

Sandy Bottom Park Progress Update

Dear Richmond Residents,

As a centrally located park nestled in the heart of Honeoye, Sandy Bottom Park is a valuable community asset that has welcomed tourists and families for generations. To preserve and enhance this asset, the Town of Richmond is working to both address pressing maintenance needs, and to look into opportunities to upgrade the park's infrastructure.

Our Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and Parks & Recreation Committee are now investigating grant funding that could be used to enhance the park's trail system. A navigable trail system that connects East Lake and West Lake Road both to each other and to Main Street's business and cultural district would be an undeniable investment in our community's quality of life, and could serve as potential economic driver for the future of the Town of Richmond.

In the meantime, the Town is continuing to work on much-needed park maintenance. Mother Nature has not been kind to Sunset Trail, which connects Main Street to Sandy Bottom Beach. In the fall of 2017, heavy rain washed out bridges and severely damaged the surface of this trail, leaving deep ruts. After a lengthy permitting process, the Hill and Valley Riders have restored these bridges, with the assistance of the Boy Scouts. As soon as the ground is firm enough to tolerate the work, the Town will install several culvert pipes and restore the surface of Sunset Trail.

Strategic removal of dead and dying ash trees will be an ongoing project in Sandy Bottom Park through 2019. The level of mortality in trees affected by the emerald ash borer has elevated both the risk of flooding along Mill Creek, and the danger to the walking public. Infected trees can fall, posing a significant danger to both the park's trails infrastructure and anyone using these trails. Best practices in park forestry management will be followed during the tree removal process, with the goals of reducing invasive species and promoting native plantings to allow wetland wildlife to thrive, while maintaining a community park and forest asset for future generations.

Several ash trees on the property will be preserved to maintain the park atmosphere and provide shade. Two very valuable and healthy ash trees on Sandy Bottom Beach have been inoculated to protect them from infestation. Another ash tree near the shuffleboard court that is healthy enough to reasonably expect success from the treatment has also been treated. As part of the ongoing update to our Master Park Plan, an educational sign about invasive species and inoculations could be installed near the trees to inform park visitors about the project.

General park cleanup is also underway. Several discarded corrugated metal culvert pipes have been removed from the park near the trail head. Rusted metal auto components that have worked their way down Mill Creek are being inventoried and scheduled for removal. Several abandoned pits found while mulching underbrush in the west area of the park will be pumped out and filled in. Old electric boxes dating back to the 1960s will also be removed, a cleanup that is long overdue and necessary to ensure the safety of the public.

Sandy Bottom Beach House and the Open Pavilion are also on the radar for maintenance, as key recreational assets for the community. Approximately 50% of the funding needed to replace the bath house roof has been reserved in Richmond's 2019 budget, with the remainder of the funding targeted for the near future. This project has already been deferred for several years, and the goal is to replace the roof before any damage to the interior of the building is incurred. Additional required upgrades to the facility include repainting the interior floors and walls. The wood fence around the handicapped parking area is on the list for repairs.

Sandy Bottom Park is a community destination, and the work of maintaining and preserving the park is a true community effort. On behalf of the Richmond Town Board, thank you to the many volunteers who have given of their time to build up the park - whether by repairing bridges or by serving on a park committee or community group. If you would like to get involved, there is still plenty of opportunity. Follow [@TownofRichmond](https://www.facebook.com/TownofRichmond) on Facebook to learn about upcoming volunteer opportunities, including tree replanting days that begin this coming spring.

Sincerely,

Caroline Sauers
Richmond Town Supervisor