

MEMORIAL PARK: FARMLAND TO FUNLAND

Fran Leusner has the job of providing recreational and other services for the 20,000 residents of Cinnaminson, New Jersey, an eastern suburb of Philadelphia. As superintendent of public works, Leusner wan-



Above: Costs were cut nearly in half by having the work performed within the city's work force. Here Cinnaminson Public Works men take grade shots. **Right:** An asphalt bike path and jogging path follow side by side. **Below:** The baseball field, ready for its first game.



ted to establish a convenient and useful park for the community of single family homes. Forty-four acres of farmland in the 7½ sq. mi. township were purchased for conversion into a park facility.

"We had to excavate the entire area and put in roads, parking lots, baseball fields, football/soccer fields, an irrigation system, water fountains, a bike path, a jogging path, tennis and basketball courts, and all the turf and trees required to make the park attractive," says Leusner.

Today, Memorial Park in Cinnaminson has handsome gardens and the pond may soon provide fishing and canoeing to residents. Since much of the work was done by city work crews, the entire project cost only about \$500,000 against an estimated \$950,000 had the work been contracted out.

Maintenance of the park is also integrated into the city programs, but Leusner estimates that he has five or six men working at the park every day. He has a park foreman who supervises the maintenance efforts at Memorial.

When the park was first prepared for planting, Leusner applied a mixture of 50 percent municipal sludge with an equal amount of composted leaf mulch and spread it over the entire area. He had made arrangements with the local waste treatment facility to acquire all the wastes for use in this manner. The state has since halted his efforts but steps are being taken to work the matter out.

Leusner now acquires manure from the riding stables nearby and mixes it with the leaves for winter application throughout the park.

Then, in April, he applies a 10-6-4, 50 percent organic fertilizer to the park grounds. They are given a light shot in summer, and fertilized again in the fall. A preemergence crabgrass preventer is applied every spring. The combination soccer/football fields and baseball fields receive selective herbicides as needed. Leusner plans to institute a complete program of O.M. Scott & Sons products next year.

Most of the turf in the park is K-31 fescue. The baseball infield was sod-

Memorial Park



Extensive landscaping was done around a sandbox for small children.

ded with Merion Kentucky bluegrass. The infield is reseeded every year. The outfield is seeded on an as needed basis. Leusner reseeds the combination football/soccer fields every year, also.

Trees in the park are mulched twice a year and watered regularly. A quick coupler irrigation system provides a ready source of water.

Leusner recently switched to S&D Products Eezy Gro Pakets to fertilize the trees. The fertilizer is slow release, applied 8-10 inches around the young trees and a little deeper around the larger trees. The trees shouldn't need additional applications for three years.

Trees in the park include Bradford pear, crab, cherry, Norway and Australian spruce, and white pine. Leusner maintains a nursery and rents a tree spade for transplanting.

When the park was first constructed, most of the trees were brought in bare root, even though plans called for balled and burlapped. Less than one-fourth were. The actual cost was \$8000 against an original estimate of \$55,000.

The trees are sprayed with insecticide routinely. Japanese beetle and scale insects are the major concerns in Memorial Park:

The county sprays the pond for mosquitoes, but Leusner tests once a week for larvae to make sure it doesn't get out of hand. There are fish in the pond now and that does help mosquito control somewhat.

Equipment for maintaining the park is integrated with that of the city. Leusner does have two large diesel Ford tractors and a Farmall equipped with a mower. Mowing units include a Mott and a 72-inch rotary. He also has a gang unit but it is seldom used except as a backup.

Budget figures are hard to break out in a situation where park management is integrated into the city budget. Leusner estimates that he gets about \$5000 for fertilizer and seed.

He puts a bid out in March and then purchases as needed. He also purchases and applies lime according to soil tests, which are performed every year.

Community support for the park is tremendous, Leusner says. "It's a masterpiece as far as the people are concerned. They love it." **WTT**



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