

West Springfield's Paul Boudo receives third annual Kuehn Community Preservation Award

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WEST SPRINGFIELD - The Community Preservation Coalition has awarded Paul H. Boudo, the chairman of the West Springfield Community Preservation Committee (CPC), the third annual Kuehn award along with nine other individuals throughout the state.



According to the Community Preservation Coalition, the award was developed to honor the memory of Robert H. Kuehn, who was actively involved in drafting the Community Preservation Act (CPA).

The CPA is a state law enacted in 2000 that allows an adopting community to establish a local fund to create new parks, playgrounds, recreational fields as well as protect open space and preserve historical buildings, according to the Community Preservation Coalition.

“Our nine people are pretty focused on what we want to do,” said Boudo regarding to his committee. “I tend to assign them work, so that it’s more than me that helps.”

As well, he said West Springfield’s CPC began when a referendum approved the committee’s formation in 2009 and that he began working with the CPC in 2010 as the chairman.

“The very first project we had; Park and Rec. requested \$4,800 to repaint the stone bridge area at the Mittineague Park pond,” he said. “So, we funded that, and we funded that 100 percent.”

He added that one project that couldn't be funded was a study for the Bearhole Reservoir watershed by the West Springfield Environmental Committee, which requested \$25,000 in CPC funds.

"It's clearly set up in the law that we're to spend that money on shovel-ready projects," he said.

He said that other projects during his appointment as chair of the CPC have included refurbishing the town common as well as granting funds to finish a fence around the historic Union Street cemetery, with gravestones dating back to the 1700's.

Furthermore, he said one of the major ongoing projects is to refurbish and maintain Mittineague Park and that the first phase is set to begin in April, costing \$220,00 in CPC funds, with the additional funds being given by a Park and Recreation grant for \$400,000.

"Up until July of last year, when they made a change in the CPA law, we couldn't invest in it," he said. "Now, we can because we can put money into the already owned recreation parks."