

Surveillance cameras to be set up around No. Brunswick

BY KATHY CHANG 06-06-2013

The installation of surveillance cameras around North Brunswick has moved one step closer to fruition.

The Township Council voted at its May 20 meeting in favor of approving a resolution authorizing the award of a contract to Hackensack-based [EarthCam Inc.](#) for the installation of a closed-circuit television monitoring system under the Department of Public Safety.

The bid is \$92,000 for the installation of the cameras, and it will cost \$11,000 a year to monitor the cameras, officials said.

According to its website, EarthCam Inc. was founded in 1996, and its expertise includes delivering millions of images daily and developing technology to manage camera networks worldwide.

Police Director Kenneth McCormick said the committee, which also included Police Chief Joseph Battaglia and the township's information technology personnel, discussed three "hot spot" areas where the panel is considering installing the cameras — North Brunswick Community Park along Route 130, Veterans Park on Roosevelt Avenue, and the North Brunswick Crescent Apartments, formerly the Oak Leaf Village Apartment Complex.

In March, the township authorized the adoption of an Oak Leaf Village redevelopment plan for the 184-unit complex located on Oak Tree Drive, on North Brunswick's northern border near New Brunswick. The units will generate at least 183 affordable dwellings.

McCormick said the discussion concerning a closed-circuit monitoring system has been going on for years.

The opportunity for the camera purchase to become a reality was made possible through a \$185,000 U.S. Department of Justice federal grant from Congressman Rush Holt's office in 2011. The funds were also used to enhance the cameras in the parking lot outside the municipal building on Hermann Road, as well as surveillance cameras in the courtroom area and hallways. The township had also set aside \$60,000 in capital funding. At the township's Community Park, the cameras will capture footage of the two entrances along Route 130. McCormick said the cameras will alert the dispatch center if any activity is picked up.

"We've had problems with people going into the park after hours and causing damage to the [sporting] fields and the buildings," he said.

One other camera will be mounted behind the maintenance facility in the park.

Councilman Carlo Socio inquired about placing a camera on Eighth Street to potentially catch activity happening inside the Community Park.

McCormick said Socio's suggestion would be taken into consideration.

He said it was important to note that police are not monitoring the cameras around the clock.

"That would be expensive," he said. "This is more like an alerting system."

During discussions regarding the cameras, Rutgers University officials said the school has 800 cameras set up, and police usually go back to the surveillance footage and solve crimes in that matter.

There is no sound on the cameras for criminal activity such as gunshots. McCormick said this also would be expensive.

"We don't have that kind of activity in our town that would warrant that kind of surveillance. ... That is more for the major cities," he said.

McCormick said that as part of the bid, officials are proposing the purchase of a mobile command solar-powered trailer equipped with a portable camera that can be deployed where needed, such as an area where the department has seen a rash of burglary crimes.



The screenshot shows the EarthCam.net website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for PRODUCTS, SOFTWARE, SERVICES, IMAGING, MARKETING, TIME-LAPSE, LIVE DEMOS, CLIENTS, ABOUT, and SUPPORT. The main content area features a large image of a white dome camera. To the right of the camera, the text reads "Public Safety Series" followed by "Advanced, easy to deploy IP security systems". Below this, there is a list of bullet points: "Monitor important locations anytime, on any device", "Protect hot spots, special events and critical infrastructure", and "Maintain situational awareness". Below the main image, there are two smaller sections: "SecurityCam" with the tagline "Monitor and protect your property" and "SecurityCam HD" with the tagline "Professional, rugged outdoor camera solution".