

Foreseeing rebuttal, PGA may drop plans

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — The PGA's plans for a \$1.1-billion golf development in the Mandarin area may have been abandoned because of anticipated problems in winning environmental permits, but there is hope the project will stay in northeast Florida.

There is suspicion that the Hall of Fame could be heading south into St. Johns County.

Jacksonville had stood to gain more than merely another couple of golf courses.

Among benefits expected from the PGA Tour complex were:

- A 1,700-acre nature preserve.

- The PGA Tour Hall of Fame.
- A Florida community college.
- 4,500 homes, from luxury housing to apartments.
- 204 acres of office parks.
- Two 18-hole golf courses.
- 12,000 jobs.
- \$6.8 million in property, sales and tourist taxes.
- A resort convention center and 700-room hotel.

While indignant letters were pouring into the Florida Times-Union lamenting loss of a project with such economic impact because of "a very small group of environ-

mentally concerned extremists," little noticed was another sad development locally.

The Fort George Island Golf Club, opened in 1928 as the Ribault Club, was closed for good.

Manager Dawn Tomberlin said closing came as no surprise. "We've been fighting the environmentalists for years. They claim runoff from chemicals polluted nearby pristine waters, and a well that irrigated it damaged the ground water."

Tomberlin said she and her staff of seven would go on unemployment.

San Francisco mayoral race puts course project into limbo

WOODSIDE, Calif. — Political infighting for the San Francisco mayoral race has balked plans for a public golf course on Crystal Springs watershed land here, according to San Mateo County supervisors and Peninsula golfers.

Not so, says the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. The board contends an environmental impact study is needed before the course can be built. A \$350,000 limited study, which San Mateo County had agreed

in April to pay for, would have shortened the time before construction plans could be considered.

Peninsula golfers for 30 years have sought a course on watershed land. The proposal calls for a \$5-million, 200-acre, 18-hole course along Canada Road.

Said veteran golfer Jack deFigueiredo, "It seems we can't get anything built in San Mateo County without some environmental issue creeping up."

Upper Thumb proposals a tale of opposites

This tale of two Michigan towns in the Upper Thumb is one of highs and lows.

First, the bad news. Ubley Heights last year was on the verge of entering the expanding Michigan golf circuit. Architect Jerry Matthews had finished the blueprints. Only bank paperwork remained. Then, a principal investor was killed in a Detroit area robbery. All went on the back burner. High weeds and distant mounds now dominate the intended course site.

Landowner Roger Kincaid believes development of the Ubley Heights course would bolster the small town's economy.

"We're only 90 minutes away from six million people in the Detroit area — Flint, Saginaw and Midland. With an airstrip and Verona Hills only a few miles away, it would make for a perfect golf weekend," Kincaid said.

Garland is the bright side of the golf course coin. The Garland complex, 30 miles northeast of Grayling, rose mightier from the ashes of a fire five years ago that leveled its restaurant and pro shop.

Investors not only rebuilt, but added three other courses, a major condominium complex and an airstrip. Tourism-focused Lewiston hasn't been the same since re-emergence of the multimillion-dollar Garland resort, still somewhat hidden by woods off F-32.

Course plans replace office park

TINTON FALLS, N. J. — Intended three years ago as the largest office park in the county, 16 acres off Garden State Parkway exit 102 may become the Twin Brook Family Recreation Center.

Developer William Sitar Associates of Woodbridge Township has downgraded plans for office space on the 216 acres. Current thinking for 48 of those acres is an 18-hole golf course, driving range, miniature golf course and a batting cage.

This land, until about eight years ago the Twin Brooks golf course, now is a horse farm. As part of the project, many of the existing greens and tees will be restored.

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