

## MIDDLETOWN

## Supervisors move ahead with recreation projects

*Sand volleyball courts are becoming more popular and don't require much maintenance, the parks and recreation director said.*

By CHRIS ENGLISH COURIER TIMES

Middletown is going a little Southern California at one of its township parks.

The supervisors approved moving forward with building a sand volleyball court at Forsythia Crossing Park in the Forsythia Gate section. The park, which also includes a street hockey rink and other amenities, is the former site of a Levittown Public Recreation Association pool.

Also at the Tuesday night meeting, the board threw a bone to hoops enthusiasts by approving the advertisement of bids for a full basketball court at Cobalt Ridge Park in the Cobalt Ridge section. It will replace the half court there now.

While true costs won't be known until the bids are opened, the estimate for the basketball court is \$65,000 and the volleyball court \$23,100, said township Parks and Recreation Director Debby Lamanna. Those numbers include an estimated \$15,000 in design and engineering costs for the basketball court and \$5,400 for the volleyball court, she said.

Lamanna said the sand volleyball court was suggested by the township's teen task force, an advisory board that makes suggestions to the supervisors on issues concerning teenagers and young adults.

"They brought up the need for more sports facilities teenagers could use without having to be part of an organized sports association," she said. "If you don't want to play baseball or soccer or something like that in an organized league, and you don't skateboard, this is another outdoor physical activity people can take advantage of."

Sand volleyball courts are becoming more popular, said Lamanna.

"These courts are very well used in other municipalities," she said. "Bensalem has three or four of them. They get good use and are no problem in terms of maintenance."

There also are sand volleyball courts at the Falls Township Community Park and at Memorial Park in Lower Makefield, the park where the Garden of Reflection Sept. 11 Memorial is located.

Lamanna said a full basketball court at Cobalt Ridge was reduced to a half court several years ago because of complaints about noise and other disturbances from fullcourt play. However, the new full court will be built at a location that is farther away from houses. Hopefully, that will satisfy everyone, she said.

"We get a lot of requests from people who want to play full-court basketball as opposed to just half-court," Lamanna said. "Among our township parks in the Levittown sections, the only other full basketball court is in Quincy Hollow."

Bid advertising for the courts was approved by the supervisors 4-1, with Robert McMonagle dissenting. He expressed concern about the design and engineering costs, especially for the volleyball court.

Lamanna said that those costs include not just drafting bid documents, but drawing up plans, taking soil samples and doing other work at the sites to ensure the courts are placed at the best spot.

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