

Survey says: Yes, but no new taxes

NEWTOWN TOWNSHIP, Pa. — Newtown Swim Club owner and golf course developer David Platt has plans for an 18-hole, par-3 golf course and driving range after receiving the results of a survey conducted last summer.

The survey indicated that 25 percent of respondents would like some type of golf in the township, but 53 percent also said they did not want to pay for it with taxes.

The proposed course would be built on 72 acres, be open to the public, and would cost

the township nothing. The land, farmland, is zoned R-2-high-density residential. However, both Platt and homeowners of Kirkwood Development hope the course can obtain a conditional-use permit.

Homeowners support the plan because of recent flooding in the area. They believe that a golf course with irrigation ponds for water runoff could help eliminate problems. Others like the idea of preventing more housing developments which, with more areas paved over, could contribute to flooding.

Yolo County okays muni expansion

DAVIS, Calif. — In an effort to accommodate the booming population of golfers in Yolo County, the board of supervisors here has approved an 18-hole golf development.

The plan, which received unanimous approval from the city council, calls for expansion of the Davis Municipal Golf Course on two adjacent sites.

Nine new holes will be placed on the first parcel: 148.8 acres located south of the ex-

isting course. The other nine will be located on 146.8 acres west of the existing course.

Other items include the development of single-family homes on several three-quarter-acre sites, a clubhouse, parking lot and driving range expansion. The city council advised that no legal restrictions exist prohibiting house placement on sites requiring a transfer of entitlements from nearby airport properties.

Vietnamese riot

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Griffiths — the foreman had consistently not followed instructions. In this specific incident the foreman, on his own initiative, moved a trench line several feet from an area Japp had marked.

According to Kirby and Japp, the incident fits a continuing pattern in still-communist Vietnam. Despite the foreigners' experience and training, "They don't like us dictating to them how to work and what to do," Japp said. "It's true throughout, with equipment suppliers, everyone. We expect some performance or we shut them off. Usually we get some improvement, but then it's back to the old B.S."

Further, in Vietnam — which maintains its one-party system alongside its strongly provincial ideals of headmen and elders who command utmost respect — the culture clash has the potential to boil over.

Kirby, an American Society of Golf Course Architects member who has worked as site coordinator for Gene Bates and Griffiths, confirmed the foreman had been a problem for some time. Two months earlier, he explained, the superintendent had tried to fire the foreman, who was caught sleeping on the job for the second time.

When Japp suspended the foreman in late March, thus setting off the series of events, Kirby was on vacation. Japp suspended him for two weeks, pending Kirby's final decision.

Upon Kirby's return, he met with more than 70 disgruntled workers. Following the meeting, the workers said nothing and remained in the shop — but they soon moved to the first hole, where they staged a sit down strike. The first hole at King's Island is surrounded by a lake, in which workers soon began swimming and washing their hair.

That afternoon, Dennis Wright, the Canadian owner of the project, arrived on site and insisted the workers leave the course. They instead moved to the first tee, where Kirby and his interpreter intervened and struck a deal.

However, at 7 a.m. the next day, Kirby and Japp saw all the workers coming over the hill from the ferry pier carrying their own tools, including shovels, sickles, sticks and at least two machetes. The mob headed for the first hole, but Kirby had already instructed the pro to close the course. However, the driving range remained open.

"About then the workers figured out the golf course was closed and headed for the range," Kirby said. "The range was full, with probably 100 people there, including the Singaporean and Taiwanese ambassadors and their families."

Wright was also at the range. After trying to order the workers off the island, the owner eventually took cover in the clubhouse, where he made the decision to shut down the project until the national government could intervene and guarantee everyone's safety.

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