

News

The Refuge Golf Club's Motorcoach project rolls forward Owner files new site plan with the county

By JAYNE HANSON

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The Refuge Golf & Country Club owner Jerry Aldridge said Thursday the motorcoach project is back on track and rolling forward after he filed a site plan with Mohave County officials a few weeks ago.

"It's exactly what I had envisioned," Aldridge said. "It's perfect. It's going to be beautiful."

The project was first submitted to county officials in 2009. After much resistance from The Refuge homeowners association, Aldridge announced he would try to annex about 50-acres of the property into city limits in mid-2010, according to earlier reports.

The issue made the ballot for a special election in May and was turned down by 58 percent of voters. The homeowners association celebrated and Aldridge released a statement saying he had full intention of moving forward with the project. In the statement, he called the project "a gem" for Havasu.

Aldridge said Thursday the most current site plan is one-third the size of his original concept in 2009, which included nearly 300 motorcoach spaces. Now, it's at 110 spaces.

"It's a less invasive project with much less masquerading," he said. "It fits naturally in the topography, it's a very eco-friendly, beautiful project."

Aldridge anticipates the spaces will sell within one year. He said interest in the spaces is largely Canadians.

Nick Hont, director of Mohave County Developmental Services, said Aldridge submitted the latest site plan Nov. 2 and the project has a new engineer. About six agencies including those pertaining to county, fire, and utilities associated with the property will review the plan and submit comments by Wednesday. So far, about four comments have been returned from the agencies.

Hont said there are "quite a few steps" before the project is ready to go before county planning and zoning commissioners.

"They only have one meeting a month," Hont said of planning and zoning commissioners. "And it depends on how fast the applicant gets back with everything."

Once the comments are received, they are returned with change requests to the applicant. Best-chance scenario, the project wouldn't be included for planning and zoning commission's review until February. From there, the commissioners' recommendation is subject to a vote by the county Board of Supervisors.

In this case, however, there are a "lot of legal issues" surrounding the motorcoach project.

According to earlier reports, some members of The Refuge homeowner's association teamed up to head off the project's progression. Hont said the litigation currently awaits a ruling. County development service employees were deposed this summer amid the legal tug-of-war.

Desert Hills Fire Chief Mat Espinoza said he received his copy of the site plan late last week. Desert Hills Fire District over sees the golf club and adjoining housing subdivision.

"In the new plans they've lowered the density," Espinoza said. "The new plans show the new spaces are spread out more. And instead of all being on the south end of the property a portion of it is on the east side of the property and surrounds the pond inside (to the right) and abuts the former KOA property."

Espinoza said there are a couple of fire apparatus accesses on the site plan that utilize Arnold Palmer Drive. The issue is one of legality with the homeowners and is yet to be determined.

Furthermore, the RVs wouldn't use the south gate of Arnold Palmer Drive. The RVs would turn to the left just before the gate and access the golf club property by way of a maintenance road situated at the southeastern-most section of the property.

"The plans haven't been approved by anybody yet," Espinoza said. "We are working on the comments as we speak. The fire department just ensures fire safety. We make hydrants and make sure there is access and room to turn around. I think the big hang up right now is for a judge to make a ruling."

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