

# THE TIMES

## Revamped Lowell park seen as stimulus for downtown resurgence

- Steve Euvino Times Correspondent
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LOWELL — Liberty Park is now William R. Nassau Park. After purchasing several parcels on the near-downtown site, the town is poised to enhance the 7-acre tract. The \$10 million project is receiving \$5 million from the Dean and Barbara White Family Foundation. Nassau, a former Lowell resident who died in 1999, worked with White at Whiteco.

Bill Hanna, president of the foundation, said the foundation supports projects that promote economic development. The revamped park project is being viewed as a stimulus to downtown revitalization, “We recognize the connection with downtown,” Hanna said, “and we’re excited to be part of that.” The project is slated for completion in spring or summer of 2026, though construction officials are shooting for an early completion of the proposed on-site community center so it will be ready for Christmas 2025.

The park project includes a community center, splash pad and open-air amphitheater with seating. The existing pavilion will be relocated and existing playground equipment, some of which is rusting, will be removed. The town has also purchased a nearby former dance studio for inclusion in the park.

The new facility will have parking for 145 vehicles. Lowell Parks and Recreation Coordinator Cyndi Hughes reported that the town has six parks. The largest is Freedom Park, and the proposed Freedom Trail will connect Freedom and Nassau parks with the downtown district.

Town Manager Craig Hendrix said Lowell has been looking for ways to strengthen parks and benefit local businesses. “We’re trying to do everything we can to invigorate downtown,” he said. The amphitheater, Hendrix said, was designed with the Northwest Indiana Symphony in mind.

Hasse Construction Co. of Calumet City is general contractor on the project, and SEH of Munster designed the park. Hasse built Bulldog Park in Crown Point, and while the Lowell project has similar features, it does not include an ice rink as in Crown Point.

Lowell Chamber of Commerce President Nancy Frigo-Svetanoff said Nassau had a “heart of gold,” recalling the family’s indoor pool as a safe place in the community. She hoped the new park will be a “source of happiness, joy and love.” Economically speaking, Frigo-Svetanoff hoped Nassau Park attracts visitors to the south Lake County town.

Town Council President Todd Angerman said the park project had gone from council to council because of financial concerns. Then, he said, someone suggested contacting the White Foundation about assistance. The foundation agreed to a 50-50 match. Tri-Creek School Superintendent Andy Anderson recalled being contacted about the park project. “We see a lot of potential for our youth,” Anderson said, citing the splash pad and opportunities for students in the arts to perform publicly at the park.