

Are Parks Desirable In Township?

FARMINGTON
Farmington Township has established a parks steering committee to investigate the needs for community parks and what steps should be taken to begin a parks program if needed.

Some township officials are

skeptical about the need for parks and about the community's willingness to support such a program.

But the township board, at its last meeting, voted to establish a steering committee to investigate and report back within 60 days.

Some township officials are

representative of the Farmington Conservation and Preservation Committee, an offshoot of the Farmington Naturalist Club.

He asked the board to establish a parks commission through the state's building authority act. Both Plymouth and Northville have established building authorities for parks, Mohlman says.

The commission could issue self-liquidating revenue bonds to build parks and lease the parks to the township paying off the bonds, Mohlman explained.

The state recreation bond program could be utilized, he added, with the state paying 80% of the cost and the township 20%. A federal open space program, he continued, has provisions for a 50-50 split of costs.

TRUSTEE DAVID STAD-

ER, also a planning commissioner, agreed the master

plan does recommend consideration of additional parks and open space in the township.

"There seems to be a need of looking towards the ultimate population and the need to acquire land for parks," said Stadler.

Stadler supported the idea of a group of residents willing to study and recommend what lands might be good for parks and how to finance any necessary program.

"If we do nothing, we may live to regret it. It doesn't hurt to plan and see what we can do. Once we are prepared, maybe we should go to the people again," added Stadler.

Nolan commented that the township already has an established parks commission. Township Attorney Joseph T. Brennan, however, said that no one can for election to the parks commission, and all terms have expired.

Treasurer Thomas Nolan commented that the township did not have the 50% or 20% to spend, and that a parks bond issue previously proposed by the board had been voted down by the people.

"Before we spend any money for parks," Nolan said, "we should go to the polls and let the people vote again."

Mohlman noted that the township's planners recognize a need of 413 acres for parks but have recommended only 260 in the master plan because land has become less available.

If a park plan is not developed soon, Mohlman cautioned, there will not be any land left to provide the future parks the township will require.

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THERE ARE now six vacancies on the parks commission. Because they were not filled within 45 days, they can only be filled by special election, Brennan added.

A study committee could be appointed and then, if necessary, the governor could be asked to call a special election, Brennan explained.

Trustee Margaret Schaefer made the motion to establish the study committee to determine the needs, what sites are available, and how a program could be financed.

"We can always build ice rinks, ball diamonds and roads later, but we must save now the natural beauty of Farmington," she said.

"There is a great deal of dispute among citizens of our township," commented Trustee Earl Oppenheimer, "on whether we should go into this type of parks program. A lot of residents are opposed

to any large parks in the township."

The study committee should represent a broad spectrum of the township, he added, rather than just those with a beautification interest.

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Consumer Fraud Is Dem Topic

FARMINGTON
Consumer protection will be discussed at the monthly meeting of the Farmington Democratic Club scheduled for 8 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 4, in the First Farmington Savings and Loan building on Mooney Street between Orchard Lake and Farmington Plaza just north of Grand River.

Speaker will be Paul Donnelly, attorney with Neighborhood Legal Services of Wayne County where he heads the consumer fraud division.

Donnelly left a position with Chrysler Corp. to join the Neighborhood Legal Services where he is joined by young attorneys fresh out of law school to work with the inner city poor.

He insists, however, that consumer fraud is not confined to the inner city. Gyp artists operate in the suburbs as well, Donnelly points out.



SUDDEN STOP — This badly damaged steel fence provides a sudden stop for sledders going down the big hill at Shiawassee and Farmington Rds. in the City of Farmington. The sudden stop, however, can not only damage the fence and sleds but also can injure children. (Evert photo)

Dangers On Hill

Continued from Page 1A
years ago proved ineffective.

Deadman estimated that the wooden fence stayed erect only "a couple of weeks," and said that the straw used to pad the fence was quickly torn up and spread around the area by the sledders themselves.

Police were called on a few occasions to stop small fires started in the straw by youthful pranksters, Deadman said.

Deadman said that relatively few injuries, one last year and only two so far this year, are reported to police, although he suspected many minor injuries go unreported. Most injuries, he suggested, are caused by collisions of careless sledders.

Deadman warned in particular against the extensive use of toboggans on the short sled run, which is not set up with a banked toboggan path. On a short run, he said, the toboggans are difficult to

control, and are responsible for several accidents.

William Prisk, business manager of Farmington Schools, says that the city has no plans to change the direction or supervision of the slide at this time, although he and Chief Deadman have talked over some ideas privately.

Prisk emphasized that the area is not specifically designed as a recreation spot. "No one is going to discourage anybody from using the hill," Prisk said, "but we're not in the business of promoting it either. We can't take the hill away."

Deadman emphasized the importance of parent's supervising their own children around sledding areas. Police often check on the hill during regular patrols, he said, but "the schools don't supervise it, and neither do we."

Deadman suggested that parents make certain that their children are not without adult supervision when sledding, by going with them if necessary.

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