

Southside: Field to reopen

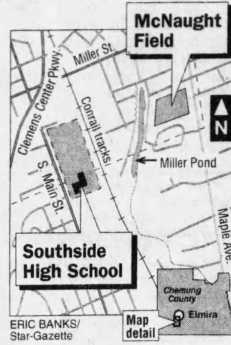
Continued from Page 1A

Results of two reviews on the school's other athletic fields are expected in early to mid-February, Sherwood said. Those reviews will look at the state's Department of Health and Department of Environmental Conservation work on the fields as well as a federal Environmental Protection Agency review.

"Our fingers are crossed," Sherwood said. "It's a lot of work."

The state began investigating the school property in May after parents and community members expressed concern about an elevated rate of cancer among students and former students at Southside, which is built on a former industrial site.

The state Department of Health is studying an elevated rate of testicular cancer among the school's students since 1997. Health officials also will review any addi-



tional data gathered about out-of-state Southside alumni who have developed cancer.

"We hope obviously property owners feel some relief having at least this decision made," Sherwood said. "We know that there are still concerns and we are going to address them as best we can."

The board's decision came a week after the Southside Advisory Committee recommended the field be reopened. The committee made its recommendations after two different environmental consultants who conducted an extensive review of the history of McNaught Field said further testing of the field for soil contaminants was not necessary.

While snow now blankets McNaught Field, its immediate future is no longer in limbo.

"All the users of the field will be able to plan for its use in spring," Sherwood said.

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