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Chambersburg celebrates road, stormwater improvements

Joyce Nowell Sep 12, 2018 Updated Sep 12, 2018



Stakeholders in the \$430,000 Rhodes Drive reconstruction and stormwater project gathered Wednesday to mark its completion.

Bu

By Joyce Nowell

CHAMBERSBURG, Pa. — An aesthetically pleasing area of downtown Chambersburg also has a practical purpose that was celebrated Wednesday by borough officials and stakeholders involved in the Rhodes Drive reconstruction and stormwater project.

The \$430,000 project, which provided an improved access street for emergency vehicles, supplied better walkways in the area between Coyle Free Library and The Towers at Falling Spring, and established an attractive bioretention area with river rock and native vegetation, also plays a role in the borough's efforts to control stormwater runoff.

“We now have water-quality features that will clean the pollutants and the contaminants from the stormwater,” said Andrew Stottlemyer, Chambersburg's storm-sewer-system manager.

The bioretention basin implements best-management practices by reducing the rate and volume of stormwater runoff from the street and parking lots that discharge into the Falling Spring branch of Conococheague Creek. Stormwater instead will redirect into the basin and be filtrated, resulting in improved water quality.

“We have a lot of infiltration going on,” Stottlemyer said of the project launched in 2015 and funding by federal, state and local funds. “The plants are taking up a lot of the stormwater. And I think, ultimately, it's resulted in a lot less stormwater getting into the Falling Spring creek untreated.”

The walkway is lighted and acts as a nature trail, complete with ducks who enjoy the creek.

Stottlemyer admitted that the pollutant reduction from the project is small compared to federal requirements that the borough must meet as part of the Chesapeake Bay cleanup, but noted a considerable list of people and organizations that cooperated to get the project done.

“This is the first project that will go toward meeting our requirements, and it was an important project because it brought together a community,” he said. “Not only does it serve as a benefit to our natural resources, it provides benefits to our community as well.”

State legislators were impressed.

“I love to see the partnerships in our community,” said state Rep. Rob Kauffman, R-Franklin.

State Sen. Richard Alloway II, Pennsylvania chairman and appointee to the Chesapeake Bay Commission, said "little projects like this matter."

"These are happening all over the bay watershed, and it's projects like these that are adding up to make a difference to clean up the bay," said Alloway, R-Franklin/Adams/Cumberland/York.

"This project is amazing," said Alice Elia, vice chairwoman of the Chambersburg Borough Council. "It's something that we can be proud of. It's a fantastic asset to our community. This project is one of many that will be implemented here in the next five years as part of an initiative to improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay."



[Andrew Stottlemyer explains benefits of bio-retention basin](#)

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