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Links

- Contact Info
- Email us
- Advertising Questions
- The Landmark
- Leominster Champ
- Community Journal
- Millbury Sutton

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- Advertiser Index
- View Current Classifieds

changes they are discussing will start in Giannetti's own office.

She and her colleagues have already begun looking at the food offered in vending machines in her office, and other offices around the city, as well as ways to help employers build time into the day for employees to walk around the grounds of their workplace and stay active. A prime break spot for Giannetti's officemates at the Burbank campus of HealthAlliance Hospital are the trails behind their building. There is one big problem with using those paths now, however.

"If you go on those trails now, it is very easy to get lost," said Giannetti.

Through the grants, organizers hope to buy trail markers for Burbank and other trails around the city to give residents safer options for their outdoor exercise routines.

Trails will not be the only walking areas in the city to get a facelift, however.

With help from a group of individuals from the WalkBoston initiative during a recent visit to Fitchburg, many crosswalks and sidewalks were marked as prime candidates for repairs. One such project was to replace a lightbulb in the crossing sign at the corner of Rollstone and Main streets.

Although a walk outside may be nice with the spring coming, taking in the fresh air is usually not so pleasant in the winter months, which is why Giannetti said that finding indoor recreational opportunities for residents is crucial. Program organizers are looking to educate community groups on each other's resources.

During a recent meeting for the education project, members of the Elm Street Congregational Church said that they wished to give more chances for children to be active when there is a foot of snow on the ground. The membership coordinator of the Montachusett YMCA offered to talk after the meeting about coordinating their efforts, a connection that Giannetti said epitomizes what Fun 'n FITchburg is all about.

"It's building, just in the assessment phase, a lot of communication and collaboration between the partners," said Giannetti.

One partner that is already on board is the district's school officials.

According to Giannetti, they get an A plus for their work in giving students the opportunity to stay healthy.

Thomas said that around half of his students participate in after-school intramural sports, such as basketball, lacrosse, and dodgeball.

"We are always on the lookout for things that will give us a boost," said Thomas. "We try to find something that is not only fun for the kids, but fits in the components of educating them about health and wellness."

The district's Food Services department also deserves a high mark in the eyes of Giannetti.

"The school food service has done a lot to introduce more fresh fruits and vegetables," she said.

McKay Campus School has even gone so far as to plant a garden with a special class to teach students how to grow their own food, something that will serve their hearts and wallets well as they grow up.

"Growing food is a great way to increase access because it is cheaper," said Giannetti.

The children who tend the garden were excited to be able to show off the fruits, and vegetables, of their labor.

"We are very proud of the work that the kids in that class do. We feel lucky to even have the garden at the school, so to have someone show an interest is wonderful" said Jennifer Fichtel, assistant principal at McKay.

Along with McKay's garden, many community gardens have been popping up around the city, as well as the addition of the Fitchburg Farmers' Market at Riverfront

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Park last year.

Those working with the grant hope to have an action plan put together by June or July of this year, so the real work can actually begin.

“There is always more we can do,” said Giannetti.

As much work as there is yet to be accomplished, Giannetti said that there are people willing to do that work though.

“There is a lot of interest in wanting to do positive things,” she said.

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