

Greenfield splash park set to open next year

By ANITA FRITZ
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GREENFIELD — It looks like children will have to wait until next spring or summer before they have a splash park to cool off in.

Christy Moore, the town's recreation director, said after a few delays, the town is ready to put the Hillside Park project out to bid, which means it won't be ready this summer.

The town received a \$200,000 grant from the state's Our Common Backyard Grant program for the project in May, and Town Council approved \$50,000 the town needed to match the grant about a month later.

The state program encourages towns and cities across the state to build new playgrounds and spray parks.

Moore said there were discussions about the type of system the town was going to use. Originally, it planned to install a recirculated water system, but has decided to tap into the town's system instead.

She said that means the system will use fresh water in the park, which will drain into the sewer system and go to the wastewater treatment plant.

"It was going to cost too much for upkeep of the recirculated system," said Moore. "The town would have had to pay for chemicals and would have had to have a certified pool operator take care of it."

Moore said the splash

park, which originally had only ground sprays, will also have overhead sprays, because the town will pay for the more elaborate park with the money it saves by eliminating the water recirculation system.

It is not yet clear how much water the town estimates it will use in the splash park each year.

The public works director was in a meeting Monday afternoon, so was not available for comment.

"It'll be much more attractive aesthetically to children," Moore said. "I think they'll have a lot more fun."

The project's construction will be overseen by the Recreation Department and Department of Public Works, but a contractor will do all of the work, including excavating the area.

Moore said the town plans to install a brushed concrete floor in the splash park so that children won't slip while

getting soaked.

The splash park will be located next to the park's playground.

Hillside Park sits on 4.97 acres and borders Conway, Elm, West and Grove streets.

Over the past couple of years, Hillside Park neighbors have complained to the town's police and Public Safety Commission about illegal activities going on in the recently renovated park, including drug deals and destruction of park benches and tables.

Neighbors have since rallied town government and neighborhood support to "take back" the park by encouraging more community use, community policing and a neighborhood watch.

Moore said the splash park will be another way to encourage people to use the park.

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Submitted Image

An artist's rendering of a splash park that could be similar to one planned for Greenfield.