

Banff area pushing for major golf development

By PETER BLAIS

Spurred on by a provincial government pushing for tourist dollars, 10 golf courses are planned within the shadow of legendary Banff Springs Golf Club outside Canmore, Alberta, Canada.

The biggest project is Three Sisters Resort, a proposed 72-hole golf course community that could add 12,000 residents over the next 20 years to Canmore, a 6,000-person 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 environmentally significant area. Three Sisters has focused its efforts there."

Public hearings before the recently formed Alberta provincial Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB) on the controversial project were scheduled to conclude in late July or early August.

To make certain both sides are heard and an environmentally sound decision made, developers are required to pay for both Environmental Impact Assessments as well as the expenses of interveners (those determined to be affected by the project) and their hired experts to testify before the NRCB, according to Canmore Director of Planning and Development 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 intervenor status, Gunn said.

If approved, the Three Sisters project would still need to be reviewed by local officials. What will happen there is a mystery since all six Town Council members are up for re-election this fall.

"The potential is there for all of them to be replaced," Gunn said. "Many people are upset with how they have handled things."

According to Bates, three of the Three Sisters courses were previously approved by the neighboring Municipal District of Big Horn. Canmore has since annexed the area. The town accepted Big Horn's approval of one course. But time limits have expired on the other two. Stop-work orders have been placed on those 36 holes, the subject of the recent NRCB public hearings. Developers have yet to submit an application for the fourth layout.

Other local projects include:

- Hyatt Regency Golf Course, an approved 18-hole layout owned by Canmore Alpine Development Co. expected to start construction in late summer or early fall.
- Mountain Meadows Golf Course, an 18-hole facility previously approved by the Municipality of Big Horn and annexed by Canmore. The time limit has ex-

pired and the project would have to be reviewed again.

- Kananaskis Guest Ranch, an 18-hole golf course and 50-stall recreational vehicle park located in Big Horn.

- River's Bend Golf Course, a planned 18-hole, 150-stall RV park in Big Horn.

- An 18-hole proposed course affiliated with the Kananaskis Country Golf Course, an existing 36-hole facility in Kananaskis Country, Improvement District No. 5. The dis-

'What the Resources board does with the Three Sisters project will be a good gauge of what's going to happen around here.'

— Paul Bates

Canmore planner

trict is managed by the provincial government. In late June, the planned facility became the first golf course project to go through the NRCB review process. Developers were still awaiting the NRCB's decision in early July.

"I don't think all the projects proposed will be approved," 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. Wildlife and the rivers are very important 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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Banff region looks to attract hordes of golf-thirsty tourists

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economic lifeblood.

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 town of 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 intervenor status. Public hearings before the NRCB took four days.

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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

DENVER, Colo. — Perry O. Dye Designs International, Inc., has broken ground on Dye's first project in Europe — Schloss Seltenheim Golf & Country Club near Klagenfurt, Austria.

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 director. 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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