquehanna River,” said Jersey Shore Mayor Denny Buttorff, as representatives from numerous organizations surrounded the new public river access.

Located near the bridge that takes people toward Antes Fort, the access provides a place for boaters to put their vessels in the water, dock temporarily, and there’s an overlook above it for passersbys to simply stop and enjoy the scenery.

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held Friday afternoon, to recognize the work of many organizations who made the project come to fruition.

In addition, Gazebo Park was established across from Main Street, and parking spaces were created to encourage people to use the site.

Buttorff talked about the history of the river that flows through the borough, noting it once reached 38 feet, 7 inches, during the 1972 flood.

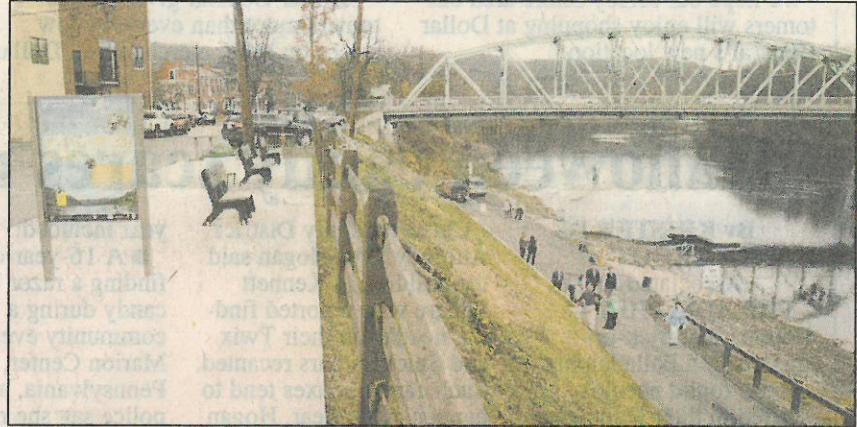
“There’s a lot of buildings... a lot of historic buildings here,” he said.

“Everything from Pine Creek comes down through here. Everything from Lock Haven comes down through here. It’s always supplied major transportation in the past.”

The river, Buttorff said, has seen tremendous use over the years.

Now that the public access is complete, the borough hopes to host different activities at the river, including canoe and kayak races and a float, he added.

Trish Carothers, executive director of the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership (SGP), a major partner in the project, also spoke.



At top, dozens of people involved with the construction of the newly established public river access in Jersey Shore Borough attend a ribbon-cutting ceremony Friday. Above, a map showing key locations in Jersey Shore is seen at the overlook near the new river access. At right, Jersey Shore Mayor Dennis Buttorff speaks during the ceremony.

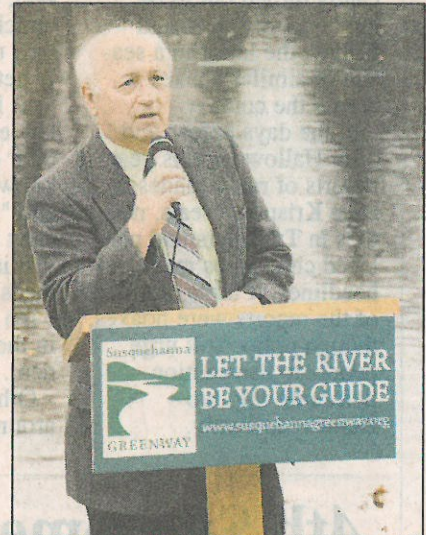
BILL CROWELL/THE EXPRESS

“We’ve been working with a team of people her in the community to make this vision happen,” Carothers said.

The SGP’s vision is to create 500 miles of connected trails, to revitalize “rivertowns” and to conserve the natural beauty of those communities in the process, she explained.

In 2012, Jersey Shore, like Lock Haven, was declared a rivertown through the SGP.

“In Jersey Shore, the history is



entwined with the history of the river and Pine Creek,” she continued. “In 2010, when we came through with our West Branch sojourn, it was nothing like it is now.”

The sojourners were greeted with a

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Ribbon cutting held for river access

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sign on the bridge, welcoming them to the borough.

Properties adjacent to the access were privately owned and five or six plots were acquired to make the access happen.

Carothers said.

Throughout 2013, SGP representatives, borough council and the Rivertown committee began conducting public input meetings to identify a list of projects, she explained.

She, like many of the speakers after her, congratulated the people who worked on the project.

"It may not look that complicated, but it was a complicated project," Carothers said.

The project, she said, has encouraged local entrepreneurs to buy buildings adjacent to the land, as well as improve and remodel existing buildings.

The future looks bright — as a coffee shop hopes to put a cafe near the access, overlooking the river, and a bike and kayak rental business may soon benefit the community.

Mike Plaskowski, educational services section chief from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), spoke next.

"This is beautiful," he said, pointing to the river that flowed majestically behind him. "My role here today is to congratulate the borough and all the partners... Thank you for helping to establish all the connections communities have with their river resources. The

connections, the improvements that've been made here are really important. Bringing people back to the river is vital to the health of a community."

A regional destination, the improvements at the eastern side of Jersey Shore represent a local park, a resource that will prove to be good for the local economy, he said.

Bob Campbell, chief of planning and development at the National Park Service's Chesapeake Bay Office, said the goal is to increase public access.

He said leveraging federal dollars with local investments and working with regional organizations is "essential to making projects like this happen."

"I've noticed the development in Jersey Shore and I commend you for your efforts," Campbell said to the numerous partners represented at the ceremony.

Carly Dean, project manager for the Chesapeake Conservancy, said her organization continues to support public access to the rivers that feed the Chesapeake Bay. "We really feel that connecting people to the river is essential to its long-term preservation. We really hope that this new public access site allows people in Jersey Shore to connect to the river in a way they couldn't before."

Vincent Matteo, president and CEO of the Williamsport-Lycoming Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau, congratulated the mayor for getting the project finished. "Economic development, recreation and tourism are not separate," Matteo said. "Quality of life is critical to the residents who

live here. This is a quality of life project..."

This type of project runs the whole gamut of what we do at the chamber. It's a great project for Jersey Shore. It's a great project for Lycoming County."

Erik Houser, legislative assistant to state Sen. Gene Yaw, R-Lycoming, and Charley Hall, district administrator for state Rep. Garth Everett, R-Lycoming, were the final two to speak.

The statesmen were both away at a meeting for the Chesapeake Bay Commission, the representatives said.

"It's great to see this come to fruition," Houser said, noting that he grew up on the eastern side of Lycoming County and enjoyed river activities. "It's great to see the people will be able to utilize this resource the way that I did."

Welcoming folks to "the most beautiful legislative district in the state," Hall noted the amount of time, energy and people this project took to complete.

He said \$48,000 was raised by private means. "Without these private dollars for projects like these, they wouldn't get done."

Following the ceremony, attendees were invited to the borough building to enjoy light refreshments.

According to a fact sheet provided by SGP, over \$500,000 in grants was raised for design, engineering and construction of the access.

Jersey Shore Borough contributed \$100,000 from Act 13 Marcelus Shale impact fee dollars.

Over this past summer, Carothers said, the SGP worked with The Progress Fund, Lock Haven University, the city of Lock Haven, Clinton County Economic Partnership, and the Williamsport-Lycoming Chamber of Commerce to conduct community assessments and a workshop will be held Nov. 18 at the Pajama Factory for the communities to see the results.

The community assessments were meant to gauge "visitor readiness" and to see what is missing and how to encourage entrepreneurial investments, she said.

Project supporters include: Anadarko, C&E Containers, Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network, Chesapeake Conservancy, David Shultz, EXCO Resources (PA), First Community Foundation Partnership of 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 & Rizzo Certified Public Accountants, Nittany MiniMart, Norcen Industries, Inc., Oakes Insurance, Inc., PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Pennsylvania General Energy, Pete and Linda Shultz, Process Control Specialists, Inc., Rauchtown-Nippnose Lions Club, the Raup Family in memory of John D. Raup, the Richard R. Motter Insurance Agency, Santino's Italian Cuisine, South Avis Realty, Susquehanna Greenway Partnership, Susquehanna Trailways, Tom and Sarah Gebret, and West Pharmaceutical Services.