

**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

CONTACT: SHELBY MICHALEK  
REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE COUNTY OF WESTMORELAND  
smichale@co.westmoreland.pa.us  
724.830.3050

**Vandergrift Borough Receives \$151,000 for Downtown Recreational Space**

**GREENSBURG, PA (Jan 9)** - Vandergrift Borough, in partnership with Westmoreland County Land Bank (WCLB), today announced it has been awarded a \$151,000 grant from the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, administered by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR).

The DCNR grant award will fund the construction of “Olmsted Commons”, an eco-friendly recreational space for residents to gather and hold events in downtown Vandergrift. The site is slated to include an event patio, gazebo, rain gardens, and green screens as well as additional beautification efforts.

Vandergrift Borough Council President, Kathy Chvala adds, “We are ecstatic about this future project and its significance to the Borough’s downtown. We are grateful for the Westmoreland County Land Bank in spearheading this community project and are looking forward to the continued partnership.” She continues, “We are also very grateful to DCNR for their support of our vision, making it possible to bring this concept to life”.

The location had previously featured three commercial structures along the town’s gateway of Washington Avenue, which had been vacant for some time. The Westmoreland County Land Bank worked diligently to acquire and ratify tax liens on these blighted structures, allowing its sister organization, Redevelopment Authority of the County of Westmoreland (RACW) to conduct the demolition and clearing the site for a productive recreational reuse.

Westmoreland County Land Bank Chairperson, David Johnston states, “Involvement in projects such as the Olmsted Commons development echoes the mission of the WCLB. Tackling this monumental project not only deters the spread of blight, but is stimulating Vandergrift’s gateway to downtown, promoting additional development opportunities”.

DCNR is the primary source of state support for Pennsylvania recreation, parks, and conservation initiatives. Grant funding from DCNR assists hundreds of communities and organizations across Pennsylvania to plan, acquire, and develop recreation and park facilities, create trails, and conserve open space.

Funding for the grants comes from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund (Key 93), the Environmental Stewardship Fund (Growing Greener 1), and federal funding sources.

###