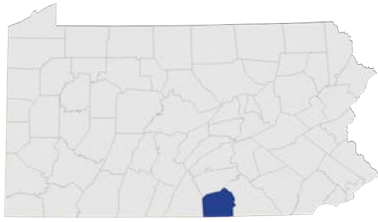


My Story



Community Pride

East Berlin Community Park

By Phil Keener, Parks and Recreation Commission

"It is gratifying to visit the park and see the families with children as they enjoy the outdoor experience that the park offers."



East Berlin Community Park is a proud achievement for this Adams County community of 1,500 people. In 2001, the citizens of East Berlin requested that the borough council purchase a 17-acre tract of land within the borough with the intent of keeping it a green area. It was recognized that the property was well-suited for that purpose, since it is composed of level ground that was farmed, a riparian corridor along Conewago Creek, a wooded tract of four acres, a small wetland, and excellent access from a lesser-traveled street in the borough. The borough council created the Parks and Recreation Commission in 2004 with the focus of initially generating a master plan for a community park on the tract. A citizen survey generated the features that the public wanted to see incorporated in the park, and a master plan was developed.



Keystone Fund Investment: \$112,000
Total Public/Private Investment:

With a master plan in place, efforts turned to a capital campaign to generate funding for the development of the park. With donations from its citizens, businesses, and civic organizations, combined with a matching grant from the Keystone

Fund, groundbreaking got underway in 2009. Initial features included a looped half-mile walking path with nestboxes along the path, an 80-person capacity picnic pavilion, parking, swings and bounce units, and a skatepark. The skatepark was not initially in this phase but an organized youth group of skaters, EBSK8s, requested that we put an open skatepark in this phase to avoid the conflicts inherent with this activity when riding on sidewalks, curbs, streets, and private property. Their request was backed by the group's fundraising efforts and a decision

Learn more at KeystoneFund.org.

was made to include the skatepark in the initial phase. It has proven to be a wise decision and is a very positive testament to youth involvement in the development of the park.

Following the initial phase, more playground equipment and soccer goals have been added and electrical service has been provided to the pavilion. The current DCNR Community Partnership Program Grant will enable us to complete the paving of the walking path and erect a basketball court. We also have been fortunate to receive a county grant which will address restroom facilities. These improvements are expected to be in place by spring of 2018. As any successful organization knows, sitting still is not an option, so initial review and planning is underway for a citizen-generated interest for a future dog park.

As an original member of the East Berlin Parks and Recreation Commission, I am proud of our community for recognizing the value of greenspace and then supporting the development of it for recreational purposes. It is gratifying to visit the park and see the walkers, skateboarders, and families with children on the playground equipment as they enjoy the outdoor experience that the park offers. It is a great success story for a community of our size and one that continues to see expanded use and appreciation by not only our citizens but surrounding communities and townships as well.

