



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Dedicated volunteers turn the new 1-mile Oak Park Nature Trail in Lower Paxton from a dream into reality

- ***NOTE: Pics, trail map & proclamation at bottom***

Lower Paxton Township, PA (Oct. 20, 2023) – After four years of hard work by volunteers who carved paths out of steep slopes and moved boulders to create natural stream crossings, the 1-mile-long Oak Park Nature Trail officially opened today in Lower Paxton Township.

The Township purchased the roughly 7-acre wooded tract by Oak Park and Maple roads adjacent to Shoops Cemetery in 2017 for \$20,000, and volunteers started work the following year on the four-tenths of a mile southern section. The northern part, which included placing a bridge over a section of stream and boardwalk over marshy areas, was finished this fall.

"This trail stands as a testament to the unwavering dedication and hard work of the many volunteers who worked countless hours to make it a reality," said Lower Paxton Supervisors Chairman Lowman Henry. "We are especially thankful to two volunteers in particular: William Roy Newsome Jr. and Jim Seidler, who were the driving force behind the Oak Park Nature Trail."

Recently, the Township named the north section of the trail "Newsome Way" and the southern part "Seidler Way" after both men, who were members of the Township's Greenway Committee, which works on creating natural recreational spaces. Before his death in 2020, Newsome, also a member of the Township's Planning Commission for 22 years, donated pavers from his home for use on the trail.

Crucial to the trail's completion was a \$2,000 donation from the Greater Harrisburg Association of REALTORS® (GHAR) and the hard work of more than a half dozen members of the Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club's "Rock Crew" that muscled 500-pound boulders into several areas for natural stream crossings, as well as building stone steps.

"We've built trail steps, retaining walls, water diversions on trails throughout the area," said Tim Bachmann, who heads the Rock Crew, primarily comprised of retirees in their 60s and 70s. "Oak Park is a nice trail for folks who want to walk their dog or for the kids who live nearby."

Bachmann said the dozens of large rocks used for steps and stream crossings – many weighing around 500 pounds – were muscled into place using handcarts and 20-pound hardened steel prybars.

Seidler, who did much of the trail work on his own – including building a wooden bridge and boardwalk sections – said it was challenging carving the trail into the hillsides bordering the stream below. The trail had to be high on the slopes because the center of the small valley is a drainage area that floods during storms.

"William Roy Newsome Jr. was one of the founding members of the Greenway Committee and was always pushing the idea of a trail in this area," Seidler said. "In all the surveys we've done over the years, walking opportunities through trails and greenways seem to be the most popular request from residents."

Kathy Ludwig, CEO of the Greater Harrisburg Association of REALTORS®, said her organization welcomes the opportunity to help.

"As Realtors, we strive to make sure that our communities are the best they can be," Ludwig said. "Projects like this allow us to strengthen our ties with the community, develop relationships with public officials, and spur economic growth and development by creating new public gathering spaces."

Lower Paxton's 16 parks encompass approximately 382 acres, ranging from natural settings to athletic fields, playgrounds, and ball courts. For more information on Lower Paxton's parks, visit <https://www.lowerpaxton-pa.gov/157/Parks-Rec>



From left:

- Jim Seidler, lead trail volunteer and member, Lower Paxton Township Greenway Committee
- Lower Paxton Supervisors Robin Lindsey, Lowman Henry and Chris Judd
- Tim Bachmann, crew leader, Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club "Rock Crew"
- Kathy Ludwig, CEO of the Greater Harrisburg Association of Realtors



LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Proclamation

Be it hereby proclaimed:

WHEREAS, the Oak Park Nature Trail, a magnificent mile-long path born from the strategic purchase of a 7-acre tract by the Township in 2017

WHEREAS, it became a reality due to the pivotal contributions of the late William Roy Newsome Jr. and James M. Seidler, whose relentless advocacy made the trail possible;

WHEREAS, in honor of their invaluable contributions, the north and south sections of the trail have been rightfully designated as "Newsome Way" and "Seidler Way"; and

WHEREAS, the trail's completion was also made possible through a generous donation from Greater Harrisburg Association of REALTORS® (GHAR); and

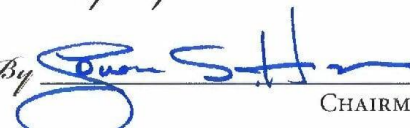
WHEREAS, the Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club's "Rock Crew," a formidable team of volunteers, bestowed their strength and expertise upon this project, skillfully positioning 500-pound boulders and constructing essential features; and

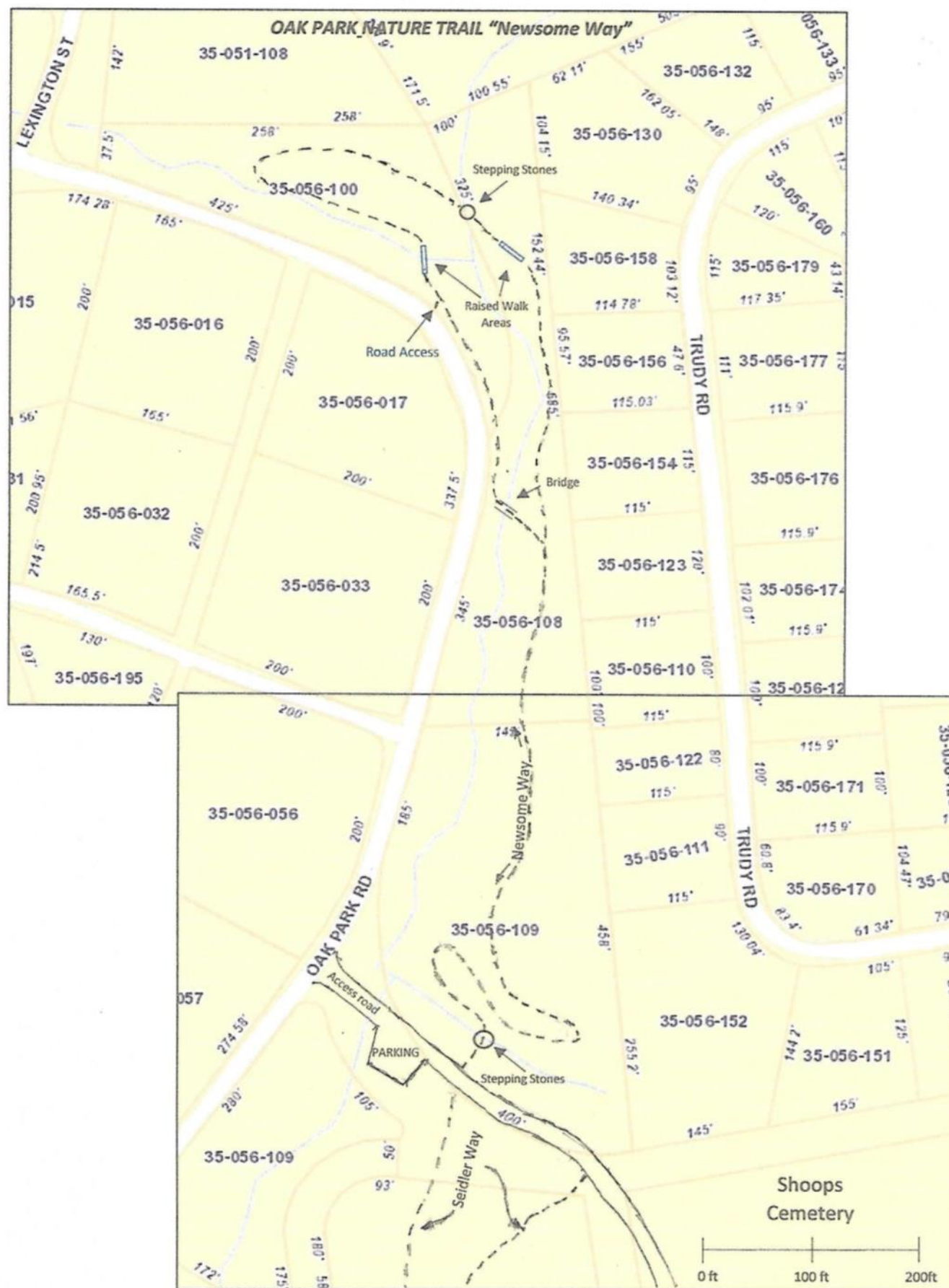
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT, AND IT IS THEREBY PROCLAIMED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF LOWER PAXTON TOWNSHIP, DAUPHIN COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, THAT ON BEHALF OF ALL RESIDENTS AND FUTURE GENERATIONS WHO WILL WALK THIS TRAIL EXPRESS OUR DEEPEST GRATITUDE TO ALL THOSE WHO MADE THE OAK PARK NATURE TRAIL POSSIBLE.

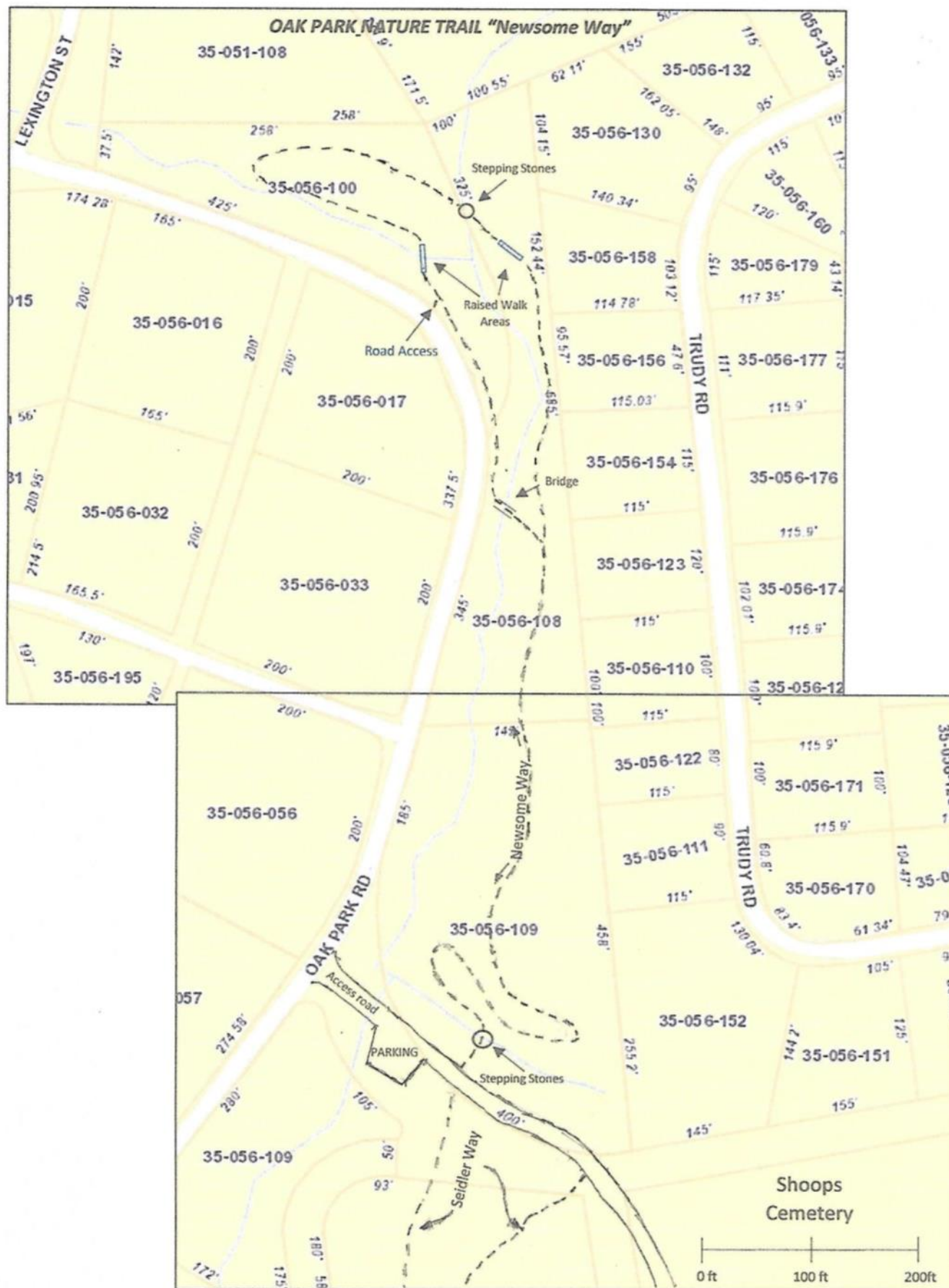
*Approved this 20 Day
of October, 2023*

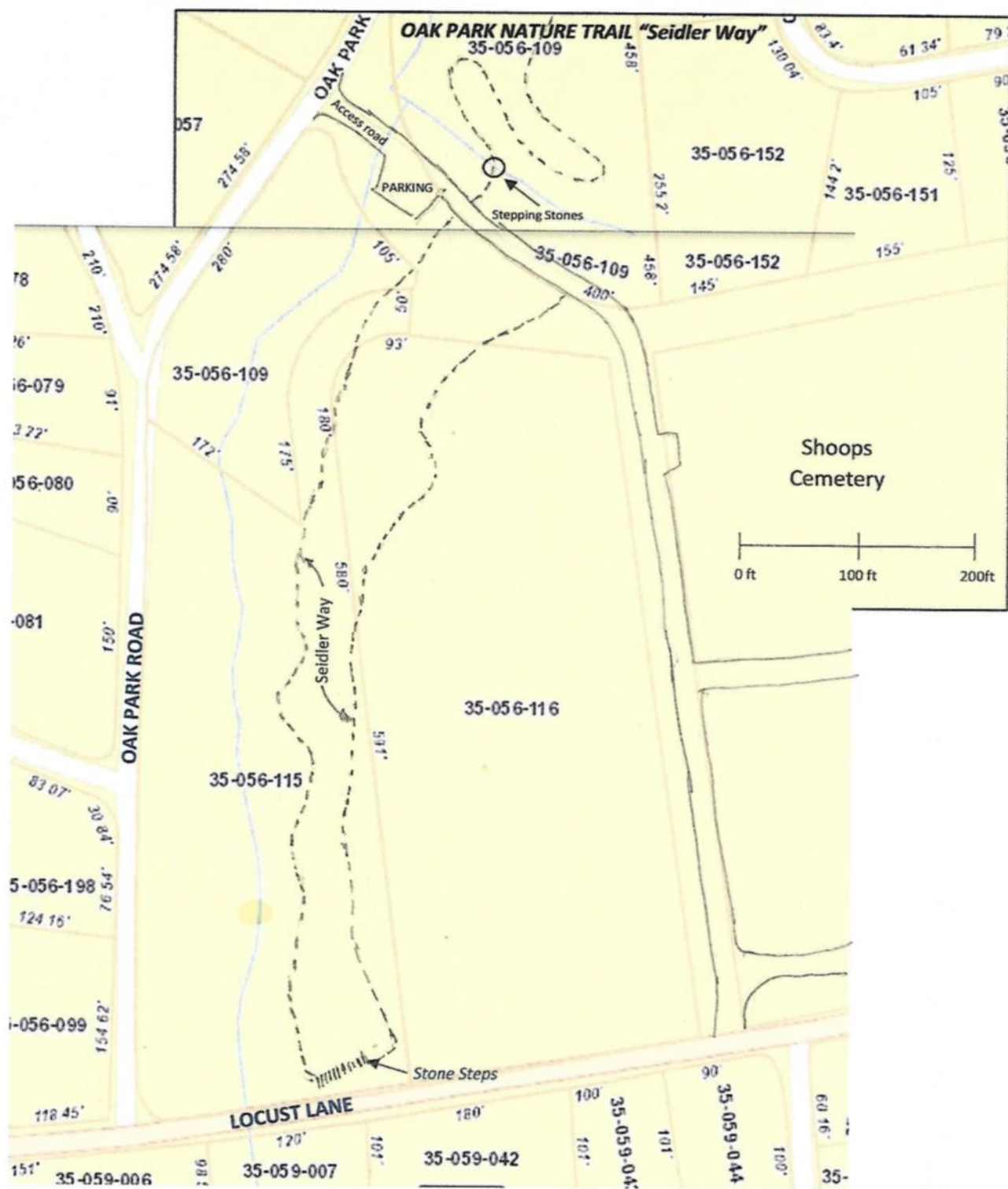

MANAGER

*Lower Paxton Township
Board of Supervisors*

By 
CHAIRMAN







Information for the below pictures:

- Susquehanna Appalachian Trail Club's "Rock Crew" that muscled 500-pound boulders into several areas for natural stream crossings, as well as building stone steps.
- Jim Seidler, a member of the Lower Paxton Township Greenway Committee, was a driving force behind the trail and built the wooden bridge and boardwalk used along the path.
- Most of the pavers used in the trail were donated by the late William Roy Newsome Jr., who also championed the trail and was a member of Lower Paxton Township's Planning Commission for 22 years.











