

Medlock Park plan draws fire

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By Hatcher Hurd
Neighbor News Editor

Decatur's Medlock Park area residents, concerned about effects a \$2.4 million expansion of the park would have on the neighborhood, came away from a meeting with DeKalb Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs Director Jim Cone with few answers but assured they would be heard.

Homeowners met with Cone Feb. 16 to express concerns of the effects on drainage in the area new construction might have, the effect on traffic a proposed 205-space lot on Oak Circle would create and the effect of consolidation of two youth associations using the park.

"We don't want to see busloads of people in here day after day," Oak Circle resident E.Q. Maddox said. "A neighborhood park is fine, but we don't want to see a big county park built here."

Cone assured the group of about 20 residents the combined youth league would only have about 560 youngsters using the facility.

"In the 1960s, Medlock Park accommodated more than 1,000 kids. We don't project near that many ever using the park," Cone said.

"The main thing is drainage," resident Charlie Pusateri said. "That's my main concern. This park is on a flood plain."

Although Cone's engineering consultant did not attend the meeting as expected, he assured the residents the issue of drainage would be carefully examined. Medlock Park lies in a flood plain next to South

Fork Peachtree Creek.

Cone invited the residents to form citizens' steering committees to work with the engineers to see that their interests are considered before construction begins on the park in late 1989.

Although the master plan for the park calls for eight ball diamonds, a concession stand-press box and a parking lot, only about \$650,000 of the \$2.4 million plan is budgeted for Medlock under the existing \$33-million bond issue.

"That's not an attractive park that's out there now," Cone told the civic group. "If you look at what we have done at Wade Walker Park, I think you'll agree (these park improvements) will increase the value of the homes in this neighborhood.

After the meeting many of the residents said they believed they had been heard and named four of their group to become a steering committee and meet with park officials.

"I think we made progress," resident Jim Albert said.

Staff photo by Hatcher Hurd
AIRING CONCERNS: Recreation, Parks and Cultural Affairs Director Jim Cone, right meets with Oak Circle residents Roy Finch, second from right, and Ed Wait, left, to discuss the effects Medlock Park will have on the neighborhood.

