

Board to take bids on Alton Baker golf course

By Rachel Runyan
Emerald Contributor

The Lane County Board of Commissioners has decided to take land bids on the proposed Alton Baker golf course, despite public outcry that the development will interfere with other park activities.

The board sent revised requests for land use proposals to businesses Oct. 2, in hopes of proving to golf course opposition groups that the course will not take the area away from other recreational uses.

The proposal to build an 18-hole golf course on 150 acres in the eastern section of Alton Baker Park has drawn opposition from community groups. These groups claim the proposed course will affect the quality of jogging, biking, canoeing and other activities the park supports.

"The proposal has been reworded to make it clear that existing uses are not to be detracted from in quality or other ways," Commissioner Peter Thurston said.

The revised proposal states that "portions of the GOA (golf opportunity area) have other park uses such as running trails, bike paths, 5-acre BMX facility, and canoeway, which must be incorporated into any acceptable golf course plan."

At the head of the opposition

is a group called Alton Baker For All Of Us, which has collected more than 5,000 signatures rejecting the proposal, said member Wes Bigalow.

The golf course would be built in a part of the park called an "opportunity area" that was set aside for development in the 1986 master plan.

A golf course was chosen from other possible development options because it meets the plan's criteria that developments generate revenue and be compatible with other recreational uses, Thurston said.

The board has not yet voted on whether to build the golf course, Thurston said, but a public hearing will be held in the first two months of 1992 to discuss the selected proposal.

There will be no other hearings on the subject until the commissioners receive proposals they believe indicate that a golf course can be built without infringing on other uses or endangering park users. Then the committee will select a proposal.

Alton Baker For All Of Us plans to fight the proposal with an initiative process to guarantee county citizens a say in the matter.

"Given that they're looking at proposals, it's clear that one may be accepted," Bigalow said. "The request for proposal



Photo by Jeff Paslay

The Lane County Board of Commissions has decided to take land bids on the proposed golf course for Alton Baker Park, despite criticism that the course will interfere with the quality of biking, jogging, canoeing and other activities in the park.

shows they're not really interested in the primary uses of the park.

"Should 40 percent of the park be used for a game that only 15 percent of Americans play?" Bigalow said, adding a 1989 city park master plan report expected the area north of the park to experience a 93 per-

cent population increase in the next 20 years.

Another major disagreement between the two sides concerns the size of the park. Bigalow said the master plan and maps made from aerial photographs show that the park is 375 acres. This means the golf course

would take up 40 percent of the park.

Thurston said that the golf course would take up only about 30 percent of the park, based on calculations by the AutoCAD computer blueprint program, which calculated 435 acres of park.

PUBLIC

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17, complained about what he said were recent racially motivated arrests on Sept. 27, when police tried to disperse a crowd in front of the 7-Eleven at the corner of 13th Avenue and Alder Street.

Allah-Muhhammad said there was a crowd of young people hanging out in front of the 7-Eleven on 13th and Alder.

When the crowd — con-

sisting of 100 white people and two black men — refused to leave, police immediately arrested one of the black men, Allah-Muhhammad said. Minutes later police arrested the other black man. They searched him and found Mace.

A police officer then charged the other black man with menacing her with the Mace, when in fact it was never drawn and never even detected until the suspect was in handcuffs, Allah-Muhhammad said.

"White people were walking around and calling them pigs but instead they arrested the two black guys who weren't doing anything," Allah-Muhhammad said.

Cody Yarbrough, 18, complained of police officers who treat young people with contempt because they look different.

"There's a lot of cops that come off with this attitude that we're all shit, something that needs to be scraped off the boot of society," he said.

PATROL

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"We don't go to parties to break up their fun, we're sent to parties and we have to do our job."

At the end of the ride, my exhausted brain could only tell me one thing: I was wrong. I was wrong in thinking that all cops were out to make my life miserable, that they were nothing but racist, fascist jerks preying on college kids and transients, and that they were cops only because they wanted power and those shiny guns.

I'm not saying cops are all good and students are nothing but rebellious brats. A vicious circle exists with students sometimes being hostile to officers, and in turn, officers developing negative attitudes toward students.

If students exhibited a cooperative attitude toward the police, I think the circle could be broken. It has to start somewhere.

Seeing firsthand what it is like to be a cop made me realize they are people with families, interests, desires — and a tough job.

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