DNR
Continued from A1

southwest section of the city of Kalamazoo, to the
DNR. The state Legislature deeded the land to
WMU in 1976. The parcel contains scattered trees
and meadowlands.

The proposed research and business park would
be built south and west of the Asylum Lake area
on 260 of 600 acres WMU owns at the intersection
of Drake and Parkview Avenue. The development
area includes 34 acres of the Asylum Lake property
in order to make way for redirected Parkview
Avenue that will veer north to Drake Road.

An agreement transferring the land to the DNR
must be signed and approved by the WMU Board of
Trustees, the Natural Resources Commission
and the state Legislature. No date has been set for
the matter to go before those bodies.

"It's not in the coming days or weeks," Burke
said. "It will be several months off. In general, I
would think that folks would be responsive to this.
I'm not sure there is controversy."

"If approved, the DNR will own and manage
this property in perpetuity, thereby assisting
WMU and the Kalamazoo community in preserving
the natural character of Asylum Lake and its
immediate environs," Roland Harmes, director of
the DNR, said in a statement.

"The DNR applauds the farsighted thinking rep-
resented by WMU's plans for the long-range use of
its land holdings near Asylum Lake, particularly
the university's desire to retain Asylum Lake and
its immediate environs as a natural open space,"
Harmes said.

"We are delighted with the DNR's interest in
owning and managing this property," said WMU
President Dietter H. Haenicke. "The depart-
ment's oversight will help ensure that this unique
and valuable resource will remain exactly that,
which has been our intention for the property
from the beginning."

Mark Hoffman, president of the Asylum Lake
Preservation Association, a group which opposes
development of the Asylum Lake property, said he
could support the DNR acting as an oversight
agency as long as the property continues to be
maintained as open space.

He expressed concern, however, over who
would handle criminal and other complaints that
would arise on the property.

"I suspect (residents) would get on the phone to
the DNR," Burke said.

In statements issued by WMU, several commu-

nity leaders added their support to transferring the
240 acres of the Asylum Lake property to the
DNR.