



Golf courses are constantly threatened by encroachments of private developers. Lulu Temple CC and Manufacturer's CC, in Philadelphia area, are surrounded on every side by residential areas, may eventually bow to financial enticements of the real estate men.

Pennsylvania County Acts to Save Its 42 Golf Courses

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Many communities are concerned about the loss of existing golf courses due to urban development. Montgomery County, Pa., which consists of 500 square miles on the northwest edge of greater Philadelphia, is doing something about this problem. Says Arthur F. Loeben, director of planning, "We have placed a considerable amount of emphasis on the importance of golf courses in our open space program. The citizens council has arranged for a publication on the importance of open space and the part golf courses play in the program."

Montgomery County has 42 courses and 12 square miles are devoted to golf. It has lost three courses to real estate developments since 1950 — Cedar Brook, Old York Road, and Baederwood. The county is making every effort to prevent future golf losses.

The county's population is about 517,000. The population has doubled every 40 years since 1800. County planners expect a population of 1,200,000 by the year

2000. For administrative purposes the county is divided into 62 townships.

Townships Purchase Courses

In an effort to discourage the sale of courses for development, county planning officials hope that some form of purchase and lease-back arrangement or township operation of facilities can be established in order to save the courses. Says Loeben: "I would like to see the county and its 62 townships adopt a firm policy that will prohibit existing golf courses from being abandoned for development."

Springfield township has already purchased a course to prevent its use for development, and leased it to a private operator. Bonds issued for the purchase price are being repaid from the rental. In not too many years, Springfield township will own the course at no cost to the taxpayer.

Burn Brae GC, in Upper Dublin township, was almost lost to a development but the township placed the question of purchase of this tract on the April, 1963, referendum and it was approved. Purchase price was \$360,000. When it takes this course over in 1964, the township will either operate or lease it as Springfield township has done.

County Wide Program

In response to the question, "What can the average citizen of Montgomery County do to help save open space?" Loeben replied: "If you are a farmer or own a golf course on a sizeable estate, you can help by holding on to your land. If the need to sell arises, first inform the planning commission. Other citizens can help by supporting the county in its open space programs. This means voting in favor of bond issues and the like. Only if everyone does his part will the county avoid the ugliness of unchecked urban sprawl."

The National Golf Foundation is co-operating with Montgomery County in its efforts to save golf facilities. Field reps. have met with county and township officials to assist with their planning. Not only will the practice of townships purchasing courses assist in the attainment of their goal of saving open space but the income from the operation of these courses can prove profitable to them.

A turf field day for New York area supts. will be held Aug. 20 at Nassau County Park on Long Island.