Early notification called key to approval of new Lake Michigan layout

By PETER BLAIS
PETOSKEY, Mich. — Approaching every organization and government agency to identify their potential concerns about Bay Harbor early in the planning process was the key to gaining approval for the potentially spectacular golf course community along the shores of northern Lake Michigan, according to one of the developers.

“Our idea was to find out everyone’s concerns beforehand,” CMS Land Co. President Rodger Kershner said.

“We contacted the local governments, state Department of Natural Resources and local environmental groups before we put pencil to paper. We wanted to find out what they were interested in and what they would not negotiate on. Then we built our plan around their requirements.”

Their plans, which were approved by DNR and the state attorney general July 11, include a 27-hole Art Hills-designed course, 500-slip marina, yacht club, hotel, shopping center and 1,000 home sites.

Construction on the first nine holes along a portion of the 5-1/2-mile frontage on Little Traverse Bay was scheduled to begin in late July. Plans are to open nine holes every summer between 1996-1998.

The developers include CMS Land (a subsidiary of Consumers Power Co.), Detroit real estate developer David Johnson and the Kircher family (operators of nearby Boyne Mountain and Boyne Highlands resorts).

In addition to their early research, Kershner said developers benefited from the fact that the course will occupy the site of an abandoned Penn-Dixie quarry and cement plant.

“The local agencies wanted the plant taken down, public access to the lake shore made available at either end of the project and the dust from the abandoned kilns taken care of,” Kershner said. “DNR was mainly concerned about controlling runoff from the old plant into the lake and that an environmentally sensitive project replace the old facility.

“It’s as much to David’s credit as anyone that we ultimately submitted a plan everyone could buy into. Getting everyone involved early just seems like common sense, but it’s not always done.

Continued on page 35

Golf course plans stalled for Illinois airport property

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — A strip of airport-owned land lies dormant here as the city, Airport Authority and Denver-based developer Golf One try to settle on plans for a municipal golf course.

Originally conceived in 1990 as a 18-hole facility slated for 160 acres off Camp Sangamo Road, the proposed course has seen the price tag balloon to $6.4 million. The Federal Aviation Administration didn’t help matters when it insisted the local Airport Authority fork over $328,000 for the parcel because it wouldn’t be used for aviation.

The deal looked dead as a door nail after differences arose over GolfOne’s proposed management fee, according to Airport Authority Chairman Don Bangert. Golf One and the city haven’t communicated since March.

However, City Commissioner Phil Spengler insists the deal is not dead. He said it’s possible the airport could approach another developer — it never signed a contract with Golf One — or enlist a different firm to manage the course.

Spengler said the city will take up the matter again this fall.

Legislature okays second links for Okla. state park

DURANT, Okla. — The state Senate has approved issuing $3 million in state revenue bonds to build an 18-hole golf course and clubhouse at Lake Texoma state park.

The project is expected to boost tourism, which is so vital to the economy in the southeastern part of the state.

The existing 18-hole layout turns 45,000 rounds annually, which led park officials to request the extra funds for a second championship course.

Construction is expected to begin later this year.

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Michigan project
Continued from page 9
The Little Traverse Conservancy, for instance, was very helpful.”
Little Traverse helps organizations
obtain land for public parks, which Bay Harbor developers have agreed to do, according to
Little Traverse Director Thomas Bailey.
“They went to the local government
and state agencies, unrolled their
plans on the table and basically
said, ‘Here’s what we want to
do. What do you think?’
“They asked for input and then
followed through with everyone’s
suggestions. So often, developers
say they are going to do this and
that, but when it comes down to
details, they are very vague. David
Johnson and CMS were always open with everyone.”
Bailey said he was also very
comfortable with Boyne’s involve-
ment, calling it one of the area’s
most successful resort operators.
“They are local folks who do
quality work,” he said.
The project was so well re-
cieved that no one responded
during the U.S. Army Corps of
Engineers required comment
period, Kershner added.
“The Corps” people said they
couldn’t remember that ever hap-
pening before,” he said.
The final two administrative
details were ironed out July 11.
First, the state approved final
closure plans for the plant and
agreed to indemnify developers
against any possible future
lawsuits related to the closing,
Kershner said.
Second, the developers final-
lized the purchase of another
750 acres from plant owner Holnam
Inc., the largest cement manufac-
turer in the country, he added.
Kershner said (714) 528-1185 ext. 27
or 45
Fax: (714) 524-7255
(714) 996-9387
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turer in the country, he added.
Kershner said.) will play along two
forested area called The Preserve.
The course will work its way
and open in early 1996. The
Quarry and The Preserve 9s will
work their way in and around
the former quarry. Seven holes
wanted a widely known architect
and “it made a lot of sense to have
ourselves involved with Boyne”
Kershner added.
Ironically, Hills had visited the
site long before a course was
planned. “The location and the need to sell house
prices, called The Pre-serve.
Construction of The Coastal 9
was scheduled to begin in July
and open in early 1996. The
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