

# Hills wins grant to help develop park

By Joanne Maliszewski  
Staff writer

A new \$500,000 athletic park — dubbed Pioneer Park — will be partially financed with the help of a state grant.

The city has been awarded a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to help develop the 15-acre youth sports park on the northwest corner of 15 Mile and Farmington roads, Special Services Director Dan Potter said.

The remaining tab for the long-

planned park will be financed through revenue generated by a .5-mill park levy, approved by voters in June 1986.

Construction on the sports park is expected to begin in mid-May. The Farmington Hills Planning Commission has approved a site plan for the park, which will offer two baseball/softball fields and two soccer fields. In the fall, the two ballfields can be used for soccer. Parking will accommodate 100 cars.

The park and its planning throughout the past year has drawn the concern of nearby neighbors in Briar

Hill, Willowbrook Commons, Three Oaks, Condor Woods, Wedgewood and Canterbury West subdivisions.

IN THE approved site plan, neighbors' demand for a 4-foot-high fence, covered with black vinyl, around the park was accepted.

Neighbors abutting the park also will receive an additional five feet of property on their side of the fence because the city agreed to move it toward the park, Potter said.

City officials also are taking bids for a landscaping plan, which neighbors abutting the park can financial-

ly participate in to landscape the five feet of additional land on their side of the fence, Potter said.

"We are not giving them that side of the fence," he said, adding that the city nonetheless "will need a commitment from them for maintenance of the land."

On neighbors' demand, berming in the park will be increased to a height of 6 feet. Sewer and water lines also will be constructed through a concession stand and restrooms are not planned, Potter said.

The approved site plan also calls

for construction of a sidewalk adjacent to the park that will hook up to an existing walkway in the area. An entrance gate off Farmington Road will be constructed. The gravel parking lot will have an entrance drive and timber parking dividers.

IN ADDITION to grass, the park's landscaping will include plantings such as Austrian pines, Norway spruces and maples and flowering crab trees.

Development of the acreage — donated to the city in 1977 — into an

athletic park is expected to meet some of the community's youth sports needs, particularly for area baseball/softball teams and clubs, as well as for the Farmington Soccer Club.

The soccer club lost its playing fields when Little Caesar International purchased 39 acres on the corner of 12 Mile and Drake for new company headquarters. A portion of the acreage served as the club's home for more than seven years until Farmington Public Schools sold the land to the pizza company.

## Student artists gain accolades

John Heffner, a student at Farmington Hills Harrison High School, received first prize for his ceramic and wood sculpture Monday as 200 works of art by local high school students were displayed for the judge's consideration. The ceramic work was done in art teacher Bill Harmon's class at Harrison.

Michelle Goyette, a student at Mercy High, received second prize. Paul Aalto from North Farmington received third.

Gwen Tomkow, president of the Farmington Artists Club, awarded more than the usual honorable mentions to the participating student artists because she felt the quality of work warranted recognition.

Beverly Ellis, arts commission chair, announced that all of the winners and special mention works of art will be on display for the first 15 days of April at Pictures & More, at Farmington Road and Grand River in Farmington. She encouraged residents to stop by and see the work being done by area student artists.

Honorable Mention awards went to: Carrie Balog, Mercy; Dan Grafmiller, North Farmington; Carol Mistravich, Mercy; Mary Potts, North Farmington; Wayne Russell, Farmington; and Shawn Sturgis, Harrison.

"Cash prizes will be presented to these students at ceremonies at the

Farmington Community Center Sunday, May 17," said Robert Benjamin and Fern Barber, co-chairs of the student art award committee and members of the arts commission.

Gwen Tomkow designated seven artists for special mention: Althea Alviar, Mercy; Richard Brown, Farmington; Erika Furey, Mercy; Regan Kronk, Farmington; Nancy Larsen, Farmington; Bryon Tobin, Farmington and Mark Zurawski, Brother Rice High School.

Students from North Farmington brought their video camera to the program and will present pictures of the participants and their work on cable Channel 10.

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