Blairsville Diamond wins award

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Award presentation

Eric Menzer, a representative of 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania, right, presented the award recently to Mike Meyer, a Blairsville Borough engineer, left; Linda Gwinn, a director of the Blairsville Community Development Authority; and Adam Marshall, PennDOT District 10 traffic safety engineer.

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Blairsville's Diamond Square Reconstruction project on Market Street recently received the 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania "Community Transportation Excellence Award" as part of the group's 2012 Commonwealth Awards program.

The $2.6 million Blairsville streetscape enhancement project on Market Street between Water and Spring streets and between Stewart and Morrow streets integrated traffic and pedestrian safety while creating a multifunctional "town center" area. The borough's traffic flow was also improved with side-street access, and the Diamond Square improvements are expected to promote downtown development. "This project improved mobility and safety for pedestrians and vehicles alike in the corridor, while enhancing historic downtown Blairsville's Diamond Square," said PennDOT District 10 Executive Joseph Dubovi.
The project also included installing Americans with Disabilities curb ramps, sidewalks with decorative pavers and upgraded highway lighting, signage and landscaping.

The work was completed by S.E.T. Inc., of Lowellville, Ohio, in October 2011.

The project was funded through PennDOT’s Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative. The PCTI is a competitive funding program to support and encourage local transportation projects that exemplify the goals of smart transportation.

Blairsville’s Market Square project was one of eight transportation projects funded by the PCTI program that were honored with the award.

Linda Gwinn, a director of the Blairsville Community Development Authority, credited the BCDA, borough manager Tim Evans, borough engineer Mike Meyers and Adam Marshall, PennDOT District 10’s traffic safety engineer, with being instrumental in submitting the successful application for the award.

Evans said borough leaders hope to build similar streetscape enhancements on Morrow, Spring, Stewart and Liberty streets extending north and south from the borough’s business district as funds become available.

The organization is a leading statewide voice for great places to live and work. The organization works with citizens, organizations and public officials to create land use, infrastructure and governance policies and practices that protect resources and strengthens the economy.

Founded in southeastern Pennsylvania in 1998, 10,000 Friends has aligned and supported organizations and individuals from across the state committed to land-use policies and actions that enable Pennsylvania to strengthen its diverse urban, suburban and rural communities and reduce irresponsible and inefficient land consumption.