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Club changes get nod

By Alan Blondin

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Several additions and changes have been made to the clubhouse at Pine Lakes International Country Club since it opened around 1927.

All of those will be destroyed or redone by owners Burroughs & Chapin Co. Inc. during an estimated \$6 million rebuilding and restoration project that was approved by the Myrtle Beach Community Appearance Board on Thursday.

The project is expected to be completed in the spring of 2009, in time for the reopening of the golf course, which has been closed since November 2006 for a restoration and renovation project of its own under the direction of course architect Craig Schreiner.

The clubhouse and course are on the National Register of Historic Places and are expected to remain there following the renovations.

"The Granddaddy," as its known, was designed by Robert White, the PGA of America's first president from 1916-19. Sports Illustrated was conceived at Pine Lakes in the fall 1953 when Time Magazine executives met to work, play golf and ride horses.

The grand clubhouse was designed in Classical Revival style by Raymond Hood, who also designed skyscrapers in New York. But over the years the interior fell into disrepair, and additions such as a grill, pro shop and unconnected cart barn were built.

Those will be replaced with a new pro shop and locker rooms, History Hall, Robert White Pub and Grille - named after the course's designer and first PGA of America president, and cart barn. All will be added to the building in an architectural style that emulates Hood's original creation, and the entire interior of the existing building will be renovated.

"Over the decades, some additions were made to the structure and many internal changes were made, not all of which honored or reflected the historic architecture," B&C spokesman Pat Dowling said. "B&C's renovations and additions will result in one contiguous building that presents itself as one piece with respect to architecture and atmosphere."

The project includes cedar siding for the building's exterior, the traditional white with black accents paint scheme, an outdoor fire pit for gatherings, restoration of the Magnolia and Azalea ballrooms for receptions and weddings, and a new swimming pool and fitness rooms for members.

"Some respectful additions, coupled with major internal and external restorations to the original structure, could actually put the clubhouse back into active play within the community," Dowling said.

Schreiner said renovations to the golf course are on schedule. He has four holes left to shape on the front nine in the next few weeks, including the fourth and fifth holes that will be the layout's only entirely new holes and will be on the west side of the property. They are replacing the former 17th and 18th holes.

Most of the existing hole corridors have been preserved, though rolling elevation changes have been enhanced, some doglegs have been lessened and holes that Schreiner deemed too narrow or too short have been expanded.

Schreiner said the planting of grass should occur when temperatures warm up in April or May, and normal growing conditions will allow a spring opening.

The entire course will be planted with a salt-tolerant Sea Dwarf Seashore Paspalum grass. It is the farthest north the warm-weather Paspalum will be used on the East Coast.

Lakes have been enlarged, deepened and connected to improve water quality and irrigation and have been more integrated into play. A bridge is being built across an enlarged lake along Woodside Drive.

Ornamental vegetation from the property has been replanted, and vegetation including varieties of myrtle trees, magnolias and azaleas have been added.

Although many trees were removed because they were struggling, or for sun or air circulation considerations, Schreiner said hundreds of pines and oaks have been transplanted in other areas of the course. The 14th green (formerly the third green) along U.S. 17 Business has been screened from the road with mounds and vegetation.

Two new practice putting greens have also been built near the first and 10th tees.

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