



DOLLAR-WISE

new maintenance facility construction

Plan your construction well and refurbish what you can to make the new facility a project you look forward to. A contingency fund will help pay for it.

▲ Piles were driven to reinforce footings.

▼ The old storage area was due to be replaced.



Is your golf maintenance facility known as the maintenance “shed” or “barn” by your crews and golfers who play the course? If it is, you could have a problem—both with your department’s image and its quality of work.

Even if you can’t tell a book by its cover, you can generally tell the quality of a golf course maintenance operation by its building...barn...shed—whatever you call it. How the facility looks and is organized indicates how much money and effort is being put into the maintenance function.

“If the barn is unorganized and dirty, the quality of work follows,” says Joe Alonzi of Westchester Country Club, which finally completed a new maintenance facility last summer. “A well-organized maintenance center increases efficiency and responsibility.”

As Alonzi learned, sometimes the actual construction of such a facility takes a back seat to the planning and financial considerations that go before.

When he took over at Westchester in 1992, the board had approved construction of a maintenance

facility that had originally been proposed by Ted Horton (now at Pebble Beach) in 1987. Budget—as proposed in 1987—was \$700,000, so Alonzi’s first order of business was to get a 15 percent contingency fund approved.

“If we had built according to plan, we knew we would fall short of our needs,” Alonzi told attendees at the most recent New York State Turfgrass Association convention. Faced with five years worth of inflation, “we also knew it would be a challenge.”

Before...

Here’s how Alonzi took on pre-construction considerations:

- 1) He hired a building architect for \$9800. The

architect was responsible for obtaining permits and coordinating with a building fabricator.

2) The project was separated into three distinct parts: the 50-by-180-foot maintenance facility, a 2500 sq. ft. repair shop and a 6500 sq. ft. equipment storage area. The design included seven concrete storage bins and a wash station.

3) Bids were taken from eight contractors. Low bid was \$545,000 for one 9,000 sq. ft. building and an additional \$28,000 for a 10-by-48-foot pesticide storage building and \$25,000 for the wash station.

The bid also included a \$12,000 performance bond that was required by the club. Combined with the architect's fee, the cost projection was now at \$607,800.

4) Alonzi decided to repair the existing structure, to be used as an administrative building. That project included a new roof, new gutters, vinyl siding, new windows and remodeling the interior. Cost: \$75,000; total cost now at \$682,800.

5) Removal of soil bins was estimated to cost \$40,000, bringing the total cost to \$722,800, by which time Alonzi "knew we'd be in trouble" making the budget of \$700,000—even with the \$105,000 contingency money.

...and after

"The first problem was unacceptable soils—rock, muck and peat—during excavation," Alonzi remembers. "Construction was stopped after four days and we had to hire an engineer to oversee a new slab and new footings that ended up taking two months." Piles, a pile driver and cranes cost an additional \$50,000.

Next, new city specifications required an eight-inch water main for the fire protection system. The trenching company hit rock while installing the main and, due to a "rock clause" in the contract, charged an additional \$6,000.

By now, the project's total costs were at \$759,800—\$59,800 into the contingency



The original building was remodeled to be used as an administrative building. That project included a new roof, new gutters, vinyl siding, new windows and interior work.



Finished. The new facility at Westchester includes a 2500 sq. ft. repair shop and a 6500 sq. ft. equipment storage area.

fund. Tack on another \$19,000 to reinforce the main building's metal shell with plywood and bollards.

Finally, in March of last year, a "floating" concrete slab was poured in 25-foot sections to eliminate its cracking as the ground would settle and heave. Coarse asphalt was poured May 16th.

By June 12th, the building was 99 percent complete and the pesticide storage bin

started going up. On July 14th, the main building, the wash station and storage building had been completed, much to Alonzi's relief.

"We had \$25,000 left in the contingency fund," Alonzi told New York Turf attendees, "but it was really a long haul." □