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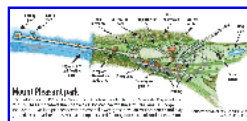


Mount Pleasant to open park in '09 Article tools

By [Prentiss Findlay](#) ([Contact](#))
 The Post and Courier
 Friday, January 25, 2008

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Waterfront oasis to have pier, memorial, playground, visitors center



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MOUNT PLEASANT — The town's \$14 million Waterfront Park would open Memorial Day weekend of 2009 under a schedule approved Thursday by Town Council that calls for bidding on phase one of the project to begin next month.

The first phase of the 22-acre park next to the Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge will have the area's longest pier at 1,250 feet, an 8-foot-tall war memorial statue cast in bronze, a sweetgrass pavilion, a visitors center and a playground.

"It's been a long road, but we're almost finished. When you walk out on the pier at



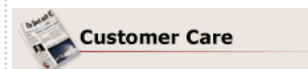
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night it's amazing how beautiful it is," said Warren Pruitt, project manager with ADC Engineering, the park's designer. The park will be landscaped with wildflowers and other vegetation to give it a natural feel as though it has always been there, Pruitt said.

The \$3 million pier sits on lopped-off pilings from the old Silas Pearman Bridge. At its end, in 12 feet of water, will be an artificial reef to attract fish,

Pruitt said. He and council discussed the safety implications of the town recreation department running a sailing program from a floating dock near the end of the pier.

Councilman Gary Santos said there's a strong ebb tide at the location that could pose a danger to kids on sailboats so close to the Ravenel Bridge. Santos suggested meeting in February with members of Hobcaw Yacht Club to see about a partnership with them. Rather than spending town money on the floating dock, it could be used to buy sailboats for a joint program with Hobcaw, he said. Council members agreed with him.

Santos and Mayor Harry Hallman disagreed about plans for a 5-acre dog park in the second phase of the project. There is no construction schedule for phase two, which also includes an amphitheater.

"That property is too valuable for a dog park. I would much rather have a building over there," Hallman said. Santos noted that the town doesn't have a dog park, which is a popular feature in other areas.

In an interview, Santos said the town is exploring selling the 5 acres designated for the dog park to a developer. "It was a dog park and it's supposed to be a dog park. The pet owners around here will go ballistic," he said. The town is in negotiations to acquire the 22 acres for the park from the state Department of Transportation. The DOT is giving the land to the town.

The centerpiece of the War Memorial Park will be the bronze statue and other elements such as a fountain that will honor veterans. The town hired Maryland-based sculptor Raymond Kaskey to create the \$400,000 veterans monument. His architectural sculptures include the National World War II Memorial on the Mall in Washington,

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D.C. Another well-known work, "Portlandia," is a 38-foot-high hammered copper sculpture on the Portland Public Services Building in Portland, Ore.

Kaskey's bronze female figure for the park represents contradictory emotions of loss and hope. In her left hand she holds a trifolded flag, presented to grieving widows and mothers. Her right hand rests upon a World War II helmet, supported by a rifle.

Reach **Prentiss Findlay** at 937-5711 or pfindlay@postandcourier.com.

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