

(MEMORIAL PARK PLAN)

SAIPAN, MAY 28 (MNS)---PLANS FOR AN AMERICAN MEMORIAL PARK IN THE MICRO BEACH AREA OF SAIPAN WERE UNVEILED MONDAY (MAY 27) AT A PRESS CONFERENCE BY U.S. AMBASSADOR FRANKLIN HAYDN WILLIAMS, HEAD OF THE U.S. DELEGATION TO THE MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS AND SEN. EDWARD DLG. PANGELINAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION.

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EARLIER IN THE DAY, AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS JOINED OTHER U.S. AND MARIANA ISLANDS OFFICIALS IN LAYING WREATHS AT TWO WORLD WAR TWO MEMORIALS. THE MONUMENTS ARE LOCATED AT SAN JOSE VILLAGE ON SAIPAN.

THE FOLLOWING IS A PRESS RELEASE OUTLINING THE PLANS FOR THE AMERICAN MEMORIAL PARK:

"IN THE CURRENT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION AND THE UNITED STATES, AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS HAS ELABORATED ON PRELIMINARY PLANS BY THE UNITED STATES FOR AN AMERICAN MEMORIAL PARK IN THE MICRO BEACH AREA OF SAIPAN. THIS AREA, FROM MICRO BEACH ROAD NORTHWARD TO "A" DOCK AND EXTENDING WESTWARD TO WALLACE HIGHWAY, IS PART OF AN AREA REQUIRED BY THE UNITED STATES FOR CONTINGENCY PURPOSES. SINCE THERE ARE NO PRESENT MILITARY USE REQUIREMENTS, AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS LAST DECEMBER PROPOSED A LARGE LIVING MEMORIAL PARK FOR THE AREA HONORING BOTH AMERICANS, AND CHARORROS AND CAROLINIANS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN THE NORTHERN MARIANAS IN WORLD WAR II.

AT A MEETING LAST MARCH WITH SENATOR EDWARD DLG. PANGELINAN AND LEGISLATURE PRESIDENT VICENTE SANTOS, CHAIRMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION AND MARIANAS DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR FRANCISCO ADA, AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS PRESENTED A CONCEPTUAL DESIGN OF THE PARK. THE PLAN CALLED FOR EXTENSIVE LANDSCAPING OF THE AREA AND INCLUDED FAMILY PICNIC SITES, WOODED TRAILS, A SMALL BOAT MARINA, AND AN ARBORETUM AND BOTANICAL GARDEN. ALSO PROPOSED WERE AREAS FOR SPORTS AND RECREATION, INCLUDING A SWIMMING POOL, TENNIS AND BASKETBALL COURTS AND FIELD GAMES. A REVISED PLAN, PRESENTED LAST WEEK, ALSO INCLUDES A PUBLIC AMPHITHEATRE WHICH WAS SUGGESTED BY THE MARIANAS LEADERSHIP LAST MARCH AS A POSSIBLE MEMORIAL TO PEOPLE OF THESE ISLANDS WHO LOST THEIR LIVES IN WORLD WAR II.

IN HIS MOST RECENT COMMENTS, AMBASSADOR WILLIAMS REEMPHASIZED THAT THE PARK WOULD BE "A LIVING MEMORIAL TO OUR LOVED ONES TO BE USED AND ENJOYED BY ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE MARIANAS." BOTH DELEGATIONS TO THE NEGOTIATIONS AGREED THE PARK WOULD BE A MAJOR STEP FOR THE CONSERVATION OF THE MICRO BEACH AND MARINA AREA.

MEETINGS IN WASHINGTON PRIOR TO THIS STATEMENT... THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF AND DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF MICRONESIA STATUS NEGOTIATIONS MET TO DISCUSS THE AMERICAN MEMORIAL PARK AND COMMISSIONED INTERIOR'S BUREAU OF OUTDOOR RECREATION TO SUBMIT A PHASED DEVELOPMENT PLAN. THIS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE MARIANAS LEADERSHIP FOR ADDITIONAL INPUT AND SUGGESTIONS. SUBJECT TO FINAL APPROVAL BY THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, THE MARIANAS POLITICAL STATUS COMMISSION, AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES, ACTUAL CONSTRUCTION OF THE PARK COULD BEGIN AS SOON AS THE POLITICAL STATUS QUESTION FOR THE MARIANAS IS SETTLED BUT IT IS HOPED THAT THE LAND CLEARING PHASE CAN BEGIN SOONER.

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