

Lambertville receives \$300K loan for a facelift

By Cristina Rojas

LAMBERTVILLE — A facelift for the heavily used Cavallo Park is closer to becoming a reality following the state's awarding of a low-interest loan to the city.

Officials learned this week that they received a \$300,000 low-interest loan from the state's Green Acres program for the popular tot lot.

The city had applied for \$485,771. Without the extra money, Mayor David DelVecchio said, the Recreation Commission would have to scale back the renovations.

Under the original plans, Lambertville architect Michael Burns proposed a main entry plaza that would include an information kiosk with built-in trash and recycling bins and a water fountain. On the western side, the entrance that opens to the towpath would have public bathrooms.

In the southeast corner of the park, Burns proposed building a "duck deck" that would jut out over the D&R Canal where kids could feed the ducks swimming by. On the opposite side, a pavilion, barbeque and picnic area could provide space for parties and get-togethers.

The open space in the center

A main entry plaza would include an informational kiosk and water fountain.

would remain as is, Burns said, but a low berm would offer additional seating for movie nights.

Burns also proposed a new path that would loop around the perimeter of the park.

The commission hopes to replace the play structure for ages 2 to 5 and attach new equipment to the existing structure in the larger play area, member Megan Ruf said in February.

The commission also planned to apply for a \$25,000 grant from the New Jersey Trails Association, she said then.

Ruf had suggested that additional funds for the project, and its subsequent maintenance costs, could come from Friends of Cavallo Park, a nonprofit group that is in the works. The Cavallo Park award is among \$66.2 million approved by the Garden State Preservation Trust.

The grants were announced Sept. 19 by the state Department of Environmental Protection,

which oversees the program.

Also in Hunterdon, High Bridge and the townships of Clinton, Delaware, Readington, Tewksbury and Union are each to receive \$325,000 in planning incentive grants for the acquisition of open space.

Six Somerset County towns will share more than \$2.2 million in Green Acres funding.

Somerville is to receive a \$306,400 matching grant for the acquisition of property in the borough's "Green Seam" project area. The project is within the boundaries of the former Municipal Landfill Redevelopment Area and consists of seven parcels currently not owned by the borough.

Also in Somerset County, Bedminster is to receive \$325,000 for parks expansion. Franklin and Hillsborough are to receive \$487,500 each for open space land acquisition and Montgomery and Peapack-Gladstone are to receive \$325,000 each for the same purpose in the state Planning Incentive Grant (PIG) program.

In Warren County, Knowlton is to receive a \$325,000 planning incentive grant for open space acquisition.

Warren Cooper contributed to this article.