

SV golf, housing proposal returns

Scotts Valley - 1990

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SCOTTS VALLEY — Developers of the proposed Glenwood Estates golf course and housing project, rebuffed by the county last year, have a new plan — and new opposition.

The development at the northern edge of Scotts Valley is encountering its first serious opposition from area residents. It also has met with reservations from the city, which has strongly supported the Glenwood Estates project since it first was proposed in 1985.

J.H. Tromp Meester, president of BRUSA Corp. of San Jose, brought the first phase of the latest proposal before the Scotts Valley Planning Commission Thursday night. That first phase involves 60 housing units on 10 acres.

According to Tromp Meester, the 10-acre site originally was set aside for a school. It was made part of the development to help compensate for the loss of the county land.

Tromp Meester said the new plans call for the same density ratio of 6 units per acre that was included in the original plan.

"We've proposed to the city that let's under all circumstances stick to the (planned density)," he said.

Tromp Meester said the new plans provide for 276 housing units and an 18-hole golf course, the same as in the original plan. The golf course is to be shorter and the housing units smaller and less expensive because 25 acres of county land have been subtracted from the original 282-acre site.

To fit all 276 housing units and the golf course within the city limits, the new plans call for homes in the 3,500-square-foot range rather than 5,000 to 8,000. Homes that would have been priced at about \$400,000 instead will go for \$240,000 to \$250,000, according to Tromp Meester.

About 30 people, mostly residents in the Canham Road area adjacent to the development, showed up at the meeting to voice their opposition.

The matter was continued until Nov. 22. BRUSA's original plans were approved by the city of Scotts Valley. However, county supervisors rejected the project in June 1993. In addition to opposing the concept of a housing project in a rural area, they cited questions about preservation of rare plants on county land, and about the excavation of 12,000 cubic yards of earth within the county's jurisdiction so that five of the holes on the golf course could be built.

Environmentalists had sued to stop the project, but an out-of-court settlement provided for land in the project to be set aside for the rare plants. The terms of that settlement will be honored, Tromp Meester said.

"That (the county rejection) gave us reason to rethink the project," Tromp Meester said. "We came to the conclusion that we still could build the golf course on our property, and that we did not need the

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SV proposal

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county's (25-acre) parcel."

However, the city's planning department has recommended that the city reject the initial plans for 60 homes on 10 acres until a proposal for the entire site is on the table. City planning director Bob Hanna had said the city should not approve only portions of the project.

Hanna did not return phone calls Friday.

Tromp Meester said his company hopes to have the complete plan ready by March, at which time it will make a formal application for approval.

City Councilman Michael Shulman called the presentation before the Planning Commission "the first phase, something to get something in the ground."

"It's a step forward to the extent he's coming in with a specific plan for part of it," Shulman said. "The city hasn't seen the entire revised plan, but part of (BRUSA's) premise was to have an entire cohesive plan rather than unconnected bits and pieces."

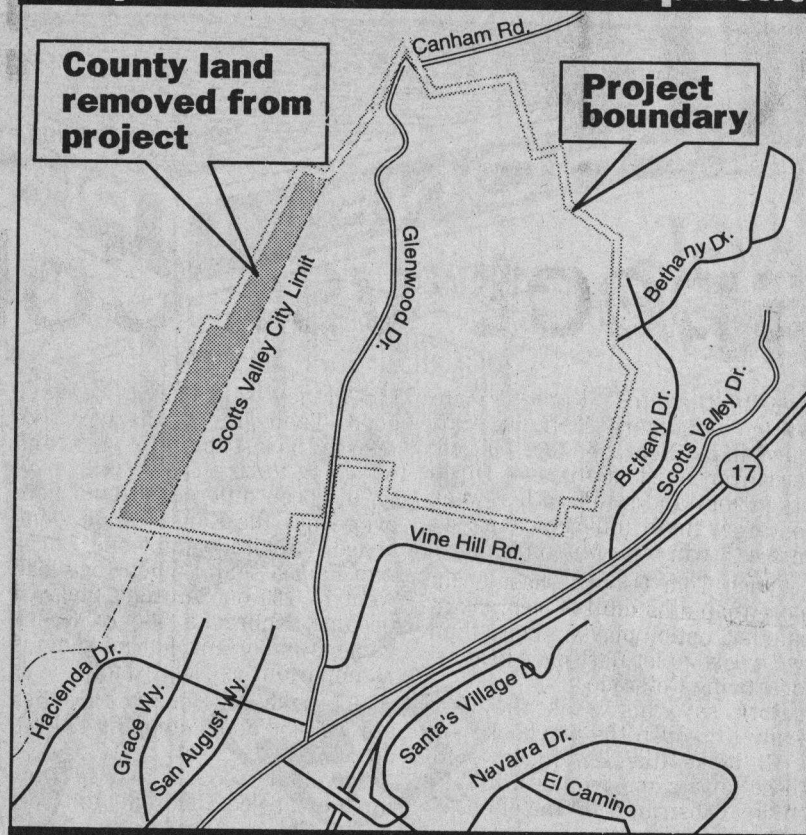
Meanwhile, residents on Canham Road, just north of the city-county line that serves as the project's northern boundary, are choosing up sides.

Robert Frank, who opposes the project, says he resents being told that residents should agree to this project because future alternatives might be less palatable.

"The only way they can sell it is it being the best of all evils," said Frank, who has lived in the area six years. "It's hard to be totally black-and-white on the issue because (older residents) have seen everything proposed there from a circus to an amusement park to condos. I just don't like being threatened."

"From a pristine horse meadow to a golf course ... who'd want that, unless you're a golfer? But Scotts Valley never has been conservative about development. Scotts Valley doesn't care if it looks like San Jose."

Proposed Glenwood development



Chris Carothers/Sentinel

Irene Cummins, however, calls the proposal "the best idea they've come up with in years" for the area, home to her family since 1949. That's 17 years before Scotts Valley was incorporated.

"We've seen a lot of changes," she said. "I want a golf course instead of 800 homes. (BRUSA) has bent over backwards on this, and if we get them mad, they'll chop it up. I've seen the plans, and they're gorgeous."

Cummins says most of the opposition to Glenwood Estates comes from relative newcomers who have a not-in-my-backyard attitude about development now that they are established in the area.

"They're Johnny-come-latelies," she said, "and if I had my way,

they wouldn't be here either. We're at eye level (to the proposed development), and I want the golf course (as part of the development).

"And we're right at the end of a valley where the dry grass is 3-4 feet tall. I want a project where we're not sitting here saying that we could be burned out."

As for the golf course, Tromp Meester said nine holes will be laid out on the west side of Glenwood Drive instead of on the east side. That will make the course more compact, he said.

"Golfers drive longer than they used to," he said, "and today you'd prefer to have courses 10 percent longer (than is the norm now). But that I can't do."