

# City of Newburgh

## Press Release

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**For immediate release**  
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### Local Businessman Restores Broadway Park

While working on the reconstruction of the former West Shore Railroad Station, owner Ray Yannone of Storm King Building Company, Inc. noticed what he thought was a “deteriorated staircase” on the other side of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. He took a walk, and soon recognized, without knowing the history, that the stairway was an important connection between the waterfront and Broadway.



**City Historian Mary McTamane speaks of the historical significance of Broadway Park. From left are Acting City Manager Rick Herbek, Deputy Mayor Regina Angelo, Mayor Nick Valentine, and Ray Yannone of Storm King Building Company, who restored the park**

Further research told Mr. Yannone this was Broadway Park, created in 1903 by landscape architect Downing Vaux, son of Calvert Vaux and namesake of the renowned A.J. Downing. He decided he wanted to make the pathways “safe, passable and presentable again,” and that he would take advantage of the enthusiasm of some of the subcontractors who worked on the old train station. His plan included repairing the walkways, clearing some brush, and replacing some of the flower beds. Thirty truckloads of stone later, historic Broadway Park is almost completely rebuilt at no cost to the City.

“It was hard to stop,” said Mr. Yannone. Like Tom Sawyer, he drew the interest of others. “This would not have been possible without the commitment of Lynn Warren Landscaping,” he added.

Other supporters included Mike Gida of Mike’s Decorative Stonework, Ed Joy Masonry, Jamie Duggan of East Coast Electric, Ed O’Donnell Excavation, Jamie Yannone of J. Yannone Excavation and Joe Gizzerelli of Devitt’s Landscape. Financial contributions for additional material, flagpole and benches came from William Kaplan, Nick Citera and Nick DiBrizzi of Cosimo’s Restaurant Group, and Rich Pasuit of Key Properties.



Mr. Yannone continued, “Hopefully the improvements we are making will dramatically improve the views, and provide places for people to sit and enjoy them as originally intended when the Council in June of 1902 placed this portion of Broadway into the hands of the Board of Park Commissioners to ‘be cleaned up, formed into flower beds, with

settees placed in good position so as to give a clear view of the river, thus make a cool, and pleasant resting place on a warm summer evening.’”

Yannone used a Cultural Landscape Report completed by Heritage Landscapes in 2007 as his blueprint for the park’s restoration and improvements. He and Lynn Warren presented their plan to City Council, and the Shade Tree Commission and the Waterfront Advisory Commission signed off before the Council approved a resolution accepting the work as a donation.

The project includes removal of brush, vines non- historical trees and stumps, re-grading and reseeding the lawn, repairs to the stonework and steps, and the historic ornamental light fixture, providing additional lighting, reshaping the upper bed and expanding the sidewalk, replacing the flagpole, and installing benches. Also, beds were mulched, existing ornamental vegetation was relocated, and the following planted: 72 carpet rose bushes, 36 Russian Cyprus shrubs, 35 daylilies, and 14 catmint plants. Trees will include four ornamental pears, four weeping cedars, six crab apples, one white spruce, two cedars, and 15 hornbeam trees. The bulk of the work on the park will be completed by year’s end, and reseeding, re-mulching, and spring cleaning will be done in April.



Mayor Nicholas J. Valentine said, “Over the years, there have been several efforts by private citizens, City employees, and community leaders to help the park maintain its original vision as a rustic retreat, which has not been an easy task. In the recent past, they included Wilbur Higgins, former Recreation Director, the Newburgh Preservation Association and its chair, Howard Reilly, the Garden Club of Marlborough on Hudson, and Father Bill Scafidi and the Youth Group of St. Mary’s Church. Now, thanks to the efforts of Ray Yannone, Lynn Warren Landscaping, and other benefactors, residents and visitors to Newburgh can once again enjoy this historic space as it was intended.”