Park opens up a variety of opinions

By JOANNE MALISZEWSKI
STAF WHITEA
When it came to the Woodland Hills Park,
Larry Lichtman didn't want to reopen Pandon's Bor. But he did. . a little.
"It think this is to an extert a self-fulfilling
prophecy," the Farmington Hills councilman
said, referring to a proposed plan to meintain
the 78-acre park in a passive state.
Lichtman urgent particulative from the
Woodland Hills part and how committee,
which do be a conceptual plan presented
to be council Monday, as well as the parks
and rerestation commission, which will review
and rerestation commission, which will review
and plan when it's done by Nov. 30.
"Eventually you will see more done on this
property than proposed because residents will
demand it." Lichtman said, adding that new,
younger families will demand more from the
city. "Eventually, there will be a need for
some type of public facility."
Lichtman's comments opened what in comparison to past discussions on the property
was a mild debate about the park's future.
Councilwoman Nancy Bates disagreed. "I
think as we become more populated it's important to have pieces of property like that."
City officials, she said, should buy and

maintain open land "to preserve yesterday's world for tomorrow's children."

Councilmen Aldo Vagnezzi reminded the council that voters approved a half-mill eight-year special parks and recreation milage on the promise that the park on Farming ton Road, south of 1-696, would be passive. "I hope we would not try to rewrite what voters wanted one year ago."

Ad hoe committee member Roy Lindhardt agreed that someone somewhere will want to use the wooded, rolling land for some type of development. "I think the potential for the citizens domands to use the property are three. But they can't have it."

Joe Derek, naturalist and committee member, asked the council and the community to open their minds to nature and maintaining Woodland Hills Park as it is. Ho slor reminded the council that he and other so-called birdwatchers never opposed the mojor sport he continued for it.

And council watcher Masha Silver spoke of the need to maintain natural areas. "If it goes, we will never get it back."

Councilman Terry Sever suggested using the \$600,000 budgeted over the eight-year milage plan for something other than Woodland.

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Woodland Hills from page 1A

to unfold — gee, we really have a

to unfold — gee, we really have a gem."

The city council accepted the conceptual plan and directed ad hee committee chairman Mark Davis to have the plan completed by Nov. 30 and distributed to the parks and recreation commission and the council.

Some council members suggested holding public hearings to hear what voters have to say about park plans. Hearings were not scheduled.

Thelloway outlined a broad area

scheduled.

Holloway outlined a broad area of the park that represents what he calls a critical habitat core, which includes the Rouge River corridor, the two central creekbed derirdors and their valley walls, the wetlands and the southern portion of the central hardwood forest.

"Together they represent the highest levels of species utilization and interaction and are the

■ In the woodland and Rouge River areas, for example, Holloway suggested placing kiosks where visitors can get information about the species of wildlife and vegetation in those particular areas.

moet susceptible to disturbance and large scale degradation," according to the Holloway's report. The plan includes an entrance directly across from the Oakland Community College entrance on Orchard Lake Road — where there is now a traffic light — into a parking area for approximately 25-30 cars.

An open gathering area and activity area would be placed not far from the parking, in these areas, organizations can gather for educational talks and displays about the park.

the park.
In the woodland and Rouge

River areas, for example, Holloway suggested placing klosks where visitors can get information about the species of wildlife and vegetation in those particular areas.

A small picnic area is proposed near the new wetlands. Holloway also suggested the need to continually maintain the park's prairie areas — to prevent them from becoming forests — as well as the scrub areas.

"Three's a shortage of rabbits on this property," he said, referring to the need to pravide features to encourage rabbit neeting.

Holloway also suggested providing areas for senior adults and people with handicaps where they can have an opportunity to participate in the richness of the park. The consultant told the council it is possible to develop certain areas of the park for use without disturbing what is called a core habitat zone, which includes the wetlands area, the two-creek corridor and part of the large woodland zone, for example.

"Preserving that core in perpetuity will preserve the wildlife richness on that site," Holloway said.

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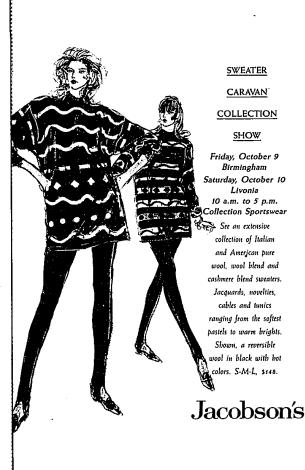


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