$5.2 MILLION PROJECT

Ohio State's new boathouse opening today

By Mark Ferenchik
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

The $5.2 million boathouse flanking Giggs Reservoir officially opens today.

The Ohio State University women's rowing team and the Greater Columbus Rowing Association already are using the building. And visitors soon will be able to rent it for meetings, family reunions and wedding receptions on the weekends.

It's the latter that concerns Beverly Stephens, one of a number of nearby residents who opposed the boathouse from the get-go. They're worried about traffic and speeding cars heading toward the boathouse, not to mention the loss of parkland along the Scioto River.

"Certainly, I'm going to be watch-

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The new $5.2 million boathouse near Griggs Dam drew protests from nearby residents who fear increased traffic and loss of parkland.

Below: The Scioto Room at the boathouse will be available to rent for family reunions, wedding receptions and other events. The initial rate is set at $225 per hour.

Boathouse

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ing traffic,” Stephens said. OSU President E. Gordon Gee and Columbus Recreation and Parks Director Alan McKnight are to officially open the boathouse at 1:30 p.m. An open house is to follow along with rowing demonstrations by the OSU team and the rowing association.

The multipurpose space can seat about 100, said Ben Jay, OSU senior associate athletics director for finance and operations.

Rental fees are $225 per hour.

McKnight said the city will install speed bumps and more 15-mph speed-limit signs on roads leading to the boathouse. It also will add one-way signs on the road leading from Fishinger Road. McKnight said officials have asked police to monitor the area.

The city’s Indian Village Outdoor Education Center also is using the boathouse for its canoeing and kayaking program, McKnight said.

Annual operating costs (utilities, maintenance, etc.) should be about $85,000, he said. Ohio State will pay 50 percent of the cost, with the rowing association paying 35 percent and the city 15 percent.

The rowing association is paying $34,558 per year to rent space, McKnight said. Ohio State paid for the 22,000-square-foot boathouse. The city still owns the land. The university has a 40-year-lease to occupy the space.

Some residents protested the boathouse, fearing it would ruin Duranceau Park, a peaceful haven where residents could gather buckeyes and stroll down to the river.

Stephens said she has walked around the boathouse and, although it takes up a lot of space, she still can get to the river.

“It’s still a pleasant area,” she said. “I’m not as upset as I thought I would be.”
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