

Lake Lawn ready to move forward

Third step taken in development plans

By Thom Aiello

EDITOR

It's full speed ahead for Lake Lawn Resort as it pushes its \$390 million renovation project forward following Monday evening's plan commission meeting in the city of Delavan.

"We're on schedule with the renovation," said Patrick Nelson of the owners group, Delavan Resort Holdings LLC, that purchased Lake Lawn Sept. 15, 2004. "There's construction on site right now.

"We've not talked about it much. We wanted the city to hear about it first, rather than hearing the rumor mill."

Now that the plan commission unanimously supported the general development plan, it will go to the city council at its regular meeting in September. After that, if it is approved, designs would have to be done and step four would have to be finalized. Internal renovations are being done in the meantime.

"We're excited to go public with the plans," said Nelson, who said everything is on schedule. Room construction started July 1 as planned. "We've gone through great lengths to go through the city planning department and to listen to their concerns."

According to step three of the planned infill development process, the resort will remain a commercial lodging development, not a residential project.

"Therefore, there will be negligible impact on local schools, public parks or any other public facilities," according to the general development plan packet. It said the project conforms to the city's master plan.

"In 11 months it's quite a vision we put together for the future of Lake Lawn," said Nelson in an interview Monday.

While the project will revitalize Lake Lawn and make it competitive in today's resort marketplace, the plan said, "The new resort will benefit the city as well in the form of increased tax revenue (room, real estate, and sales taxes), and increased local employment."

It said the new buildings would

be spread among the different park-like areas of the resort.

However, the newer plans will not have the sprawl that the original plans of approximately 18 months ago had, said Nelson, 54, of East Troy.

The original plan didn't have an upgrade of the original resort and the convention center in the new plan is much larger. The road entrance was taken off of Highway 50 and moved to North Shore Drive. The layout has been changed so there are no remote condo units. That also helped save greenery.

"The development will also ensure that the resort will be there for future generations to enjoy," said the packet.

"Lake Lawn Resort will remain a local landmark without imposing on or adversely affecting the surrounding area or community," it added.

The main new access will be via a new entry drive from North Shore Drive.

Two of the hotel's buildings will be demolished, removing 61 units. Also eliminated will be the horse stable, water tower and several support buildings, as well as part of the existing convention center.

New buildings will be developed to create a number of themes that will add to and compliment the existing lodge theme, according to the plans. Exterior finish colors will use natural, earthen tones to compliment the natural setting. New buildings will be sited to take advantage of the scenic beauty of the site and of Delavan Lake.

"The lake is our jewel," said Nelson, who is one of two board members, along with Dan Hintz of Caledonia, to join Executive Officer Tom Quinn of Oak Creek as the lead members of the ownership group. "The lake is the reason we bought the property. We want to enhance everything. In our design we went to great pains to preserve the lake."

Retention and detention plans were incorporated into the golf course area to help maintain sediment run off into the lake.

The new construction consists of four to six stories, both connected and separated buildings with mean roof heights of up to 65 feet to 85 feet and with decorative architectural features that will extend to 100 feet to provide landmark and directional icons on the property.

Remaining will be 222 hotel rooms, a pool, restaurants and conference areas for 220,000 square feet. The areas to be demolished represent 57,000 square feet.

New construction is to include 1,000 guest bedrooms with 880,000 square feet for residential use, 65,000 square feet for lobby/res-

taurants/retail, 135,000 square feet for conference, 50,000 square feet for spa/leisure, 130,000 square feet for an indoor water park and 90,000 square feet for administration, service and mechanical use. That's a total square footage of 1,350,000.

The water park was facing the lake in the original plans, but is set into a hill now so that less of the water park will be exposed.

"On the lake side, people can enjoy views of the lake," said Nelson.

Several holes on the golf course will be completely refigured and water hazards will be added. There will be a clubhouse on the 18-hole course. Food, beverages and snacks will be available in the clubhouse.

"We will keep it as a nice resort course, friendly to all levels of play," said Nelson.

That fits the nature of the resort, said Susan Stoga, a public relations consultant for the facility. She said the course needs to be challenging, yet playable.

Many groups go to Lake Lawn and they often have golfers of varying talents.

Square footage for driving areas (201,000), total parking areas (700,000) and fire access road/paths (160,000) is 1,061,000.

The first phase of construction is scheduled to be completed in spring of 2006. Then, in 2006, construction of the next phase will start.

"It's a monumental task of designing," said Nelson. "People don't understand how much (it takes) to make it functional."

The new construction is broken into lodges, lakefront estates and a marina. Each area will have guestrooms.

First phase of Lake Lawn sales near completion

Condominium sales at the soon-to-be renovated Lake Lawn Resort are well underway with phase one sales nearing completion, according to Delavan Resort Holdings LLC owners' representative Patrick Nelson.

The resort is currently selling 222 newly renovated, condo-hotel suites in one- and two-bedroom combinations, many with loft bedrooms. The condominiums will be available for occupancy in early 2006. Phase two sales will begin later this year.

Lake Lawn Resort, located along more than 1.5 miles of shoreline on Delavan Lake, will be transformed into a four-star resort. The proposed plan includes:

- 1,222 guestroom suites, including the remodeling of 222 of the resort's existing rooms and the addition of 1,000 new rooms. Many rooms will feature adjoining parlors and multiple bedrooms;
- 130,000 square foot indoor water park;
- 165-slip marina and boardwalk, featuring a festival retail complex;

- 30,000-square-foot destination spa, with 90 luxury spa suites attached to the spa;

- A redesigned golf course with a new golf club.

- Five new destination restaurants, along with food courts, delis, ice cream parlors and specialty coffee shops;

- 150,000 square feet of new or newly renovated flexible meeting space, including meeting rooms and a conference center.

Lake Lawn Resort has a purchase program for condo buyers. The resort will lease back the suite from the buyer, pay condo association dues and provide reimbursement for all property taxes, for a two-year period.

"The condo buyer has responded with a great deal of enthusiasm," said Nelson.

"As we close out sales of this phase, we are already moving forward to the next phase and creating the area's top resort experience."

For more information, visit www.lakelawnresort.com or call 1-800-338-5253.