

Future of Aptos course uncertain

By ANNA MARIA BASQUEZ

Sentinel staff writer

APTOS — A landmark golf course with a 30-year history may soon have its greens sold out from under it.

John Menge operates the Aptos Par 3 golf course along Highway 1 but hasn't been able to renew his lease because of uncertainty over the property's future.

County Supervisor Walt Symons said he understands the property is about to go on the market and that there may be an effort to develop it. He said he would fight to keep the land in open space, however.

The property will stay zoned for recreation "as long as I'm around," Symons said. "I don't think the lease has been granted to continue it as Par 3, but I won't support a development on it other than recreational. They've been trying for years, with different developers coming through in my six years in office, and my reaction has been the same."

Menge said he has been unable to get any firm information from the property owners but also understands the property is about to go on the market.

Menge said about half the property is

owned by Sonny McFadden while the remainder is owned by brothers Larry and Grant Wrathall.

Neither could be reached to comment Thursday, but Sonny McFadden had said previously, "We don't have any firm plans ... right now. We might be looking to sell it now, but we haven't made any decisions."

The Aptos Chamber of Commerce has fielded two dozen phone calls this week from area residents and golfers concerned about the fate of the course.

"People who live here love that golf course," said Karen Hibble, chamber executive director. "Seniors play there because it's inexpensive and it's a small course. Aptos doesn't have any senior center or any youth center. Other than the beach, there's nothing for young people to do."

Resident Marq Lipton said the course provides a unique recreational opportunity.

"The Par 3 is a wonderful resource for the community," Lipton said. "If you go out there, you see a lot of pre-teens playing golf. A lot of seniors play golf there. It would be a real shame if the community lost it."



Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel

Golfers have enjoyed low-key rounds of golf at the Aptos Par 3 course for more than 30 years, but the property is for sale and its future uncertain.