Banff area pushing for major golf development

BY PETER BLAIS

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purred on by a provin-

cial government push-
ing for tourist dollars, 10 golf courses are
planned within the shadow of leg-

derary Banff Springs Golf Club
outside Canmore, Alberta, Canada.

The biggest project is Three Sisters Resort, a proposed 72-hole
golf course community that could
draw 12,000 residents over the next
20 years to Canmore, a 6,000-per-
sion township located just outside
the gates of Banff National Park.

"The Wind Valley area is the
chief concern," said Barry Gunn,
a reporter with the weekly
Canmore Leader. "It's an environ-
mentally significant area. Three
Sisters has focused its efforts there.

Public hearings before the re-
cently formed Alberta provincial
Natural Resources Conservation
Board (NRCB) on the controver-
sial project were scheduled to
conclude in late July or early Au-
gust.

To make certain both sides are
heard and an environmentally sound decision made, developers
are required to pay for both Envi-
ronmental Impact Assessments as
well as the expenses of interven-
ers (those determined to be af-
fected by the project) and their
hired experts to testify before the
NRCB, according to Canmore
Director of Planning and Devel-
opment Paul Bates.

Three Sisters developers have
already spent about $1 million on
the project, Gunn estimated. The
environmental group Earth First
was among those granted inter-
venor status, Gunn said.

If approved, the Three Sisters
project would still need to be re-
viewed by local officials. What will
happen there is a mystery since
Canmore planner Paul Bates
said. "What the Resources board
does with the Three Sisters project
will be a good gauge of what's
going to happen around here."

"There's a healthy split of opin-
ion within the community. Wild-
life and the rivers are very impor-
tant to many people. Some aren't
sure golf courses are the best use
of the land. Others don't like what
they believe golf represents.

"But the Hyatt project got solid
support. The course really seems
to work with the land."

"Canmore was mainly a coal-
mining town until the late 1970s.
When that industry fell on hard
times, tourism became the area's

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Continued from previous page

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Real estate values have shot up the past decade, angering some residents and would-be residents opposed to Three Sisters and the 2,000 new homes it could add. 

A basic, three-bedroom home in the Canmore area has climbed to $140,000, much higher than 10 years ago, Gunn said.

If growth continues, some fear Canmore could eventually mirror the Banff, a resort that rivals communities like Aspen and Vail, Colo., Gunn said.

"Banff looks like the West Edmonton mall without a roof," he said.

Kananaskis Country Golf Course was the first golf project to go before the NRCB, Director of Golf Brian Bygrave said. One golf course, no real estate and no re-zoning were involved. No one qualified for intervener status.

Public hearings before the NRCB took four days.

"Three Sisters — with its four courses, 2,000 homes, resort hotel and re-zoning requirements for a portion of Wind Valley — was expected to take two months. "You can't compare the two projects," Bygrave said. "Three Sisters is a mega-project. Ours is a mini-project."

"Still, it was frustrating to have to go through that process since we are in an area that was already zoned for what we wanted to do. There was some opposition, but not much."

The same can't be said of Three Sisters. Big Horn Municipal Manager Sam Hall said the controversy surrounding the bigger project involves the perceived environmental sensitivity of Wind Valley; fears the hundreds of miles of abandoned coal mine tunnels that underlie the property render it unstable; and the fact that Three Sisters Calgary-based development company is not local.

"Some projects seem to get a lot of negative press and others don't," Hall said.

Attempts to reach Three Sisters officials were unsuccessful.

Perry Dye opens European office, inks first pact


The project will be a collaboration of Dye Designs, Kanovsky Golf Construction of Klagenfurt, and G & G. Hauser Golf & Landscape of Vienna.

Dye will design the 18-hole championship golf course around a castle — Schloss Seltenheim — the baronial home of the Hapsburg family.

Dye will provide other services including construction supervision, shaping, and a maintenance consultant beginning with grow-in. The project will also include a nine-hole Romantic course and practice facility designed by Architect Ing. Gerold Hauser, president of The European Society of Golf Course Architects, and a clubhouse designed by Wien & Klimbacher.

With the establishment of a site office at Seltenheim, Dye expects to coordinate its other European business from this location.

Legends opens North Course, readies South

FRANKLIN, Tenn. — The North Course at Legends Club of Tennessee opened for play June 27. The Club's South Course will open later this year.

Legends Club will be the permanent home of the Tennessee PGA, the Tennessee Golf Association and the Tennessee Golf Hall of Fame. Legends Club of Tennessee is owned and operated by Kite/Cupp Golf Enterprises. Based in Atlanta, Ga., the board of directors of Kite/Cupp Golf Enterprises is chaired by Robert E. Cupp and Tom Kite Jr. 

Management of the clubs will be directed by the board of directors of Kite/Cupp Golf Enterprises, Inc., with their directions carried out by the club directors. Members will be appointed to serve on the Clubs' Golf Committees to insure that they have teaching programs, tournaments, and events that actively promote the enjoyment of the game for the entire golf communities.

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