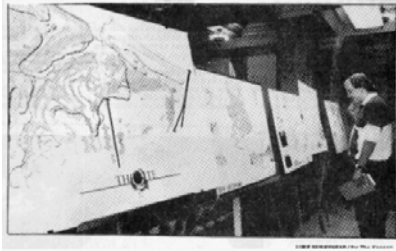


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Quindaro will be repaired

Local archaeologist to protect the ruins from erosion

By ANDREA STEWART and JOHN CARRAS of *The Kansan*

Work to preserve the old Quindaro ruins in northeast Kansas City, Kan., is about to start.

KCK officials have finalized details of a contract with local archaeologist Larry Schmitz to do a \$140,000 stabilization project to protect the ruins from erosion. City officials hope to eventually turn the site into a historical park if they can get state funds to finance it.

The contract, authorized by the city council, will become official within the next few days after it is signed off by city officials overseeing the project. Then Schmitz will have the green light to begin work at the site which is near 27th Street and Sewell Avenue.

A meeting was held Tuesday at city hall between city officials and citizens supporting the preservation of the old Quindaro ruins. City Engineer Fred Backus, who is overseeing the Quindaro project, said the meeting was amicable.

"I think everyone is looking forward to getting the stabilization project started," Backus said.

Employees and visitors to the Wyandotte County Courthouse, 710 N. Seventh St., are getting a first-hand look at what the historic Quindaro ruins could look like after a redevelopment project is completed, according to a design panel creation by students from Kansas State University.

A 10-piece exhibit featuring design concepts for the development of an interpretive park at the Quindaro site will be displayed through Sept. 22 at the Wyandotte County Courthouse on the second floor.

Created by graduate and undergraduate students in landscape architecture, park and recreation administration and public administration, the display was first exhibited in December 1993 with a slide presentation and panel discussion at the downtown Kansas City, Kan., Public Library.

The display is sponsored by the Quindaro Town Preservation Society, KCK City Council and its Underground Railroad Commission, the Wyandotte County commissioners and coordinated by Dr. Michael Swann, professor of architectural and

urban design at the University of Kansas. These design panels have been on display in the rotunda of the Kansas Capitol at Topeka, at the Kansas State Historic Museum and at Bluford Library in Kansas City, Mo.

Slides of the Quindaro design concepts have been shown at several by Swann Optimist, Kiwanis and study clubs in both KCK and Kansas City, Mo. And U.S. Rep. Jan Meyers sponsored Quindaro as a possible historic site on the United States Trails/Underground Railroad preservation bill passed by Congress.

The panels, with designs by Jay Griffin and the concept by Craig Hahn, offer patrons a perspective sketching of a redeveloped Quindaro Park.

The concepts behind the design for Quindaro is to allow for the site to be classified as aneighborhood park.

Possible park facilities would include a visitor station for self-guided tours, a working archaeological lab and structure, walking, jogging, riding trails which allow viewing of the ruins and open fields for recreation. The story of old Quindaro would be revealed through a sculptural wall along the paths and an amphitheater which will be of multi-purpose use for cultural and educational settings.

The designs also allow for an open air market to allow concessionaires to provide visitors with refreshments and goods related to activities such as cultural fairs and theater events.

The main idea for the preservation of the site is the coming together of three cultural [sic] for a brief period in history. Anti-slavery Anglos, African American and the Qyndot Tribe came together to form the town of Quindaro in the late 1850s.

The design concept calls for funding sought from all levels including federal, state, local and donations.

There are two owners of the Quindaro site, the City of KCK and the African Methodist Episcopal Church (AME Church).

The city envisions the site as a long range project consisting of an archaeological dig site with tourism facilitated by a visitor center. The AME church is undecided about the future intentions for the site.