

Don't let developers spoil a real jewel

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Editor,

There is a beach that is a little out of the way, but by far is the most beautiful beach in Southwest Michigan.

I discovered Jean Klock Park as a junior in high school and fell in love with the place. If you talk to anyone over the age of 50, it was the place to go in the summertime. Many would like to see this happen again. But the integrity of the park soon may be compromised by development.

The plot to develop on the Jean Klock property is not something new, it just changes actors and scenes. Beginning in the 1950s to the present, the latest plan is to place 28 luxury homes on 4.8 acres of land. Officials from the city of Benton Harbor say that this would only take up 5 percent of the total park property. What the Benton Harbor officials hide behind these statistics is that these houses will be built on the beach and will place private houses right next to a public beach, something that may cause tension between public swimmers who have come for a view that will be compromised by development, and the private homeowners, who every time they look out their back yards will see swimmers.

This plan also goes against the wishes of the of J.N. Klock, who when donating this land to the city stated in the contract to the city that it "shall at all times be open to the public meaning the whole park," not "the parts that the city decides not to sell." Public action was able to stop development before and public action can work now!

I would encourage the public to take interest in the park by discovering the love for it that I found in it. Come out and enjoy the natural beauty that the park holds. Join in the fight to stop development from coming to Jean Klock Park by letting the city of Benton Harbor know it is not in its best interests to sell even a part of what has been called "the Jewel of Southwest Michigan."

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