



Moon seeks funding for riverfront park plan

By **Tory N. Parrish**

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Moon doesn't have \$6.5 million it needs to turn a contaminated, old industrial site and adjacent property into a riverfront park, officials said.

The township hopes to receive state and federal grants to move forward with developing the park along the Ohio River.

"It's all based on money at this point. ... It's not a cheap project," said Lance Welliver, director of Parks and Recreation.

The property consists of 19.2 acres along Route 51, east of the Sewickley Bridge, along the south bank of the Ohio River.

Two parcels — totaling 15.1 acres — once were owned by Russell, Burdsall & Ward Corp., which made bolts and nuts at the Moon site from the 1920s until the 1990s, according to a master site plan that Sean Garrigan, a principal from Somerset-based planning and design firm Stromberg/Garrigan & Associates Inc., presented to Moon supervisors last week.

Oil from manufacturing processes contaminated some soil. The Moon Township Municipal Authority acquired the property in 2002 to protect the quality of its groundwater extraction wells nearby, and to ensure township access to the land, said John Riley, the authority's general manager.

The township has applied for a \$600,000 Environmental Protection Agency brownfields grant as part of the Ohio River Brownfields Coalition that, if approved, would be split among four municipalities. Moon hopes to find out by June whether the grant is approved, Welliver said.

Moon received a \$30,000 state grant in 2012 to study the riverfront project, which included the site plan. The township contributed \$30,000 to the study.

There are three parks in Moon but the township doesn't have much river frontage, which adds to the allure of having a riverfront park, Supervisor Marvin Eicher said.

The park would be developed primarily for "passive recreation," so it would not include athletic fields or courts, according to the site plan.

It would include a "great lawn" that would step down to the river's edge; an urban beach; a water spray pad; river boardwalks; and fishing piers.

"It's a different type of recreation. And I think a community the size of Moon, we're really looking for opportunities to create more recreation for residents," Eicher said.

The park would be a link to the planned Ohio River Trail, a 41-mile bike and water trail that the Ohio River Trail Coalition wants to develop from Coraopolis to Ohioville, officials said.

"It directly fits in and then it becomes like a major anchor of the trail," Garrigan said.

Some remediation has been done on the property, but \$4.5 million is needed to meet Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection standards, according to the site plan.

An additional \$2 million is needed for improvements, such as park amenities and a railroad crossing that also would serve employees of Fab-Tec Industries Inc. on University Boulevard, the plan said. The plan

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recommends that Moon seek grants.

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