

County to ask title to Lee Park

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Baltimore county will ask the city for title to the park at Lake Roland, shown above during 1969 cleaning.

County to ask title to Lee Park

By ANTHONY BARBIERI, JR.,
Towson Bureau of The Sun

The Baltimore County Parks Board agreed yesterday to ask the city for title to the 450-acre park surrounding Lake Roland, but warned that the county may not have the funds to clean up the lake immediately.

The lake in the past few years has been rapidly filling with sediment washed down from developing areas in cen-

tral Baltimore county. The lake is part of Robert E. Lee Park, which is in the Ruxton-Riderwood area of the county but is owned by the city.

Talked for 15 years

According to William J. Tierney, the county director of parks and recreation, the city and county have discussed cooperating on improving and maintaining the park for the past 15 years, but have been unable to reach agreement.

At its meeting yesterday, the board heard two community leaders from the Ruxton-Riderwood area, who warned that some portions of the lake are already swamp, and that the rest is in immediate danger of becoming a "dead lake."

"The reason the decision

presses now is because of the rate at which the lake is filling up," said George S. Wills, who is chairman of the Maryland Environmental Trust and a resident of the Ruxton area.

Would be costly

Charles B. Allen, chairman of the county parks board, told Mr. Wills that correcting the siltation problem at Lake Roland would be a costly project, regardless of whether it was undertaken by the parks department or the Department of Public Works.

He and other board members pointed out that the department was having a difficult enough time in getting funds for projects already approved.

"I don't think the county would be interested in anything

other than turning the county property over to the county," Mr. Allen said.

The board then agreed to send a letter to city parks officials stating that the county would assume responsibility for improvements to the park if the city would give the county title.

While acknowledging that the clean up of Lake Roland would take "big dollars," Mr. Wills told the board that residents of the Ruxton-Riderwood area were strongly in favor of saving the lake even to the point of agreeing to a "special taxing district" to maintain the park if the county gets title.

"It is clearly a question of whether the community and the county government want to bite the bullet and do it," Mr. Wills said. "The lake's deterioration has become much more acute."