

A welcome addition

Neighbors — who watched as those amenities have all but disappeared from the site, and the plastic-and-metal jungle gym and brick building near the southeast corner of the park became marred with graffiti — appear to be happy with the PAL's plans.

"It's nice when you see work in progress," said Maria Ligeria, who lives next to the park. "There are a lot of kids in the neighborhood."

Seventy-seven-year-old Sally Kearney of North Sumner Avenue is among those in the neighborhood who remember the hospital and later the park.

"You hate to see something go to ruin," said Mrs. Kearney. "I think it's a great idea. They (the children) have nowhere to go and keep them out of trouble."

Her adult son, Keith Kearney, added his support for the project.

"I can't imagine anyone speaking negative," he said. "I hope it happens. Kids need a place to go."

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Concrete progress

A crew from city-based general contractor Spano Construction has already laid a foundation for an addition to the former boiler building of the long-closed West Side Hospital at the playground and former West Side Crime Watch building.

Chief Elliott was a founding member of city's chapter of the PAL in 2000. The volunteer-based organization relies on fundraisers and donations for its projects.

"We really didn't have a facility. We were raising funds, and now we're trying to take it a step further," he said. "After



MICHAEL J. MULLEN / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Scranton Police Chief David Elliott stands in the construction zone at a city playground at Jackson Street and North Bromley Avenue — the future site of the Police Athletic League's \$130,000 children's recreation complex.