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A \$10 million project

The Trust for Public Land celebrates groundbreaking for Nat Turner Park

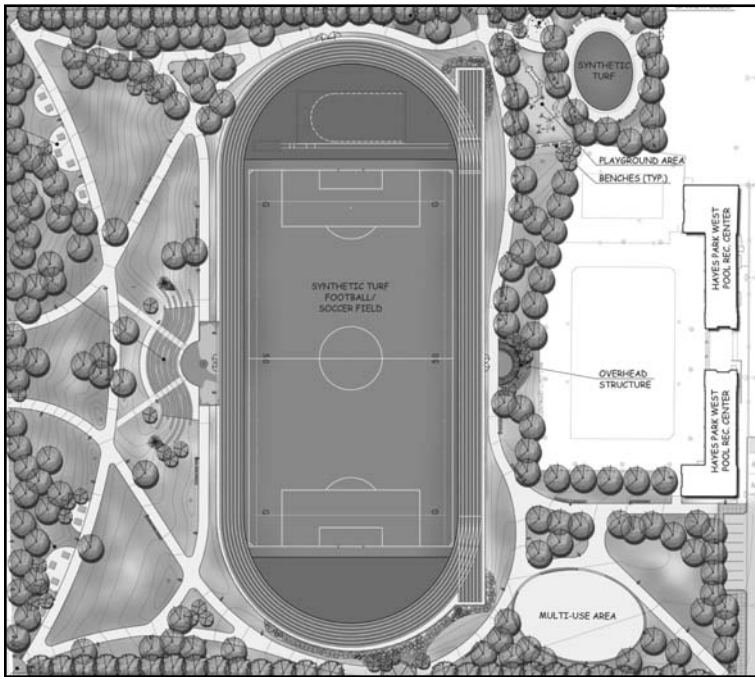
NEWARK, N.J. — The Trust for Public Land (TPL) and Newark Mayor Cory Booker broke ground in June at Nat Turner Park, beginning construction at the largest city-owned park in Newark. TPL will transform the nine-acre lot, which has been underutilized since the city acquired it in the 1970s, into a safe, vibrant, well-used park that will serve residents, including nearly 7,000 neighborhood children. The \$10 million construction project is expected to be complete next summer.

The work is being done as part of TPL's Parks for People—Newark initiative, a \$30 million investment in Newark communities. The Trust for Public Land is a national nonprofit organization that conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, gardens, and natural areas, ensuring livable communities for generations to come. In urban areas, much of this work takes shape in park development projects. In outlying areas, TPL focuses on buying land from private owners and transferring it to public ownership for recreational uses.

Located in the Central Ward's Springfield neighborhood, Nat Turner Park is adjacent to Hayes Park West Pool and Recreation Center and surrounded by multifamily residential housing as well as several schools, including Eighteenth Avenue School, Cleveland School, and



Newark Mayor Cory Booker and project team brok ground on Nat Turner Park in the Central Ward on June 16



Nat Turner Park final rendering

the new Central High School.

"We are making the dream of a quality, modern, park in our Central Ward a reality through the partnership we have built with The Trust for Public Land and the Newark Public Schools and the creativity and input of the Central Ward community," said Mayor Booker. "Together, we have manifested the spiritual strength that enables us to transform our city into the national leader in safety, prosperity and the nurturing of family life, and make that real for every resident of our community."

"Nat Turner Park is a reflection of our commitment to addressing the dire need for recreational open space in the city. Urban parks are critical to a good quality of life for residents in Newark and other cities, and we are very excited about the commencement of construction at the park," said Rose Harvey, senior vice president of The Trust for Public Land.

Participatory design is a signature of TPL's park development work. For Nat Turner Park, guided by a Master Plan Steering Committee with representatives from the City of Newark, Newark Public Schools, and the community, TPL held workshops with local residents and students, asking them to set priorities for the park and create models of the design.

The park will include an am-

phitheatre, community event space, multi-purpose athletic field, 400-meter regulation track, a playground, picnic areas, and streetscape improvements. The City of Newark, Newark Public Schools, and the community will play lead roles in park stewardship and programming, with support from Friends of Nat Turner Park.

Lead funding was provided by the City of Newark, the New Jersey DEP, and Victoria Foundation. Additional support was contributed by Essex County Recreation & Open Space Trust Fund, Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Johnson & Johnson, Local Initiatives Support Corporation's NFL Grassroots Program, National Recreation Foundation, The Prudential Foundation, and New Jersey Urban Enterprise Zone Authority. TPL is working in partnership with Newark Public Schools, Springfield/Belmont Super Neighborhood Council, and Friends of Nat Turner Park.

TPL is raising \$30 million to invest in 11 of Newark's parks and playgrounds. Other projects include the renovations of Jesse Allen Park, the creation of a playground at Mount Vernon School, expansion of two existing playgrounds, and work at Minish Park on the Passaic River. TPL has already created seven Newark parks and playgrounds, serving more than 31,000 residents.

Mc Gowan Builders breaks ground on 44,000 s/f Leaguers Headquarters and Head Start Development

NEWARK, NJ — The Leaguers, Inc. and Mc Gowan Builders, Inc. (MGB), broke ground for the two-story, 44,000 s/f Leaguers Headquarters and Head Start Building at 405-425 University Ave. The total development cost of the project is \$23.5 million. The building construction cost is \$14 million. The Leaguers executive director and CEO Veronica Ray; U.S. Congressman Donald M. Payne; County of Essex Deputy Chief of Staff and former Leaguers Chairman William D. Payne; Mc Gowan Builders president and CEO



405-425 University Ave.

Patrick J. Mc Gowan; and Mc Gowan Builders vice president Martin C. Mc Gowan led the ceremonies.

The building, a major element of the Downtown Newark redevelopment effort, will house The Leaguers headquar-



Leaguers groundbreaking

ters office, a 22,000 s/f Head Start and community services facility, a commercial office space, and an underground parking garage. The \$23.5-million project was financed through the Federal New Market Tax Credit.

"Today's groundbreaking ceremony marks the new chapter in The Leaguers' six decades of service for the community of the Greater Newark Metropolitan Area. Our new building will provide services to more than 200 Head Start students and to more than 100 children and parents in after school programs," said The Leaguers Executive Director and CEO Veronica Ray. "This project was made possible by the financial participation of Boston Community Capital, Nationwide Insurance Company, and Stonehenge Community

Development. Crucial support was provided by The Office of the City of Newark Mayor Cory A. Booker, Deputy Mayor for Economic and Housing Development Stefan Pryor, and the Newark Councilwoman Dana Rone."

"We're delighted to be a part of this magnificent project that will contribute so significantly to the development of Newark. Upon completion in 2009, The Leaguers building will provide the community with excellent child care, education and other vital social services," said Patrick Mc Gowan.

Moving Newark Forward

Despite current economic challenges and the national housing finance crisis, the Booker Administration is dramatically expanding the housing choices available to lower income residents.

After years of under-funding, the city is redirecting resources, starting new programs and using creative measures to accomplish the Mayor's goal of providing significantly more housing options for all Newarkers. Over the last two years, the Booker administration has DOUBLED the number of new affordable housing units that are under construction and has INCREASED the pipeline of new affordable housing projects by almost 400%.

The city currently has completed over 400 units of affordable housing and made them available for Newark families. In addition, over 100 homes will be built, including 13 new projects to be approved in the coming weeks. These homes will be made available to families who earn too much income to qualify for "low income" housing, but can not afford market rate housing. Despite the housing crisis, limited federal and state resources, and the credit market crunch, the Booker Administration is steadily delivering on its commitment to creating more housing options for all Newark residents at every income level.

Some key affordable housing projects for low income and at-risk Newarkers currently underway include:

- **Integrity House Women's Housing Program**
- **Rights of Passage**
- **Avon/Springfield Multi-generational Housing**

This new multi-generational housing project will provide 23 units of rental housing affordable to low and extremely low-income households. Ten (10) units will be rented to low income seniors, and at least 13 units will be rented to seniors that serve as primary care-givers for grandchildren and great grandchildren.

- **Ivy Hill Senior Community**
- **Avon Mapes**

This project will provide 19 units of affordable rental housing for families located at three different sites in the South Ward. The Stratford Homes project, located on Avon Avenue, provides transitional housing in large, three-bedroom units, for formerly homeless families with children.

- **Springfield Commons**

For more information on Affordable Housing, please call (973) 733-8400 or log onto the City's website
www.ci.newark.nj.us

