

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape SUCCESS STORY

By: Urban Research &
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Upper Mount Bethel Park – Phase 3 trail and observation deck (2015)

SUMMARY

Lehigh Valley Greenways money was crucial to installing a raised deck observation / teaching area and connecting trail, approximately 750 feet long, that connects the barn and parking area with the observation deck / wetland / vernal pool area. The trail and deck are positioned to take advantage of new native plantings (funded by Landscapes for Communities and Wildlife) that enhance the wetland boundary and provide a more scenic area for the trail and deck. This project is the first step in developing an educational walk and teaching area that would overlook this preserved natural feature.



CHALLENGE

The Upper Mount Bethel Community Park has been in existence for nearly 10 years yet it was underutilized and unknown. With the aid of several initial grants, the Township was able to develop the core athletic area early on. Since that time, the focus has been on other aspects of the Township. Focus and funding fell away from the park and further development of amenities stopped.

The 2006 park master plan outlined a nine phase plan for development. By 2009 the main recreation fields were in place along with one parking lot. This was the condition of the park at the beginning of 2015

FUNDING

Grant Award:
\$12,500.00

Match:
\$16,672.37

Total Project Cost:
\$29,172.37

PARTNERSHIP IS KEY

UMBT Recreation Board –

Volunteer time

UMBT EAC – Volunteer time

UMB Park Foundation –

Volunteer time

Martins-Jacoby Watershed

Association – Volunteer & cash

Lehigh Gap Nature Center –

plant material

Township Residents –

Volunteer time and cash



SOLUTION

The trail, native planting, and observation deck project was developed with two main goals in mind. First, it was designed as a staged kickoff project to improve the park's identity and circulation system while increasing awareness of the resources and amenities to residents and visitors. Second, it was developed to increase the understanding of the value and resources of the park with Township officials and strengthen support of continued development

RESULTS

The project has been a great success. It provides residents the opportunity to explore natural outdoor ecosystems that are located within their community park. The PA Fish and Boat commission has stated that the adjacent wetland and vernal pool area is a unique feature with exception value.

The project will also assist in making this park one that will have appeal for all types of visitors, active and passive. By adding native plants, an accessible trail, and an observation area of an undisturbed wetland habitat, it balances a facility that up to this point has been focused completely on active recreation.

Ultimately, this natural pathway and the protected wetland area will create a more livable and sustainable community, protecting the quality of life for its residents.

Contact

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