



A churning wave-making wall in deep water sends waves onto the artificial shoreline of the wave pool proposed for Addison Oaks.

Machine to make waves at 700 acre county park

By ROBERT KIPPER

OAKLAND COUNTY—A row of hydraulic fans and powerful bursts of air into tunnels of water below, displacing water at the deep end of the pool. With fans alternating every 1.5 seconds, a rocking motion is created which, in turn, produces waves.

No, this is not the closely guarded secret of how Cecil B. DeMille parted the Red Sea in "The Ten Commandments."

It is the way waves as high as three to six feet are made in an artificial swimming pool called, appropriately enough, "the wave pool." Three-acres large, it attempts to bring the feel of the ocean inland, duplicating with cement and chlorinated water a windy day at the ocean.

All that's missing, according to its proponents, is the salt, undertow, seaweed and stinging varmits found in the real thing.

OAKLAND COUNTY parkgoers may someday have a giant wave pool of their own to splash and toss around in. It is part of the master plan, recently adopted, for developing Addison Oaks Park, the 700-acre county park located in the northeast tip of the county about 12 miles north of Rochester.

Just as the wave pool represents a departure from conventional pool planning, the Addison master plan represents variations in park planning by the county parks and recreation department.

Whereas the other county parks have been designed to preserve as much as possible of a wilderness atmosphere, Addison Oaks, while preserving a good deal of its land in a natural state, will be loaded with special interest, revenue-producing attractions of which the wave pool is only the highlight.

Vintage 1924 trolley cars, which are already purchased and headed for Oakland County from the Chicago Transit Authority, will be used to link the various attractions, transporting golfers, hikers, picnickers, boatmen, conventioners, swimmers and outdoor concert buffs to their chosen location in the park.

THE MASTER plan calls for the creation of overnight convention facilities; a 170-acre, 18-hole golf course; and a 5,000-person amphitheater for outdoor concerts in addition to more conventional park features such as family or group camping (90 acres), nature preserves (110 acres), picnic

and day camp uses (80 acres) and provisions for boating, fishing, field and winter sports.

In short, the little known and slightly used county park, whose latest claim to fame has been hosting the marriage of television sweethearts John Kelly and Marilyn Turner, may someday have more to boast about: a park showplace designed to handle 5,000 persons at peak periods.

Only two things, however, stand in the way of implementation: 10-15 years and at least that many millions of dollars.

Park planners say it will probably take that long and that much to make the master plan a reality.

THE WAVE pool alone cost \$450,000 when one was built in Decatur, Ala. in 1970. It's anybody's guess how much such a pool would cost today or how much higher the price of artificial waves will rise within the next 10-15 years.

Eric Reickel, director of the county parks and recreation commission, admits that funding possibilities are limited right now. However, he feels that the plan will eventually be paid for with a combination of county and federal funds and private donations.

A six-phase implementation schedule has been devised so the master plan can be developed in stages, whenever funds become available.

The wait could be considerable. Federal funds, which are being diverted to higher priorities like fighting unemployment, have dried up for projects such as this.

FRETTER OVER how the Addison park will be paid for is, however, apparently not germane at this stage of the project. What is important now is that a good plan be ready for better days when it may be implemented, park planners say.

According to this line of reasoning, today's recessed economy shouldn't divert planners from \$10-15 million schemes for days when an expansive varied recreation facility will be in even greater demand.

The man with the highest hopes for the project is Robert Bills, the landscape architect whose West Bloomfield firm drew up the master plan.

It was over two years ago that Bills and his staff began hiking, surveying and photographing the land for the project. Then, as now, it took a great deal of projection to scan the site and see features like trolley cars, a golf course and a pool that makes its own surf.

THE PROPERTY, once the elegant estate of Arthur H. Buhl, the Detroit industrialist, is largely made up of marshlands, rolling fields, woods and sharply sloped hills.

It is now used primarily for camping and picnicking and has a small lake for swimming. A Tudor-style manor house is used for wedding receptions and other parties.

Bills thinks the park will be a great attraction for families as well as overnight campers and conventioners. Interests for the entire family would be within a short, scenic trolley-car ride of each other.

DESPITE THE many alterations, Bills said he believes the master plan preserves the best natural features of the land.

"The plan does not imply a scaled-down version of a Disney World type installation," he says. "People say, 'My God you're gonna rape the landscape.' But that's not the case."

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