

Urges no on May 18

CAPE opposes millage, not parks

By MARK GIANNOTTA

"The parks commission has been telling people we are against parks in general, and that is completely untrue."

"That we are opposed to is the plan to build golf courses, convention centers and train rides in the parks. We feel they should be reserved for more passive activities."

The speaker was Ralph Hogg, representing a group called CAPE, Citizens Against Park Expansion. The group is opposing the May 18 Oakland County ballot request for renewal of the quarterly property

tax that is used for county parks acquisition and development.

At its final meeting Tuesday at Upland Hills, the group planned strategy for getting a no vote next Tuesday, concentrating its fire on the Addison Oaks county park near Oxford.

HOGG SAID: "It was not our intention of stopping parks. We feel that the current law provides for a handful of persons to acquire and administer tax dollars with no citizen recourse or control on how the monies are spent."

CAPE's formal platform has three points:

"1. That the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission be deprived of its autonomous status by having the nine county commissioners exert their constitutional authority and refuse to sanction any special property tax for parks support."

"2. That the Michigan Legislature enact amendments to the enabling park act that limits any development with tax dollars and/or bond issue revenue that is in conflict with existing businesses without voter approval."

"3. That no park development shall be undertaken without approval in writing and a public announcement of conformance to all state and federal environmental acts."

CAPE BEGAN its fight 14 months ago by collecting 8,801 signatures on petitions and attending public commission meetings to fight amendment 6 plans for the Addison Oaks park.

Hogg said CAPE succeeded only in getting the commission to eliminate an auditorium and wave pool from the Addison plan.

He said other changes for Addison will include a 5,000-seat amphitheater, conven-

tion center with 100-room motel, golf course and 2½ mile electric trolley line.

"We originally started as a group concerned with Addison Oaks, but after we found out the commission had plans for all six Oakland County parks, we decided to carry our campaign throughout the entire county," Hogg said.

"We have received requests for help in forming similar groups in Clarkston and Independence Oaks, so obviously we have started to reach a wider range of people."

AS ELECTION DAY draws near, CAPE members will circulate petitions asking voters to support their views.

They will also pass out literature at shopping centers and at the polls Tuesday.

Other CAPE members commented on the parks program.

Joyce Saphin of Addison Township said: "The people of this area want to keep the parks green. We don't want to end up with

wall-to-wall concrete like some inner city."

Steve DuBrul, retired General Motors executive living in Oakland Township, said parks should provide natural beauty and not be turned into amusement parks. I feel we have a better than even chance of seeing the proposal defeated."

But Hogg noted the parks commission would seek to put the issue on the November ballot if it is defeated May 18.

CAPE President Robert Bryson said people are tired of having politicians use tax money carelessly.

The ballot proposal asks for renewal of a quarter-mill tax that was passed in 1968 and renewed once in 1971. It would raise an average of \$2 million a year over the next five years if renewed.

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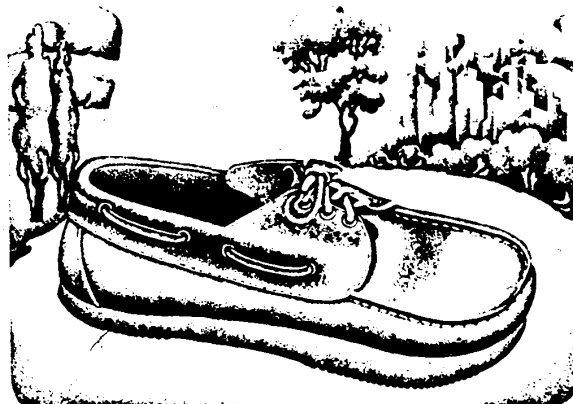
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