

Beech Acres Park plans intensify

Firefighters raising funds for memorial on Salem Road

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ANDERSON TWP. - In the next few years, Beech Acres Park will see improvements, including a firefighters memorial and a skate park.

The 12-member Anderson Township Firefighters Memorial Committee has been working to raise funds and recently decided to build the memorial at the park on Salem Road because the site will have good visibility and ample parking. It will be completed in the spring of 2004.

The \$200,000 project will include a 75-foot-by-75-foot area, with a 7-foot bronze firefighter on a 5-foot platform as its centerpiece. There will be an eternal flame and the area will be lighted. Memorial plaques and a list of names of those who have served the Anderson Township Fire and Rescue Department will also be in place. An area will be set aside to honor those individuals who have died in the line of duty or of work-related illness or injury.

"That memorial part of the park will make a nice place of meditation, to rest and reflect," said Gary Justice, president of the Anderson Township Fireman's Association. "The committee has been working very hard, meeting monthly and doing tons of work and research; and we're happy with what they finally decided upon."

Beech Acres Park is in the middle of other improvements, too. The park district recently decided that the first phase of a 24,000-square-foot skate park will be designed, with hopes it will be completed by the spring, said Troy Euton, planning director for the Anderson Park District.

Last week, Mr. Euton met with people interested in the park to discuss creating a skate area made up of a combination of steel surface structures and poured cement structures.

The park district has allocated \$200,000 to the project, enough to cover the cost of a 15,000-square-foot surface park. Volunteers are working to raise matching funds to build the other 9,000 square feet in cement, he said.

After a 15-2 vote of the skaters in attendance in favor of the combination park, the park district is beginning work on designing the skate park, Mr. Euton said.

"We gave the option to the skaters and did a field vote. We came to a consensus, and now we can get started," he said.

HOW TO GIVE

To contribute to the firefighters memorial, send donations to The Anderson Township Fireman's Association Memorial Project, 6211 Salem Road, Cincinnati 45230. For information, call 474-3151. To donate to the skate park fund or for more information about it, visit the park district Web site at www.andersonparks.com.