

the farmington enterprise & observer

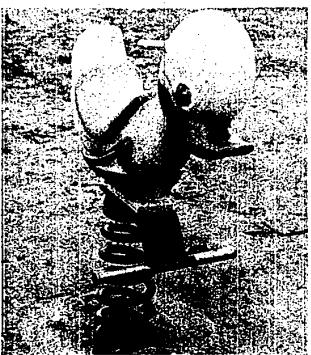
Wednesday, October 7, 1970

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THE SITE — The site of the new Drake Rd. Park contains a large ball diamond, two smaller diamonds and a play area northwest of Longacre Elementary School which is located along the rear of the Drake Park site. (Evert photo)



REVELATION — What is it that has been attracting the attention of Longacre pupils? The question asked in Sunday's Enterprise & Observer is answered today by revealing the source of fun — those toy ani-



mals on springs at the new Drake Rd. Park. The equipment was donated by the Farmington Area Jaycees. (Evert photo)

City's Drake Park Is Carved From Farmland

BY LYNNE LUTHER

Three diamonds and a few chips scattered here and there in a round setting sounds like something Ari plans to tuck into Jackie's Christmas stocking.

Actually, the diamonds are for baseball, the chips are made of wood and meant to prevent erosion at the setting of the new City Park recently constructed at Drake Rd.

A joint venture financed by city and state, Dinan said the Farmington Jaycees also contributed funds toward the purchase of playground equipment.

It was through their efforts that the new swings, slide, merry-go-round, "huck abouts" and teeter-totter were installed for little ones to play on.

WITH "PHASE I" of construction on the new city park now completed, Dinan said "Phase II" is due to start as soon as more funds can be obtained from the state.

Construction on the new 10-acre site cost the city approximately \$7,000 or 15 per cent of total cost while the state paid

80 per cent of the total cost, about \$28,000. Their share was computed on a 1960 population census.

Dinan said Phase II, which will add barbecue stands, picnic tables, restrooms, drinking fountains and more cleared space for kite-flying and other open air activities, will probably cost the city another \$5-8,000, bringing total city funding of the venture to "somewhere between \$12-15,000," Dinan estimated.

Construction on Phase II won't be getting underway until sometime after July, 1971, when "more state funds will be available" and the city becomes eligible to apply for another state grant, Dinan said.

THREE BASEBALL diamonds were set up at the park. The biggest diamond accommodates both hardball and softball players while two smaller ones were constructed and sited especially for Little Leaguers.

Dinan said light fixtures and a backstop must still be added and a sprinkling system is already in the ground to help keep the turf green.

More sports facilities will be available when Phase II is completed. Tennis courts will be added along with a new parking lot and storage building on the site, Dinan said.

"The whole plan of our new city park should be in full operation by the end of 1971 or '72 at the latest," he said. Although Dr. Roderick Smith, superintendent of Farmington schools, said there were "no set plans" for Longacre Elementary School, which adjoins the park, to use its playground facilities, our photographer caught plenty of kids taking advantage of the new equipment.

Dr. Smith said teachers might take the little ones over to the park to picnic, "but there is no real pressing need" to use park facilities for everyday school exercise activities.

"The Community uses school property for a number of things," he added, "so I'm sure that if we ever did need park facilities, the city would have no objections."

George Vondrak, superintendent of the city's Department of Public Works, explained the use of wood chips

"to prevent erosion" on the eastern bank of the park and the south side of the ball diamonds.

"We've scattered chips under swings, slides and picnic tables and plan to put them anywhere mud and puddles might keep people from using that equipment."

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EMORY DANIELS, Editor

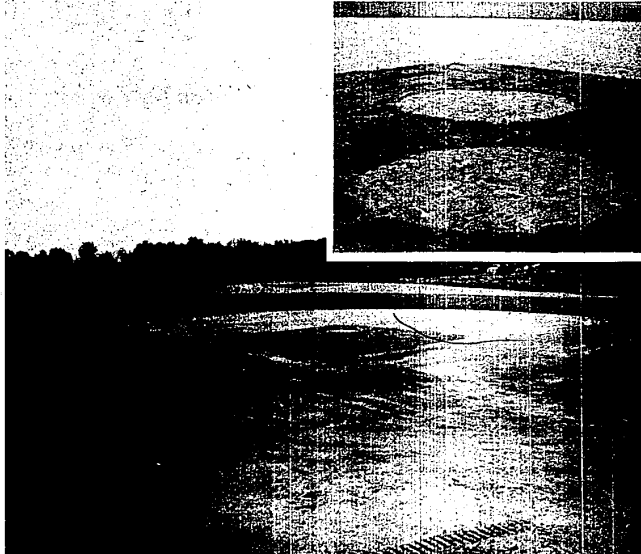
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A Park Is Born



DOUBLE USE — The large ball diamond at the Drake Park can be used for either hardball games or slo-pitch softball. The double-mound (see insert) feature

is a unique concept in laying out ball diamonds and makes the field more accessible for softball and hardball play. (Evert photo)



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