



Jim McNair, CGCS

For the past year-and-a-half, I have had the opportunity to head the Public Relations (PR) and Long-Range Planning (LRP) committees. In my column last year, I outlined the operations of the PR Committee. This year, I will give some insight into the workings of the LRP Committee.

During 1998, the MAGCS completely revised its long-range plan. We perform this update from time to time in order to delete accomplished objectives and add new ideas to the plan. The long-range plan basically gives direction to the Association. The LRP Committee is not so much involved with triggering the ideas as with researching the feasibility and publicizing and implementing them through the appropriate committees. We don't have a crystal ball, but merely listen to the Board of Directors, Past Presidents Council and the membership. Some of the improvements to the MAGCS that are the legacy of prior long-range plans include the change from the Bull Sheet to *On Course*, the new directory format, the Environmental Committee, and the ability to pay for meetings by

credit card. I would like to bring you up to date with another issue that we are facing.

Recently, the MAGCS received an offer from the CDGA to participate in the occupancy of a proposed "Illinois Golf House." The CDGA plans to build this facility at Cog Hill G.C. during the next several years. It is their desire that this facility will house all of the major golf-related associ-

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ations under one roof. We have been asked if we are interested in sharing office space with these other associations. We are pleased that the CDGA has included us in their planning, but we have to look at the present and future needs of our membership before we agree to any long-term commitments.

Our association is growing at a steady rate. The day-to-day operations of the MAGCS are growing as well. The business end of running this association is constantly generating more paperwork. Last year's Annual

Report was 55 pages summarizing the business of the MAGCS. My point is that maybe the time is right to pursue this opportunity for office space. I want to be clear, though, about the usage of this space. I don't envision moving George Minnis to Lemont. George has a very efficient office setup in his home. It would be counterproductive to move George's operation. This new office at Cog Hill would be staffed by a clerical person (maybe shared with one of the other golf associations). Our membership would gain a live voice at the other end of the phone to answer questions, direct calls to the proper person and to give information. This person could also perform some of the basic clerical duties and book-keeping currently done by the officers of the MAGCS. Initially, this may take place during limited hours each week, but at least the membership would be able to talk to someone during office hours and not have to play "phone tag."

I'm using this forum to bring this opportunity before the membership to get some feedback from you. We don't have an answer yet as to the anticipated date of completion of the CDGA facility: probably several years. We don't know how significant the cost of this space will be or even if there will be any cost at all. Until we have a better idea of how many other golf-related associations may be involved, we won't know of the possibilities to share staff. But, we do have an opportunity here that we need to examine. Think about where you expect this Association to be in the next few years, and then let us know. We are accessible by phone, fax or e-mail. We look forward to hearing from you. 