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## Plans launched for Licking River Water playground envisioned

By Tim Stein  
Kentucky Post staff reporter

A Covington man and the director of a Cincinnati rowing facility have big plans for the Licking River.

One sees the waterway as a recreational playground that could spur economic development. The other sees it as a perfect spot to tout his favorite sports — sculling and rowing.

They've joined forces to make their dreams a reality. At a site near 16th Street in Covington, they envision a dock with a canoe rental business, a training center for Olympic athletes and a plant that would manufacture boats used in sculling.

"Kenton County is blessed with having two major waterways along its banks with the Ohio and Licking rivers," said one of the men behind the project, David Klingshirn of Riverside Drive. "The problem is, the Licking River isn't used enough."

Klingshirn's partner is Stephen A. Baker, director and juniors' coach for the Cincinnati Rowing Center on the bottom floor of the Boat House on Eastern Avenue in Cincinnati. The cen-

ter includes the only indoor rowing facility in the area, as well as other equipment for the sport. The center is a training ground for Olympic hopefuls.

Klingshirn and Baker have been meeting on the project for several months, although it's still in its early stages. Klingshirn, who often carries his canoe over the hill and into the Licking River, would like to see a small dock with canoe rentals at the site. Baker, meanwhile, wants a storage building for sculls and would use the Licking River for training athletes who are trying to earn a spot on the 1992 Olympic team.

The \$5 million rowing center in Cincinnati is equipped with indoor rowing tanks and machines, but when athletes need to train outside they have to leave the downtown area.

"The Ohio River is just too busy with barge and pleasure boat traffic," Baker said. "We could utilize the water in the Licking River because boat traffic is not that bad."

Both men see a site at the eastern end of 16th Street as a starting point. A

Please see LICKING, 2K

# Licking

From Page 1K

cut in the floodwall opens into a large, flat area that covers 15 to 20 acres.

The land is owned by Gus Juengling, who runs a meat-packing facility, and Charles Parris, who manufactures wooden skids. Adjoining property is owned by the city.

Covington City Planner Robert Horine said the property is zoned for conservation, and no zoning change would be required. Baker has had a preliminary meeting with Horine.

"The plan they have is consistent with a neighborhood plan put together about two years ago," he said. "A development like this would certainly benefit the entire community."

Klingshirn said "the biggest problem with development along the Licking River is accessibility. A development at 16th Street would be a good beginning."

But a catalyst for the Licking River project could be a scull manufacturing plant at the 16th street site. Baker says he will discuss plans with a manufacturer in the next few months.

"It's very preliminary, but that would certainly get development off on the right foot," he said. "It would be the hub for development."

Klingshirn, a Republican who opposes incumbent Bernie Moorman in a Kenton County Fiscal Court race in the Nov. 7 election, said he will work with state and federal officials to obtain grants for the development.

He and Baker say they don't



RICHARD PRIDEMORE/The Kentucky Post

Josh Duval, 15, Highland Heights, works out in a rowing tank at the Cincinnati Rowing Center. The director of the center, Stephen A. Baker, wants to train Olympic hopefuls on the Licking River.

know how much the land or project would cost.

Klingshirn said he would like to see the Licking River declared a scenic waterway, making state and federal money available for cleanup and development of recreational facilities.

"I think a canoe livery and park area on this end of the river would be great," Klingshirn said. "We need to utilize our land and waterways."

Baker said he is interested in beginning a rowing program for Northern Kentucky high school students. He said some schools in Cincinnati have rowing teams.

"With a facility on the Licking River, I'm sure Northern Ken-

tucky schools would become more involved," he said.

"Rowing is a great sport, and it's just beginning to grow in this area. It's one of the best exercises around."

Baker said several members of the rowing center are from Northern Kentucky. The Cincinnati center opened in December 1988.

Baker conceded that he and Klingshirn "have a long way to go" before their project is a reality.

"But we are very attracted to the Licking River," he said.

# OUTDOORS/RECREATION



Ted Jackson of Mount Adams utilizes the Cincinnati Rowing Center's rowing simulator as part of his daily workout at the boathouse.

Michael Snyder for The Cincinnati Enquirer

## Wider involvement is the goal

BY SUZY ROUSH  
Enquirer Contributor

The Cincinnati Rowing Center is developing a reputation for training world-class rowers, yet is working on getting the community to take up rowing as a hobby.

The rowing center was established in December, 1988, as a facility for rowers to train and non-rowers to work out.

"Some people wanted to use this for fitness, come down and just use the indoor facilities, the Nautilus, the tank, Life Cycles, stair-climbing machine," Steve Baker, director of the junior team, said. "We have aerobics . . . Basically all those things are available through our fitness memberships.

"We also have those people who row and use these facilities so they become better rowers. That is happening on a recreational basis as well as an elite level — trying to make the national team."

Still, it is mainly a rowing center, with more than 250 rowers making use of it.

"We're trying to expand the amount of facilities and the numbers of programs. It's not convenient yet," Baker said of community rowing. "We're working on making it more convenient by getting a barge across the river next to Crocket's (River Cafe)."

"That's going to give us is downtown accessibility, access to the Licking River, which will give us a little better rowing conditions."

The Ohio River is not a favorite of rowers, because, according to Baker, they can only row on it during certain times of the

day. The other option is East Fork Lake, which is east of Amelia in Clermont County, far off the beaten path for most rowers.

The rowing center boasts 10-12 elite rowers, who are training for the United States national teams. It works with three area high school rowing teams and collegiate teams from Miami, the University of Cincinnati and Xavier.

The Cincinnati Rowing Center is one of five official U.S. training centers and the only one in the Midwest. Others are in Newport Beach, Calif., Seattle, Boston and Philadelphia, all of which are considered rowing strongholds.

Linda Schneider and Ingrid Klich are members of the elite rowing team.

"It's a term (elite) that has been applied to a group of athletes who, generally, are not in college, pretty much physically and every other aspect at a high enough level that attaining national status is a possibility," Baker said. "They're training for that goal at least 10 months a year."

"It's very good fitness as far as cardiovascular," said Schneider. "It's not hard on any of the body parts. It's an interesting way to get in shape. It's not hard to learn. It's just different from anything they've ever done before. Once they get the hang of it, it's not that bad."

"There's a lot of things you have to think about to get the effect that you want," said Klich. "That kind of boggles some people initially. You eventually get the hang of it and the movements become natural. With a