Member Spotlight
February 2021

Paxtang Park Celebrates Reopening; Offers Access to Greenbelt Trails

While Paxtang Park is no longer in the Dauphin County borough that bears its name, its recent rejuvenation was supported by the borough.

Historically, the area was a part of Paxtang, but over the years various municipal borders changed, and it fell “on the other side of the tracks,” outside the borough’s boundaries, according to Borough Manager Keldeen Stambaugh.

In 2017, the Susquehanna Area Mountain Bike Association (SAMBA) had the idea to restore Paxtang Park with the park re-opening in the spring of 2020.

The origin of Paxtang Park is as a 40-acre trolley turnaround. In the early 1900s, to entice people to ride the trolley, the company built a “trolley park” that included a rollercoaster, carousel, restaurant, and lake. The park fell out of use after the trolley system shut down.

Initially, SAMBA came to the borough to partner in their efforts to create mountain bike trails along the Greenbelt Trail in Paxtang.

Because the park property is part of the Greenbelt Trail, it is considered a Harrisburg City property with the parcel and entrance in Swatara Township.

“We supported and assisted as we could with clean up, tree issues, and signs,” said Stambaugh. “I assisted in bringing all the right players to the table to help move the vision forward.”

While the volunteer coordination and plans were led by SAMBA, the non-profit was assisted by the Capital Area Greenbelt Association, which includes five municipalities.

“The trail ties us together in many ways,” said Stambaugh.

Paxtang is a relatively small borough, Stambaugh said, but “in many ways we support and provide an inclusive feel to our ‘community,’ which spills over to borderline residents within Swatara Township.”

After the renovations, Paxtang Park has nearly two dozen parking spots, a large pavilion with picnic tables, and a information kiosk. Funds for the project were raised by SAMBA.

For more information for the park at 147 City Park Dr., Harrisburg, visit SAMBA’s website at samba biker.com.

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