

# CHAPTER 3

## EXISTING PROTECTED LAND

A key component of the open space plan is a review of existing protected land. An inventory of existing conditions, along with an assessment of future needs, is necessary for formulating many of the plan's goals and objectives. Existing protected land refers to land preserved for active or passive recreation use and/or for environmental



*Mill Park was purchased by the Borough with County Open Space Funding*

conservation purposes. In addition to municipally-owned areas, it can include land preserved by private conservation groups, farmland, schools sites, and private open space preserved as part of residential or non-residential development.

This chapter identifies existing open and recreational land in Rockledge and separates it into two categories of protection - permanently- and temporarily-protected land. The latter category makes an important contribution to the overall recreation base of a community by preserving open space, conserving significant natural features, and/or providing recreation facilities that do not require municipal involvement in maintenance. However, temporarily protected land can easily be lost. In evaluating open space needs, this distinction is important, as is the goal of increasing the amount of permanently protected land so that future generations can also benefit from open space.



*Rockledge Community Center*

**PERMANENTLY  
PROTECTED LAND  
MUNICIPAL OPEN SPACE**

Rockledge Borough’s existing system of parks and open space is comprised of both active and passive open space areas. Four parks or open space areas are owned and maintained by the Borough. The Borough also owns

and maintains the Rockledge Community Center. The Borough’s parks and open space comprise a total of 7.5 acres of land, 5.3 acres of which is considered active space. The active open space includes amenities such as a softball field, volleyball court, tennis courts, basketball court, playground, gym, and picnic tables. Each offers community residents important recreational opportunities and scenic amenities.

Outside the Borough, there are five active recreation areas to note which may be used by Borough residents:

- Lorimer Park, Abington
- Burholme Park, Philadelphia
- Pennypack Valley Park, Philadelphia
- Fox Chase Recreation Center, Philadelphia
- Fox Chase Farm Park, Philadelphia/ Abington

**TEMPORARILY  
PROTECTED  
PRIVATE**

The undeveloped portions of Lawnview and Montefiore Cemeteries are private open space which are temporarily protected from development. These undeveloped sections of the cemeteries in the Borough are lands considered temporarily protected since it is possible they could eventually be developed.

In total, Rockledge Borough has a significant amount of protected land, with 7.5 acres being permanently protected and the cemetery land temporarily protected. This park and open space network provides Borough residents with many opportunities to enjoy all that open space can offer – recreation, tranquility, beauty, and a sense of community. However, approximately half of this land is comprised of temporarily protected



land— the undeveloped portion of the cemeteries. This could be lost to development in time if the land owners or land use changes. For this reason, the Borough should consider acquisition, or if too expensive, non-acquisition methods of gaining control of some or all of this land to benefit the overall Borough parks and open space system. With careful open space planning, residents may be assured the Borough will be able to offer them the same or greater level of active and passive open space in the future as they enjoy today.