

April  
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# West Pikeland Township

## News

### FROM THE BOARD ROOM

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## West Pikeland Board of Supervisors

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## FROM THE BOARD ROOM

This is a first in monthly communications from the West Pikeland Board of Supervisors to further inform residents about various aspects of the township in regard to what is currently going on in the township and what is planned going forward. This month's topic is Walnut Lane Park. Completion of phase 1 of the park's development occurred prior to the outbreak of the pandemic. This turned out to be fortuitous in that many residents during the past year have utilized the paved loop or the trails that extend in the woods behind Fairfields as well as connecting with Anselma Mills. The grass on the playing fields has now had adequate time to mature and this month the fields will be open to GEYA youth soccer. This gives the township additional capacity as LYA will continue to utilize Pine Creek Park for soccer and lacrosse. Going forward use of the fields at Walnut Lane Park will expand including youth lacrosse. Additional activities are planned as the park continues to be developed over the next few years.

We would like to provide a brief history of how the park came to be and how West Pikeland Township has been successful in obtaining funding to purchase the property and develop it. Going back a number of years West Pikeland Land Trust and our Open Space Committee recognized the need for an additional park that could support active recreation as well as passive recreation. They identified the former White farm as a prime location and patiently pursued it over a number of years before it became available to buy. The property which is approximately 69 acres was bought in December of 2013 for \$5,225,000. The township obtained grants in the following amounts: \$246,000 from the Greenway, Trails and Recreation Program of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, \$1,000,000 from the Community Conservation Partnership Program of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources,

The Board of Supervisors feels establishment and development of the Walnut Lane Park is reflective of our philosophy and approach to overseeing West Pikeland Township. Residents have over the years indicated their top priorities include creating areas and opportunities for active and passive recreation along with maintaining open space. Therefore we have made them and will continue to make them our top priorities. We have worked hard to maximize financial as well as other resources for West Pikeland Township as evidenced by the securing of outside funding detailed above. Further, we encourage input and involvement of our township residents and recognize the value of their talents and contributions. As elected officials we understand our responsibilities relative to our residents and will continue to be guided by your desires and needs.



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Chester County Municipal Grant Program. Why were we eligible to apply for these grants we received? Pennsylvania Act 153, Land Preservation for Open Spaces, was passed in 1996. It allows for townships that have their own Open Space Fund to be eligible to receive grants to purchase property for open space. Back in 2007 West Pikeland Land Trust had the foresight to put forth in a public referendum the establishment of the township's own Open Space Fund. Residents by an overwhelming majority voted for establishment of this fund so West Pikeland Township became eligible for grants from county and state sources. The above grants made it financially possible for the township to purchase the White property. Because of the establishment of our own West Pikeland Open Space Fund we have also been able to utilize county and state funding in easing properties assuring they will not be developed in the future. More about that in upcoming communications.

In more recent years modifications to by the state to their open space policies also allows for a percentage of Open Space funds to be unitized for development and maintenance of properties purchased with open space money.

Phase 1 of development of the park was completed late 2020 at a cost of \$1.2 million. The township received grants from Chester County in the amount of \$225,000 and from DCNR in the amount of \$200,000 to help cover these costs. Prior to Phase 1 being initiated a master plan was developed for Walnut Creek Park guided by a professional park planner and a committee of our residents. We have applied for more grant money to continue to build out the park in future phases. The board would like to acknowledge the contributions along the way of numerous residents and the township committees who have made this park possible. We are fortunate to have residents that have in the past and continue to donate their time and talents for improvement of the township.