

Federally funded park enhances Arlington Subdivision

By Jimmie Covington

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When the weather is nice, Margaret Triplett, 79, and Katherine Hall, 71, enjoy the quarter-mile walking trail in the small, new community park built with federal funds in Arlington's Dixon Robinson Subdivision.

Two-acre Dixon Robinson Park, at Lamb Road and Hughes Drive north of U.S. 70 on the town's west side, also is fun place for Triplett's and Hall's grandchildren and children from the subdivision.



Photos by Karen Pulfer
Focht/The Commercial Appeal

"I go down there and walk the little walking trail," said Triplett, who will be 80 next June. "I go around it twice and I really enjoy that."

The park, open for several weeks, is the second small community park built in the suburb over the past three years with federal Community Development Block Grant funds, said Ed Haley, town superintendent.

The other, 2.8-acre Mary Alice Park on Mary Alice Drive in Mary Alice Subdivision in east Arlington, was completed in 2006.

It sits at the former location of the old Arlington Blending and Packaging Inc., which was once designated as one of the Memphis area's most dangerous hazardous waste sites.

It is one of hundreds of superfund sites nationwide that have been cleaned and put back into use through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's redevelopment program.

In a mid-1990s project that cost about \$4.7 million, cleanup crews excavated and decontaminated about 41,000 tons of dirt. The property received clearance for park use and Arlington obtained it from the government.

"It took about five years but we finally got it approved," Haley said. "Then I got \$230,000 in (CDBG) money for the park. It has really helped the area."

As an extra precaution to ensure the Mary Alice site remains free of contamination, five wells are maintained on the property, including one that has equipment above ground. They are checked annually, Haley said.

The Dixon Robinson site was not a problem site.

In the announcement of the park plans in January 2008, officials said the town had received \$350,000 in CBDG funds for the Dixon Robinson area.

After design costs, land purchases and drainage improvements, \$200,000 was available for the park.



Joshua McMillan, 2, and his sister, Emily, give the new equipment a good test climb.

"We have got a playground, a pavilion, the walking trail and landscaping," Haley said. "We put our cedar fence up around it."

He said the park "keeps kids from having to go across (U.S.) 70 to get to a playground. If the community wants to have a picnic, we have little grills out there where they can cook out."

In another improvement for the Dixon Robinson area, Arlington's Board of Mayor and Alderman recently approved a contract with Shelby County for \$235,000 in CDBG money to provide sewer improvements.

Haley said the funds will allow the town to replace a 40-year-old lift station with a gravity flow sewer line to serve the subdivision.

He said the old lift station, on the west side Lamb Road at Hughes, produces a smell and requires electricity to operate. The gravity flow line will be much more efficient, he said.

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