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He brought town a winning attitude

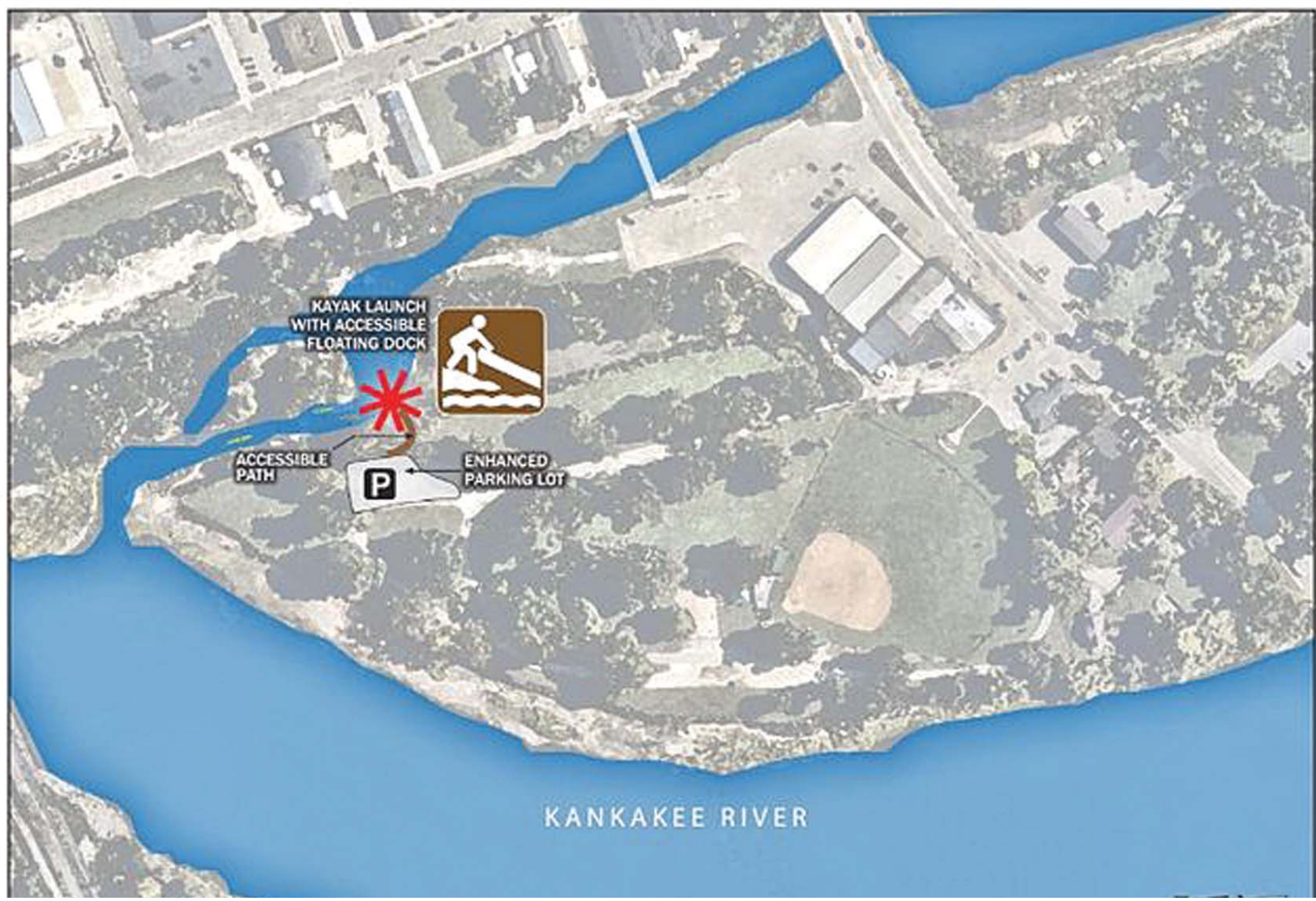


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**COST ESTIMATE**  
**\$300,000**

ACCESSIBLE KAYAK LAUNCH

MILL RACE LAUNCH POINT

## Kayak launch is back!

STAFF REPORT

A plan to bring a kayak launch to Wilmington's north island park sank in the summer of 2021 when the city said

thanks but no thanks due to insurance reasons.

But the kayak launch may happen after all as the Illinois Department of Natural Resources called to announce

the city will get a grant to install a portable launch along the mill race.

Mayor Ben Dietz told city council members the DNR's call came Jan. 25, the night

when both island parks were flooded due to ice jams on the Kankakee River.

Dietz said the launch will be portable so that it can be installed and removed seasonally. "We will be sure to get it out early to avoid any damage from future flooding."

The city has partnered with the Forest Preserve District of Will County for the \$300,000 project.

This project will feature a fully accessible floating dock, new parking lot enhancements, and an accessible path to connect the project.

"This will be a great addition to our community as well as a fantastic destination for those looking to enjoy all of the natural resources Wilmington has to offer," the mayor said.

The city would be responsible for maintenance and winter storage for a period of at least 10 years.

Dietz described the proposed aluminum pier launch as ADA "friendly," meaning it would have a ramp for handicap accessibility but would still require some effort to place the kayak and launch.

"It holds the kayak in place then you can get in it and shove yourself off," he said.

The city will be responsible for one-third of the cost or about \$80,000. Dietz noted that more details will be made available when the city completes its comprehensive parks plan.

Unlike two years ago, aldermen did not question the grant, including liability in case of an accident.

The kayak launch site is far from the main river dam and the South Island exclusion zone where there have been drownings in the past.

## Residents urged to complete water service survey

The city of Wilmington, partnering with Chamlin and Associates, is asking residents to complete a survey in compliance with an Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) mandate to report the materials of water service lines throughout the state.

According to the EPA, "To address lead in drinking water it is important for water systems to develop and maintain an inventory of service line materials."

"Developing an inventory and identifying the

location of lead service lines (LSL) is the first step for beginning LSL replacement and protecting public health."

Your input is valuable and necessary for the city to complete this inventory.

Please visit <https://arcg.is/1bHLm1l> to take the survey or scan the QR code in the ad that appears in this edition.

If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Wilmington city hall at (815) 476-2175.



THE BIG QUESTION is when will the island parks open? Mayor Ben Dietz told the Wilmington Chamber the city is working with the city engineer to get the south island opened first. Until then the parks are closed to traffic, including walkers and hikers, for safety sake. The south island is in better shape than the north island, the mayor said, and he met with the WBSA to inspect the ballfields. The south island fields were not flooded while the north island ball field will need extensive work including the replacement of fences, new dirt and an inspection of the concession stand. Dietz said the north island roadway with up to four layers of asphalt was washed away in some sections. No cost estimate for repairs was given.

## Allgood lured by NJCCA national champions

BY ERIC FISHER  
PUBLISHER

Wilmington senior line-backer Joe Allgood has signed a letter of intent to play football at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, IL

Allgood, a co-captain on the 2023 State Champion Wildcats, said it was the winning culture at DuPage that attracted him most.

This past December the Chaparrals won the NJCAA Division III football championship for the third year in a row. The 11-1 team ended up

with 12 NJCAA All Americans, evidence there are several skilled players who are well coached.

"I visited the campus, met coach Matt (Rahn) and everybody and they were just great. They seem to know what they're doing. And it seemed to be a lot like Coach Reents, he's very good coach, disciplined, and makes sure everyone's on

SEE ALLGOOD PAGE 2



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