

# State Eyes Maybury As Park Site

By W.W. EDGAR

Unless there is an unexpected hitch, the rolling acres at Maybury Sanitarium will become the first state park in Wayne County before the summer is ended.

The 865-acre site is between Seven and Eight Mile roads west of the City of Northville.

This was almost assured last week when the City of Detroit, which had the site for sale to the highest bidder on March 1, removed the deadline and paved the way for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to consider the purchase.

In removing the deadline, the City of Detroit, through its surplus property department, asked the Natural Resources group to make a suitable offer with the stipulation that the site must be sold by the end of the fiscal year, June 30.

ORIGINALLY, the site was to go to any bidder. But in fear that the beautiful rolling country would fall into the hands of a developer and the last big beauty spot in Wayne County be lost, many of the surrounding communities -- and members of the Detroit City Council -- went on record proposing the sale only for recreational purposes.

Among these, the City of Northville approved a bond issue for \$750,000 to initiate the purchase of at least 200 acres for a park.

Others included the City of Plymouth, and the Wayne County Board of Commissioners.

"We are making our bid only as a last resort," Frank Ollendorff, city manager of Northville, explained.

"We can't handle the entire parcel, but we could make good use of 200 acres for such things as a golf course, swimming pools, trails for horse back riding and other features to attract nature lovers and outdoor people."

WITH THIS gathering interest in preserving the area for a park, the two state legislators -- Sen. Carl Pursell (R-Plymouth) and Rep. Marvin Stempien (D-Livonia) -- urged the Dept. of Natural Resources to become involved to the extent of making a bid.

As a result, the DNR adopted a resolution to that effect. Now the matter is up to the State Legislature to approve the use of the funds from the state recreation bond issue.

In urging the department to make the bid, Pursell pointed out that last year, as a member of the Wayne County Board of Commissioners, he attempted to interest the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority in acquiring the area for park purposes.

"This group is water oriented," Pursell stated, "and on that pretext passed up the Maybury site."

He is pleased now that the DNR is interested. In that feeling he has been joined by Rep. Stempien who voiced the opinion "that the major hurdle has been passed and that I am confident that with the genuine interest, cooperation and expertise of the City of Detroit and the Dept. of Natural Resources, the two parties can get together to reach a speedy agreement."

WHILE NO asking price has been publicized, the City of Detroit from the beginning

has stated that it would be willing to sell at a lower price to some other governmental agency than it would to a private developer.

It has been hinted that the

price to an outside developer would have to be "approximately \$3 million." It also has been hinted that the state could acquire the rolling area for \$2 million.

Located in the northwest section of Wayne County 21 miles from downtown Detroit, the site includes the former William Maybury Sanitarium, built years ago

to care for those afflicted with tuberculosis. It is within the general area bounded by Seven Mile, Napier, Eight Mile and Beck Roads.

It comprises approximately eight per cent of Northville Township's area and, at the present time, is zoned for single-family residential development.

Strangely, Northville Township has taken no action on the proposed sale.

It is well suited for a state park. Many of the area's fastest growing cities are just a few miles from the site.

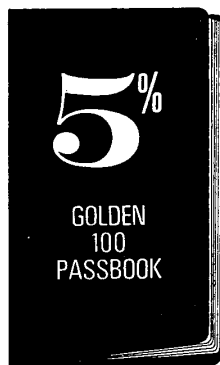
Northville, Plymouth, Livonia, Novi, Wixom, South Lyon, Farmington, Garden City and Westland. These cities comprise a total of 236,000 population.

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