

PUBLIC NOTICE PUBLICATION

The Essex County Board of County Commissioners Conference/Board Meeting will hold a public hearing on **Wednesday, February 15 at 5:00 P.M.** After **6 P.M.**, the Commissioners will hold a public hearing. The purpose of the hearing is to obtain public comment on a park development grant application to be submitted to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Urban Parks and Green Acres Grant Programs. This application is for improvements to Weequahic Park located at Elizabeth Avenue and Meeker Avenue in Newark, New Jersey, including replacement and improvements to the track circling the lake and the addition of new fitness equipment. A concept plan showing the proposed changes, an Environmental Impact Assessment, and a preliminary cost estimate can be found at: <https://essexcountynj.org/notice>.

The Commissioners will be available to discuss the project and answer questions. All residents are encouraged to attend and participate. To provide written comments on the proposed application, or to request a copy of the final application, please contact: Joshua Zaitz, Contract Administrator, jzaitz@parks.essexcountynj.org, 115 Clifton Avenue, Newark, NJ 07104.

**2023 Request
County of Essex
Weequahic Park Improvements**

Cost Estimate

Weequahic Park Improvements	
Remove approximately 2.2 miles of rubberized walking track around Weequahic Lake	\$85,000.00
Install approximately 2.2 miles of new rubberized walking track around Weequahic Lake	\$650,000.00
Remove exercise equipment along the walking track (15 pieces)	\$200,000.00
Replace the exercise equipment along the walking track (15 pieces)	\$450,000.00
Signage	\$100,000.00
Park Appurtenances	\$150,000.00
Benches	\$100,000.00
Total Weequahic Park	\$1,735,000.00
SUBTOTAL	\$1,735,000.00
Professional Services @ 13%	\$225,550.00
Contingency @20%	\$347,000.00
TOTAL BUDGET	\$2,307,550.00

Sanjeev Varghese, Essex County Engineer
Essex County Department of Public Works

Date

01-23-23



1/25/2023, 4:01:31 PM

- Water Bodies
- County Boundaries
- CLAIMED
- Wetlands (2012)
- Municipalities
- Wetlands (2007)
- Road Centerlines of NJ



INFORMATION TABLE	
Project Name	Weequahic Park - Jogging Track & Misc. Improvements
Project Location	Weequahic Park, City of Newark, New Jersey
Block/Lot	3730/1
Scale of Map	1 = 300
Adjacent Streets	US HWY 22, Meeker St, Dayton St, Frelinghuysen Ave.
Proposed Improvements	Rehabilitation of perimeter jogging track & replacement of 15 pieces of exercise equipment

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WEEQUAHIC PARK
JOGGING TRACK IMPROVEMENTS

CITY OF NEWARK
ESSEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY



ESSEX COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
DIVISION OF ENGINEERING

SANJEEV VARGHESE
COUNTY ENGINEER
N.J. P.E. Lic. No. 40597

No.	Date	Description
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TITLE:

CONCEPT PLAN

PROJECT:

DRAWN: GV

DESIGNED: GV

CHECKED:

APPROVED:

DATE: 01-26-2023

SCALE: 1" = 300"

SHEET: 1 OF 1



FLOOD HAZARD INFORMATION

SEE FIS REPORT FOR DETAILED LEGEND AND INDEX MAP
FOR DRAFT FIRM PANEL LAYOUT

SPECIAL FLOOD HAZARD AREAS		Without Base Flood Elevation (BFE) <i>Zone A, V, A99</i>
		With BFE or Depth <i>Zone AE, AO, AH, VE, AR</i> Regulatory Floodway
OTHER AREAS OF FLOOD HAZARD		0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard, Areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depth less than one foot or with drainage areas of less than one square mile <i>Zone X</i>
		Future Conditions 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard <i>Zone X</i>
		Area with Reduced Flood Risk due to Levee See Notes <i>Zone X</i>
OTHER AREAS		Area with Flood Risk due to Levee <i>Zone D</i>
		NO SCREEN Area of Minimal Flood Hazard <i>Zone X</i>
GENERAL STRUCTURES		Effective LOMRs
		Area of Undetermined Flood Hazard <i>Zone D</i>
OTHER FEATURES		Channel, Culvert, or Storm Sewer
		Levee, Dike, or Floodwall
		Cross Sections with 1% Annual Chance
		Water Surface Elevation
		Coastal Transect
		Coastal Transect Baseline
		Profile Baseline
		Hydrographic Feature
		Base Flood Elevation Line (BFE)
		Limit of Study
		Jurisdiction Boundary

NOTES TO USERS

For information and questions about this Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), available products associated with this FIRM, including historic versions, the current map date for each FIRM panel, how to order products, or the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) in general, please call the FEMA Map Information eXchange at 1-877-FEMA-MAP (1-877-336-6627) or visit the FEMA Flood Map Service Center website at <https://msc.fema.gov>. Available products may include previously issued Letters of Map Change, a Flood Insurance Study Report, and/or digital versions of this map. Many of these products can be ordered or obtained directly from the website.

Communities annexing land on adjacent FIRM panels must obtain a current copy of the adjacent panel as well as the current FIRM Index. These may be ordered directly from the Flood Map Service Center at the number listed above.

For community and countywide map dates, refer to the Flood Insurance Study Report for this jurisdiction.

To determine if flood insurance is available in this community, contact your Insurance agent or call the National Flood Insurance Program at 1-800-638-6620.

Basemap information shown on this FIRM was provided in digital format by the United States Geological Survey (USGS). The basemap shown is the USGS National Map: Orthoimagery. Last refreshed October, 2020.

This map was exported from FEMA's National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL) on **1/26/2023 10:19 AM** and does not reflect changes or amendments subsequent to this date and time. The NFHL, and effective information may change or become superseded by new data over time. For additional information, please see the Flood Hazard Mapping Updates Overview Fact Sheet at <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/118418>

This map complies with FEMA's standards for the use of digital flood maps if it is not void as described below. The basemap shown complies with FEMA's basemap accuracy standards. This map image is void if the one or more of the following map elements do not appear: basemap imagery, flood zone labels, legend, scale bar, map creation date, community identifiers, FIRM panel number, and FIRM effective date.

SCALE

Map Projection:
GCS, Geodetic Reference System 1980;
Vertical Datum: NAVD83, NGVD29

For information about the specific vertical datum for elevation features, datum conversions, or vertical monuments used to create this map, please see the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) Report for your community at <https://msc.fema.gov>

1 inch = 500 feet 1:6,000

0 250 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 Feet

0 50 100 200 300 400 Meters



NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE PROGRAM
FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAP

PANEL 154 OF 178

Panel Contains:

COMMUNITY	NUMBER	PANEL
TOWNSHIP OF HILLSIDE	340465	0154
CITY OF ELIZABETH	345523	0154
CITY OF NEWARK	340189	0154

Weequahic Park – Essex County, New Jersey Environmental Assessment

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

- a. Briefly describe the total development project

Weequahic Park: The proposed project seeks to complete improvements to Weequahic Park. The project scope includes replacement and improvements to the track circling the lake and the addition of new fitness equipment.

- b. State objectives of / need for the project

The County seeks to complete this project in an effort to expand and enhance the recreational offerings available at Weequahic Park. Weequahic Park serves the recreation needs of the City of Newark and surrounding communities, and is also enjoyed by residents throughout Essex County. Essex County is home to 852,720 residents and is the third largest in New Jersey. According to the United States Census Bureau, 37.4% of Essex County residents are African-American, 29.1% are White, 23.7% are Hispanic, 5.5% are Asian, and 4.3% are Other or Two or More Races. Essex County is the second most densely populated county in the state, which demonstrates the need for protecting and enhancing limited open space resources.

The urban population that surrounds Weequahic Park is an immense and diverse population. The City of Newark is home to a population of over 306,000 residents, of which 46.5% are Black/African-American, 36.8% are Hispanic/Latinx, 9.9% are White/Non-Hispanic, 1.8% are Asian, and 5% are Other or Two or More Races.

Approximately 79,000 Newark residents are living in households with incomes at or below the federal poverty level. While the City and County are home to racially and ethnically diverse populations, the socioeconomic conditions in the City and County demonstrate significant concentrations of poverty and related social determinants of health. According to the US Census American Community Survey, the median household income for the City is \$41,335, roughly 60% of the US average household median income of \$69,021, while the County median income is \$67,826. In addition, 25.8% of the City's population and 15.3% of the County's population live below the poverty line. These statistics demonstrate a significant need for safe, accessible, and well-maintained open space in the City of Newark and County of Essex, and the proposed project seeks to cultivate Weequahic Park's ability to provide such a space.

- c. Fully describe multi-phase projects

Not applicable. The proposed project is not multi-phase in scope.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Describe existing environmental features:

a. vegetation

Weequahic Park is home to significant vegetation, including thousands of trees of various native species, as well as grass lawn areas throughout various sections of the park.

b. wildlife

Weequahic Park, like most parks in the Essex County Parks System, were designed by the Olmstead family – who designed New York City’s Central Park. They contain naturalistic landscapes inhabited by local bird life and woodland animals typical of the northern New Jersey region.

c. geology, topography and soils

Weequahic Park is located in the Lower Passaic and Saddle River Watershed Management Area. Moreover, “Essex County is located within the glaciated Newark Basin portion of the Piedmont physiographic province. The Newark Basin is an elongated northeast/southwest-trending rift valley.” The site sits on the Passaic Formation Sandstone and Siltstone facies. The primary rock type on the formation is sandstone, with a siltstone secondary rock type. The sandstone is interbedded grayish-red to brownish-red to a maximum thickness of roughly 3,600 feet. Geochronologically, the formation is estimated to be of the Lower Jurassic an Upper Triassic periods. The native soils consist mainly of Boonton Loam, which is a fertile soil consisting of clay, sand, and humus.

Weequahic Park is relatively flat, totaling 311.33 acres, including an 80-acre lake.

d. water resources/hydrology

Weequahic Park Lake is an 80 acre lake located within the boundaries of Weequahic Park. The lake is home to a variety of fish, including largemouth bass, catfish, channel catfish, yellow perch, carp, and sunfish. The lake is utilized for activities such as fishing and kayaking by visitors.

e. historic/archeological resources

At Weequahic Park, the Divident Hill Memorial Pavilion was constructed in 1916 on the hill where Robert Treat and other commissioners of the town of Newark met with the commissioners of Elizabeth-town to fix the boundaries between the settlements, thus commemorating the 250th anniversary of Newark’s founding.

f. transportation/access to site

Weequahic Park is accessible by car, on foot, and by bicycle. The park is easily accessible from US-22 and is situated close to the Newark Liberty International Airport. The park is also located in Newark's Weequahic neighborhood, from which residents can easily access the park via various residential streets. There are also several bus stops located in close proximity to Weequahic Park, with stops located on North Broad Street at Mertz Avenue and Hillside Avenue at Munn Avenue. The park is also located less than two miles from the Newark Liberty International Airport Train Station, which serves passengers travelling on the Keystone Service, North Jersey Coast Line, and North East Corridor.

g. adjacent land uses/description of the surrounding neighborhood

Weequahic Park is located close to Newark's highly populated Weequahic neighborhood, as well as the Newark Liberty International Airport.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED ACTION

a. Discuss all affected resources and the significance of each impact

The project entails the one-for-one replacement of the existing track surrounding the lake, as well as the addition of a fitness cycle around the lake. The proposed improvements and enhancements are not anticipated to have any adverse effects on the surrounding environments in Weequahic Park. Weequahic Park offers spaces that are currently available and are demonstrably suitable for the planned additions and enhancements. Project locations were selected to minimize vegetative clearing, grading, and soil erosion to the greatest possible extent.

b. Discuss short-term and long-term project impacts

In the short term, the replacement of the track will sustain active recreation at Weequahic Park, as it will provide visitors with an upgraded facility for walking and jogging. Additionally, the new fitness equipment will increase recreational opportunities for Newark and Essex County residents. Over the long term, the new track and fitness equipment will allow for more sustained active recreation throughout the year, and improve health and wellness of populations disproportionately impacted by the social determinants of health. The proposed renovations will also improve the overall quality of visitor experiences in both the long and short term.

c. Discuss anticipated increase in recreation and overall use of site over time

The replacement of the track and the addition of new fitness equipment at Weequahic Park is expected to increase active recreation on-site, as the upgrades will create a more enjoyable and aesthetically pleasing environment overall, which could lead to increased attendance by visitors looking for both active and passive recreational opportunities.

- d. Identify adjacent environmental features that may be affected by the proposal

Adjacent environmental features to the project site at Weequahic Park include the environment existing within the park, though the proposed changes are not expected to negatively impact this environment. The 311.33 acre lake is surrounded by the existing track, that will be replaced and enhanced with fitness equipment. There are not anticipated impacts to the lake, as the project proposes one-for-one replacement of an existing features. The fitness equipment is not anticipated to have any adverse impacts on the lake.

- e. List any permits required for project and brief status (i.e., waterfront development)

It is not anticipated that any permits will be required to complete this project. However, should the need arise, all necessary permits will be acquired in a timely manner.

- f. For development that would impact an undisturbed portion of the project site, the local government must submit a Natural Heritage Data Request Form to the DEP's Office of Natural Lands Management (form available at www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/natural/heritage/datareq.html or by writing to Natural Heritage Program, PO Box 404, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0404). Please attach and discuss the results of the search.

Not applicable. The project is not being completed in an undisturbed portion of the site.

- g. Discuss if/ how the project may be impacted by sea level rise and any related design considerations.

The project will not be impacted by sea level rise.

4. ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION

- a. Identify alternate sites

Weequahic Park is a vital source of recreational space to Newark residents, with few other parks offering the same amount of space and variety of recreational offerings. There are no alternative sites to locate the proposed additions and improvements, and the project proposes replacement and enhancement of existing features at the site.

- b. Discuss alternate levels and types of development

The footprint of Weequahic Park cannot be expanded to create new spaces wherein the proposed project could be implemented, as the surrounding area is heavily developed. Completing the project at alternative locations through new park development or redevelopment would be significantly more expensive, time-consuming, and more negatively impactful to the surrounding environment than utilizing available space within the project site.

- c. Compare environmental impacts of each alternative

There are no alternatives, and therefore no environmental impacts to compare.

5. MITIGATING MEASURES

Measures and precautions to be taken to mitigate adverse impacts at both project sites include, but are not limited to, the erection of silt fencing during and after construction, the proliferation of soil and sediment controls, scheduling and staging efforts to minimize overall disturbance, and significant landscaping activities that include the replanting of any flora whose removal is required for the completion of work. Additionally, the project will comply with any and all rules and regulations promulgated by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and/or other regulatory agencies regarding building, remediation, and environmental conservation, and to the attainment of all necessary permits for building, remediation, and soil conservation, as needed.