

Holly botanical gardens taking shape

Something wonderful is happening in Holly. A 70-acre park, the largest piece of undeveloped land in the village, caught the eye of Jim Hilty and last fall he bought it.

Hilty said that with the wholehearted approval of the Holly Planning Commission, a privately owned botanical park that will be open to the public is being developed. Hilty's Garden Park of Holly should be ready in five years.

"boundaries," said Hilty. Coincidentally, a township park is adjacent to this land. It offers recreational facilities that will complement the serenity of this botanical garden. All the people involved have a common devotion to the preservation of the wild areas.

HILTY'S SONS, Loren and Monroe, head horticulturists, are designing and laying out the gardens with the encouragement and approval of Evelyn Haskin and Hilty. His daughter, Alon, has been involved in the planning meetings. Loren's special interests are the hidden gardens, a maze and butterfly dome. Monroe wants to install a formal garden on the central part of the parcel. The land runs along East Holly

Road for a quarter of a mile and is a half mile deep. The builders, who first looked at the area to see the terrain and water, found wildlife — nesting sandhill cranes, owls, gray herons, woodcock, pheasant, fox and deer. There are wetlands, streams, native plant life.

In one place small oak trees are again coming up in what for many years had been farmland. They will be kept trimmed so that they won't grow too big so visitors can see an emergent oak forest. Behind these trees is an existing forest with some trees as old as 250 years, which will be retained and left as natural as possible.

Beneath and in front of this forest is a perfect example of a moss garden. All forms of lichens and mosses (10-15 different kinds) are growing and will be supplemented by as many others as can be coaxied to grow.

A SUNKEN garden between two parking areas will be built and then the visitor can traverse that distance on a bridge, enter a nature trail, proceed on to the formal gardens and

out over the ponds. Visitors will also be able to go around the ponds directly to a secret garden where weddings can be held.

Construction of the 14-foot walls of this garden will begin soon. Here plants that are most susceptible to weather damage and partial to subtended or indirect light will grow. Flow romantic to participate in a wedding in these surroundings.

Self-guiding tapes will be available for sightless people so that they can take independent walks over the wetland area (shaped like a bird) without having to be attended. A hand-rail will guide them. The tape will contain bird sounds so that the listener can identify birds heard on the walk.

Formal gardens encompassing 12-15 acres are planned in what is now open fields. A maze, which can be seen from an elevated level, will entice the curious. Other formal gardens include a sundial, quinceaux, parterre, knot, sump and topiary.

A hidden garden in an Italian grove with waterfalls running through-out will be another feature. A butterfly dome is planned as well as a



down to earth
Marty Figley

large arboretum which will dissect an avenue of two double rows of sugar maples or lindens (the final decision hasn't been made) and the esplanade, which will run through the formal gardens and part of the semi-natural area.

REFLECTING POOLS on graded levels with waterfalls between them are in the scheme so that from the top, visitors can look the whole distance for a quarter of a mile down to the bottom of the esplanade.

Nitched among the gardens and anywhere they can be built, will be private bowers with picnic tables. They will be numbered so that they can be reserved in advance.

The existing woods will be left as is, but will be augmented with additional plants that would have grown naturally in the area.

Plans call for a reception center which will include the history of the area and how and why things were done for this garden.

Suggestions on what to look for in the Garden Park of Holly will help visitors to learn as they enjoy. All plants will be labeled.

Some of the gardens are being laid out from 17th century books. The builders are using an 18th century surveyor's chain just for the fun of it — and when directions on a garden plan indicate "three chains" the dimensions will be accurate.

Chamberworks to perform

"An Evening of Concerti" by Chamberworks will be presented at 7 p.m. Friday, May 4, at Varner Hall, Oakland University, Rochester.

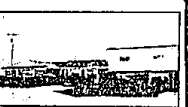
The musicians are Maria Smith and Hal Grossman, violins. Paul

Willington, violincello and Thomas M. Kuras, harpsichord.


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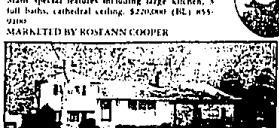
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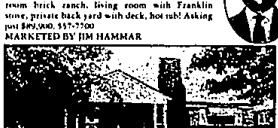
FARMINGTON HILLS. Recently updated kitchen. Master suite with walk in closet, beautiful living room. Cathedral ceiling, fireplace, and central air. \$199,900. (313) 553-9100
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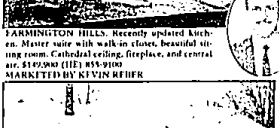
INKWELL. Beautifully landscaped home, which backs up to heavily wooded park, neutral colors throughout, deck and patio. \$124,999. 609-4500
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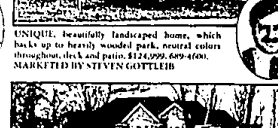
THIS UPDATED 4 bedroom colonial features lower level walkout, French doors, beaded glass entry doors, brass chandelier, 130 ft. of footage on Walnut Lake, Birmingham Schools. \$159,000. (616) 267-1553-5688
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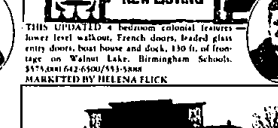
BIRMINGHAM BEAUTY. Spacious, well maintained 2 1/2 bed. one ranch. Fireplace in large living room, updated kitchen with oak cabinets, full basement, garage. \$115,000. \$157-7700
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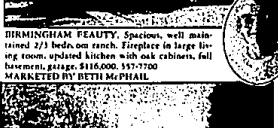
WALK TO BIRMINGHAM. Attractive North Royal ranch with fireplace, bay window, hard wood floors, neutral decor, ready to move into. \$94,900. 645-1900
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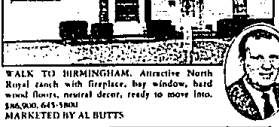
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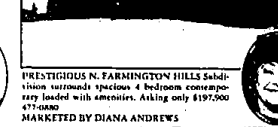
CUSTOM RANCH. Three bedrooms, 1 1/2 baths, fireplace, finished basement, attached garage on 1 1/4 acres. All for only \$127,000. 354-1500
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