Greater Des Moines Softball Complex

Park and Recreation Board…Did You Know?

October 24, 2017
History

- Starting in 1860 existed as prairie land
- Primarily used for farming
History

- Owned in the 1990's by Edward Ochylski
- Owned Iowa Packing Company
- Sold the land to the city for $2 in 1995
History

• Land rework began in 1997
• Construction began in 2002
• Field lighting added in 2004
• Opening Ceremony was September 25, 2004
• First pitch by Mayor Cownie
Field Lights

- First proposed in 1995
- Strong reaction by the neighborhood
- Sued Polk County over rezoning

Controversial softball complex to get lighting

By CHRISTINA SMITH
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City officials plan to add lights this spring to a new softball complex in the northeast part of the city.

In a memo to the city, Don Tripp, director of the Parks and Recreation Department, said there is $151,000 available to pay for the lighting project at the softball complex near Northeast 46th Avenue and Northeast 46th Street. The complex is scheduled to be complete by July 1.

“We need to build up the east side. I would prefer something nicer, but every bit helps. I think it will bring people over and show them that we don’t all live in shacks and drive tractors.”

Pat Pflaumer, east Des Moines resident talking about the softball complex

Construction on the project began last summer, years after the park was first proposed. Initial plans called for an eight-diamond complex, but only four have been built. The fencing and field turf also is in place, and the city expects to pave the parking lot sometime in spring.

Even before construction began on the long-suffering fields, the city faced problems. Neighbors sued Polk County over rezoning of the area — annexed by Des Moines — and a judge ruled in favor of the county. In 1998, the Iowa Supreme Court upheld the decision.

Although the project is taking years to complete, George Davis, chief umpire for Greater Des Moines Softball, said the wait will be worth it. Players and interested parties had hoped for the project to be completed quickly, he said, "but as soon as we got over one hurdle, we would come to another one. But I feel it is going to be one of the most beautiful

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Amenities

- Irrigated fields
- Concrete pathways around all fields
- All weather capabilities
- Vinyl fence material
- Separate maintenance building
- PA system
- Playground facilities
- Concessions stand
Recreation Leagues

• Before construction of the complex Des Moines utilized 15+ locations across the city to play games
• Hosted numerous tournaments over the years
• Leagues have had 1000’s of teams
Benefits of the Park

• Perfect combination of recreation and park land
• Red oak trees
• Blue bird boxes
• Natural environment