

DeKalb Trying To Oust Honor Farm for Homes

By OSCAR JOHNSON

DeKalb County officials are trying to get the federal penitentiary's sprawling Honor Farm near Panthersville moved.

DeKalb County Commissioner Charlie Parker has written Rep. James C. Davis to "explore the possibility" of having the farm removed from the county. The move, he said, is necessary to allow residential growth in the southwest section of the county and to allow the county to collect taxes on the land.

NEGOTIATIONS

Marion Blackwell Jr., of the Adams & Cates realty company, confirmed that negotiations with the federal government are underway. "But it is a long-range proposition," he said, and estimated the move could not come about before three or four years.

The honor farm, made up of 1,248 acres, is part of the U.S. prison system. It provides food and milk for the penitentiary in Atlanta.

Warden Frederick Wilkerson said Friday the proposed move is "highly improbable," but he would not rule out the possibility. He said the honor farm is an "integral part" of the Atlanta prison and the prison would have to be moved if the farm is moved.

SEES NO REASON

"There are literally thousands of acres around it not built on," he said. "I don't see any emergency reason to make such a change." The move would have to be negotiated by the federal director of prisons and the U.S. attorney general's office, he said.

Commissioner Parker, who is spearheading the negotiations, said the farm is blocking growth of Panthersville, Gresham Park and Cedar Grove.

Blackwell estimated the 1,248 acres are worth from \$300 to \$800 each.



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Land

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ment when inmates from the federal prison cultivated crops there during World War II, a DeKalb official said.

Only 156 acres of the farm is considered suitable for development, DeKalb Planning Coordinator Carl Logan said, because the remaining 400 acres lies in the flood plain of the South River and small creeks.

The land is located, however, directly in the southward growth corridor of the county and is partially surrounded by new residential developments.

A DeKalb planner said a private developer "could make a real killing" by turning it into a planned community with single-family and apartment housing laced with the river land.

The GSA refused to say exactly how the DeKalb land is being worked into their bargaining package. Their spokesman would say only that is "being held for possible exchange" and is being used actively in negotiations.

He refused to reveal the specific Everglades land being considered because it would "cause all kinds of phone calls and other people would get into the act . . . it's like selling a house. . . . We are not allowed to tell you who we are negotiating with."

But sources in the Department of Interior disclosed that land being sought is the so-called "Hole in the doughnut" in the southern section of the 1,325,864-acre swamp.

The tract is surrounded by federal park land and has thus been a troublesome point for the department ever since the swamp wilds were declared a national refuge in the 1940s.

The department has tried to acquire it, but has been blocked by lack of funds or the unwillingness of the owners to sell. Negotiations now are "very promising," an Interior official said Thursday.

The acreage is owned by 50 individuals and consists of a combination of pine forest and swamp and farm land used to grow tomatoes. The largest single owner, Milton Weisenberg, holds 4,500 acres.

The GSA spokesman said at one point that the DeKalb land would be traded for about 4,500 acres, but that it would part of a deal for "many thousands more."

He said other federal land and possibly cash would be included in the package.

Postal

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masters since Benjamin Franklin's day—until the Republicans won the White House in 1968 and Postmaster Gen. Winton M. Blount put a stop to the practice.

"I call him the Trojan Horse," Saylor said.

House approval promised to head off threats of another mail strike.

The Senate is not expected to take up the bill until after the July 4 recess but restless mailmen, particularly in New York, pledged to put off strike votes if the House passed the bill.

Opponents charged negotiation of extra pay in high cost-of-living areas discriminates against the South and rural areas and said mailmen across the country are entitled to "equal pay for equal work."

"We in the South have been

trying to overcome these discriminatory barriers for decades," said Rep. Claude Pepper, D-Fla.

But Rep. Frank J. Brasco, D-N.Y., said mailmen with large families do not have to go on welfare in the South and rural areas to supplement paychecks but do in New York City.

"The 8 per cent pay raise in this bill will be a pittance if we don't do something about area wages," Brasco said.

Rejected, 124 to 67, was an amendment by Rep. Sam Gibbons, D-Fla., to prohibit postal unions and the new postal service from negotiating any higher wages for the same work in one section of the country than in another.

But the House approved 120 to 59 a provision that such area wage negotiation be permissive for the areas that need it, and not mandatory for all areas of the country.

The new U.S. Postal Service, which Postmaster General Blount has said might take a year to set up, would be one of the most basic overhauls in the U.S. mail system ever.

It would end Congress' 181-year control over mail rates, pay and policy and turn the operation over to an independent government agency that is to put it on a self-paying basis by 1978.

President Nixon and Blount say the system is needed to wipe out deficits now running more than \$1.2 billion a year.

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ual's right to testify on his own behalf.

"The court finds that as a matter of fact he did make the statement," said Thibadeau.

He said citing Stynchcomb for contempt was "the hardest task I've performed" in his one and one-half years on the bench.

"He owes the county and the people of the state a duty that is higher than theirs," said the judge.