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# Borough of Chambersburg

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## Chambersburg Borough Adds New Features to Nicholson Square Park

**Chambersburg, Pennsylvania** – On October 29, 2019, the Chambersburg Recreation Department held a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate Nicholson Square Park, the Borough's newest community park, located just off Bassett Drive in the northern portion of the Borough. The park was, until recently, just open space, reserved by the developers situated between rows of townhomes. Now, the facility is full of recreation options to support, not only the Nicholson Square neighborhood and its enormous youth population, but also, youngsters and adults from across Chambersburg; and even nearby Menno Haven retirement community and the Franklin Square area of Greene Township.

The multi-year effort to install new amenities fulfilled the objectives of the 2006 Borough Master Park Plan. In 2018, over ten years after the release of the plan, construction began on the first phase of this project. The park development project consisted of a picnic pavilion, age appropriate playgrounds, handicap accessible parking spaces, and a walkway around the playgrounds.

A second phase, to install two half-court basketball courts, grade and seed the remaining open space to develop a multi-purpose field, and connect and continue the pathway around the field, was finished in the fall of 2019.

"This new facility fills a tremendous need for additional park and recreational amenities in the Borough's First Ward," said Vice President of Town Council, Alice Elia, who represents the First Ward where the park is located. "The importance of a park of this nature cannot be understated, and how it is the northernmost Borough park, filling a need for our community," emphasized Julie Redding, Superintendent of the Chambersburg Recreation Department; adding "it serves as a "small regional recreational facility."

Council Member Elia, added "that a commitment of Town Council to issue the 2016 Recreation Bond not only resulted in our construction of the Aquatic Center, but new playground equipment in every neighborhood of the Borough, other amenities such as fixing up our Recreation Center on S. Third Street, and finally construction of this new facility at Nicholson Square."

Other dignitaries at the event included Council Member Barb Beattie, County Commissioners Bob Ziobrowski and Bob Thomas, Stephen Christian, President & Executive Director of the Chambersburg Area Development Corporation and the Greater Chambersburg Chamber of Commerce, and Sam Thrush from Downtown Chambersburg, Inc.

Ms. Redding pointed out "the park project was advanced through a collaborative effort between the Borough of Chambersburg, Nicholson Square Village Community Association, the community homeowners association (HOA), and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. David H. Martin was the contractor on the project and Chuck Strodoski, of YSM Landscape Architects in York, Pennsylvania, helped design the layouts for the park."

The Nicholson Square Village Community Association, along with their partner PB Services, Inc. Real Estate, donated \$50,000 towards this project. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, also known as DCNR, awarded a Community Conservation Partnerships Program grant to the Borough of Chambersburg for costs associated with the first phase of the park project. Additional proceeds for the project came from the Borough's 2016 Recreation Bond.

"The Homeowners' Association gift demonstrated a commitment to accomplishing the park development project," said Ken Rife, President of the HOA, as he expressed the community's enthusiasm for the park, "the people appreciate the park here, and we have noticed a gravitation of youth from the parking lots of the development to participation in activities at the park."

Borough Manager Jeffrey Stonehill added, "Chambersburg's Town Council has shown tremendous commitment to the Borough's recreation projects," and that "recreation is not just about health, safety, and neighborhood quality, it is a key to economic development. A good park raises area real estate values."

Mike Eschenmann of DCNR congratulated the Borough on the completion of the project, and spoke to the remarkable effort put into completing the park project and others like it in the Borough, stating, "Chambersburg has shown professional leadership and dedicated commitment to recreation projects such as this...keep up the great work here in Chambersburg."

Commissioner Bob Ziobrowski highlighted that Franklin County Commissioners have been supportive of the project since the onset, providing a support letter for the Borough's grant application in 2015. Commissioner Bob Thomas spoke to the importance of amenities like Nicholson Square Park, and commented, "the accessibility here gives this park the ability to meet the needs of those with disabilities."

"The general sense is that the neighborhood is quite pleased with the new facility," added Jeffrey Stonehill. "I hope that everyone visits the new park." If you have any questions about the Nicholson Square Park project please email Julie Redding, Chambersburg Recreation Department, at [jredding@chambersburgpa.gov](mailto:jredding@chambersburgpa.gov) or Jeffrey Stonehill, Borough Manager, at [jstonehill@chambersburgpa.gov](mailto:jstonehill@chambersburgpa.gov).

Chambersburg is a unique community. Chambersburg supplies more services than any other municipality in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In addition to typical town functions, Chambersburg is Pennsylvania's only municipality supplying electric and gas. Chambersburg is 1 of 35 Boroughs to operate a municipal non-profit electric utility. Chambersburg is the largest municipal electric utility in the State, twice as large as the second largest, Ephrata, Lancaster County; and, the only one to operate generation stations. Chambersburg is 1 of 2 municipalities in PA to operate a natural gas utility. The other is Philadelphia, which does not operate an electric utility. Nationally, Chambersburg is 1 of 2,000 communities to have its own electric system and 1 of 800 communities to have a natural gas system but 1 of only about 50 to operate both. Chambersburg manages a regional water system, a regional sanitary sewer system (not through an independent Authority), and a new storm sewer utility; one of the first storm sewer utilities to form under the new Federal mandate to regulate stormwater.

Chambersburg currently has 20,508 residents (2013). [www.chambersburgpa.gov](http://www.chambersburgpa.gov)