

Kollen Park / Heinz Waterfront Walkway



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A Michigan Recreation and Parks Association Site Design Award Winner 2008!!

A Keep Michigan Beautiful President's Plaque Award Winner 2009!!

<http://www.keepmichiganbeautiful.org/holland.html>

Location

Kollen Park / Heinz Waterfront Walkway is a 24 acre jewel situated between the western end of 10th Street and Lake Macatawa. The address is 240 Kollen Park Boulevard.

History

It is hard to believe that the lawns at Kollen Park were once the site of a basket factory. Kollen Park was given to the City of Holland, February 12, 1921 by Martha Diekema Kollen in memory of her husband, George E. Kollen. She purchased the property from the De Pree Company who obtained it from the C.L. King basket factory.

When Mrs. Kollen, who was the first woman member of the Holland Board of Education, deeded the 19-acre plot to the city, she stipulated that the land be developed into a public park and playground to be known as the George E. Kollen Memorial Park. In presenting the city with the property, Mrs. Kollen indicated that she wanted the land to serve as a lasting memorial to her late husband who frequently regretted that Holland residents did not have a park on the lakefront. Mrs. Kollen felt the park would benefit the greatest number of people.

Mayor E.P. Stephan said that when Mrs. Kollen gave the \$10,000 park, she did not give it to one percent of the people. He said it is "a place where people of this and future generations who do not possess the means of going to distant places can find a breathing space and can enjoy the lake at our door."

The sweeping terrace of the park came about because of the ingenuity of the Holland city park superintendent John Van Bragt and the Parks Department. For many years, the terrace provided an "upstairs" and "downstairs" for picnics. And, for several years,

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reservations were taken for picnics and people would designate their choice. Van Bragt started development of the park in 1927 and the park was officially turned over to the Holland City Playground Commission in 1929. The original playground equipment was purchased through pledges made in a drive by the Holland Lions Club in 1928.

Swimming hasn't been allowed at the park for many years, but in 1929, four lifeguards were on duty and also taught swimming. In 1930, the American Legion band concerts were moved back and forth from Centennial Park until 1938 when the concerts became a permanent summer attraction. The band shell opened in 1960.

Today, Kollen Park is the City's major waterfront recreational park and serves a variety of open space and recreational opportunities for the community. In 1998, a community charrette was held to develop a new redevelopment and expansion plan for Kollen Park. The first phase was completed in the fall of 2003, which included the first phase of the boardwalk in the north end of the park, new playground area, picnic shelter and parking.

Today, Phases II, III, and IV are being dedicated. These phases include expansion of the boardwalk along the original Kollen Park waterfront, a new boat launching and parking area, new boulevard entrance to Kollen Park from 16th Street and the extension of the waterfront boardwalk around the Heinz facility adding 1800 lineal feet of boardwalk to the 2150 feet along Kollen Park for a total of 3950 feet. This project also includes the addition of a new parking area adjacent to the Boatwerks Restaurant, sidewalks and walkways connecting the former Western Tool property located west of the restaurant. Today, the park consists of over 24 acres and the 4000 lineal feet of boardwalk on a perpetual easement granted by the H.J. Heinz Company. ~ History Courtesy of Randall VandeWater

Amenities

The park contains a large group picnic shelter, band shelter, lake-front gazebo, playground, boat launch ramps, limited docking facilities, parking, and several hundred feet of Lake Macatawa frontage with boardwalks and fishing decks. The park also contains a fountain donated by Queretaro, Mexico, and a Dutch immigrant sculpture from the Netherlands. Significant improvements have recently been completed at Kollen Park, with further enhancements planned in line with the Park Master Plan. The City has also recently secured a waterfront easement on the Heinz property to allow for future construction of 2000 linear feet of lakefront boardwalk to the west of the park.

- Large group picnic shelter
- Playground
- Gazebo (lake-front)
- Bandshell
- Boat day slips - 3
- Boat launching ramps
- Parking
- Fishing decks
- Fountain
- Restrooms
- Boardwalk
- Limited docking facilities
- ADA accessible
- Grills

Supporting Documents

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[Kollen Park - Lakeshore Living segment 10-08.pps](#)

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