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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 26, 2014**

## **Curtis Mill Park Under Construction**

*Scheduled to Open Late Summer 2014*

**Newark, DE** (March 26, 2014) – City of Newark announces that construction on the long-anticipated Curtis Mill Park located on Paper Mill Road has begun after this winter’s snowfall delayed a late January/early February start. The latest addition to the city’s parks is scheduled to be open late this summer. It will include the construction of a park entrance at the existing traffic light at Paper Mill and Old Paper Mill Roads, minor improvements to Paper Mill Road and the traffic signals, a 12 to 15 car parking lot, a plaza that will contain kiosks with educational and interpretive information and photographs of the former paper mill, a meadow, and landscaping and internal walkways.

The city salvaged a large number of bricks from the smoke stack that once stood on the property, which will be used in the construction of the plaza area. Curtis Mill Park will be a passive park with the parking lot also serving as a trail head for the Pomeroy and Newark Rail Trail located just south of Curtis Mill Park.

“After many years of building community consensus, developing plans, working with DNREC on the Brownfield remediation, resolving floodplain issues, pursuing multiple funding sources, obtaining the necessary permits, getting the contract approved, and dealing with the delays of a harsh winter, I am thrilled to see that the Curtis Mill Park is scheduled to open for our enjoyment this coming summer, said District six City Councilman Stu Markham, in whose district the park resides.

City Manager Carol Houck was an Assistant to the City Manager when Newark purchased the former Curtis Paper Mill in 1999. Its proximity to the city’s water plant and the waterway made it an attractive property to maintain control over. “Early efforts to have the site certified as a Brownfield were successful and opened the door for Newark to receive up to \$1 million for remediation efforts,” said Houck. “I am happy to say that when the project is completed, we will have likely been reimbursed the full \$1 million for which we are eligible. These funds were crucial to our ability to beautify the location and complete the overall project of which DNREC’s guidance and technical support was extremely valuable. It took 15 years, but the final product, including intersection improvements at Old Paper Mill Road, will be well worth taking the time to get it right.”

“It’s great to finally see shovels in the ground at Newark’s newest park,” said Newark Parks and Recreation Director Charlie Emerson. “This project required a great deal of planning and coordination

with various State and local agencies. In addition, I was very pleased with the support we received from the citizens of Newark and our City Council while completing the project's master plan in 2010. I really want to thank our consultant, Pennoni Associates, the good people at DeIDOT and DNREC, and city staff for their time, energy and expertise. When completed we will have converted an industrial brown field site to a pleasant passive creek side park."

There is a 180 day window for completion. Construction should be completed at or about the end of August. Landscaping is expected to take place after construction is completed. Residents can expect increased construction traffic around the site as well as road improvements being made. The road improvement work will occur in June and July.

"The development of Curtis Mill Park is a tremendous benefit to our City," said Newark Mayor Polly Sierer. "It provides additional park and recreational opportunities for individuals and families to exercise, relax and enjoy the outdoors in a beautiful setting. Thank you to all of our partners in the collaboration of this project, including city staff, DNREC, contractors, and our citizens."

***(Photograph attached: Parks and Recreation Director Charlie Emerson, City Manager Carol Houck, Mayor Polly Sierer, and City Councilman Stu Markham.)***

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COMING THIS SUMMER

# Curtis Mill Park

City of Newark Department of Parks and Recreation

Project Funding:

- City of Newark
- Delaware Dept. of Natural Resources Environmental Control
- Brownfields Grant fund
- Land and Water Conservation Trust Fund
- Delaware Dept. of Transportation
- FY13 Bond Bill

Project Consultant:  
Pennoni Associates Inc.

Project Construction:  
Reybold Construction

CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS

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