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Rudyk Park Plans Take Shape with Community Workshops

PERTH AMBOY – Upcoming workshops and community input will play a key role in the improvement and expansion of Perth Amboy’s Rudyk Park, according to project organizers.

A free workshop, open to the public and scheduled for 4 to 6 p.m. April 29 at a multipurpose room on Middlesex County College’s Perth Amboy campus, 60 Washington St., will address the park’s ongoing issues of access, lighting and drainage inadequacies, as well as inventory the equipment and pedestrian upgrades needed.

To further engage the public, organizers plan to canvass residents in the park’s surrounding neighborhoods and schedule a second workshop for May.

The public’s impact may well reach into every aspect of the Rudyk Park improvements, from the design to the inclusion of arts to how the park is used, said Denise Nickel, a senior project manager for the Economic Development Division of the Middlesex County Improvement Authority, one of several entities involved in the venture.

“This is a forum that welcomes resident feedback,” Nickel said. “We want to hear from the individuals who use the park and who have a stake in its expansion. Their past experiences, ideas and recommendations may craft the outcome of this plan.”

The City-owned, 7.87-acre Rudyk Park is named for Army Private First Class Stanley Rudyk, the first local Ukrainian-American casualty of World War II.

The park is also home to the Roberto Clemente Stadium, a popular venue for sporting activities.

“Rudyk Park celebrates Perth Amboy’s diverse roots,” said Middlesex County Freeholder Deputy Director Carol Bellante, liaison to the MCIA. “Roberto Clemente was one of the Major League’s first Puerto Rican baseball players, whose name graces both the stadium and the Puerto Rican Day Festival that the park now annually hosts. This small plot of land is a major source of pride, honoring the heritage of so many who call this City home.”

Currently, a portion of the MCIA’s \$1 million Brownfields Coalition Assessment Grant from the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency has funded the project’s environmental assessments, planning and community outreach efforts.

The outreach phase of the Rudyk Park project began in March and will run through June.

Planners expect to present a report and unveil a final site-concept design, which will also incorporate a new firehouse on the property, by mid-summer.

Aside from the MCIA, Perth Amboy’s Mayor Wilda Diaz and members from the City’s Office of Economic and Community Development, Office of Recreation, Department of Public Works and outside consultants from the Rutgers Center for Urban and Environmental Sustainability have been instrumental in this endeavor.

CoLAB Arts of New Brunswick, an organization that engages artists and their advocates and facilitates creative conversation through programming, infrastructure, partnerships, mentoring and productions, is also exploring how it can become more involved with the Rudyk Park enhancements.

Updates on the Rudyk Park accessibility and expansion project can be found at <http://rudykpark.blogspot.com/>.

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