

Resort earns planning nod

By PAUL STUART
Frontiersman reporter

PALMER — Victor Trygstad's golf resort is back in full-swing.

A plan to create a 18-hole 800-acre golf course and resort in the Butte got new life with a 4-1 vote of the Mat-Su Planning Commission Monday.

The Mat-Su Planning Commission had turned thumbs down 7-0 on Trygstad's proposal for an 18-hole golf course and resort in the Butte on Feb. 3. At that time, commissioners said it was because they didn't get a site-plan map as requested.

They got their map Monday night. In fact, there were maps and charts all over the place.

And Trygstad got the green light for his golf resort. The vote was 4-1. Commissioner

Patty Hanrahan, who was absent and excused, had requested an on-site inspection.

The borough assembly last month, apparently unhappy with the earlier call, remanded the application for reclassification of the 320 acres and conveyance to Trygstad back to the planning commission, with instructions to look at it again, this time with the map and other data.

Now the resolution, with a favorable recommendation to reclassify the land for general use and convey it to Homestead Properties to build the resort is likely to come before the assembly again for its final consideration in April. But it will go before the assembly with a long list of strict and specific stipulations attached.

Butte Community Council

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RESORT: Approved

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president Jim Stocker said the council will definitely appeal the planning commission decision — first through the borough's adjustment and appeals process, and then, if necessary, in Superior Court. The Butte council has been spearheading strong opposition to the resort project for months.

Both Stocker and Trygstad gave 20-minute presentations and answered questions for the commissioners, before the decision.

An uncontested amendment added to the resolution a list of more than a dozen performance and other stipulations to be met before the transaction with the borough is final. The measure that will come before the assembly will be to convey the 320-acre parcel by means of a lease with an option to buy. The measure states the borough can terminate the lease if any of the stipulations are not met on schedule.

The only dissenting vote Monday was cast by Commissioner Jim Kracker. Kracker said he remembered thousands of acres being locked up for recreational use in Talkeetna in a

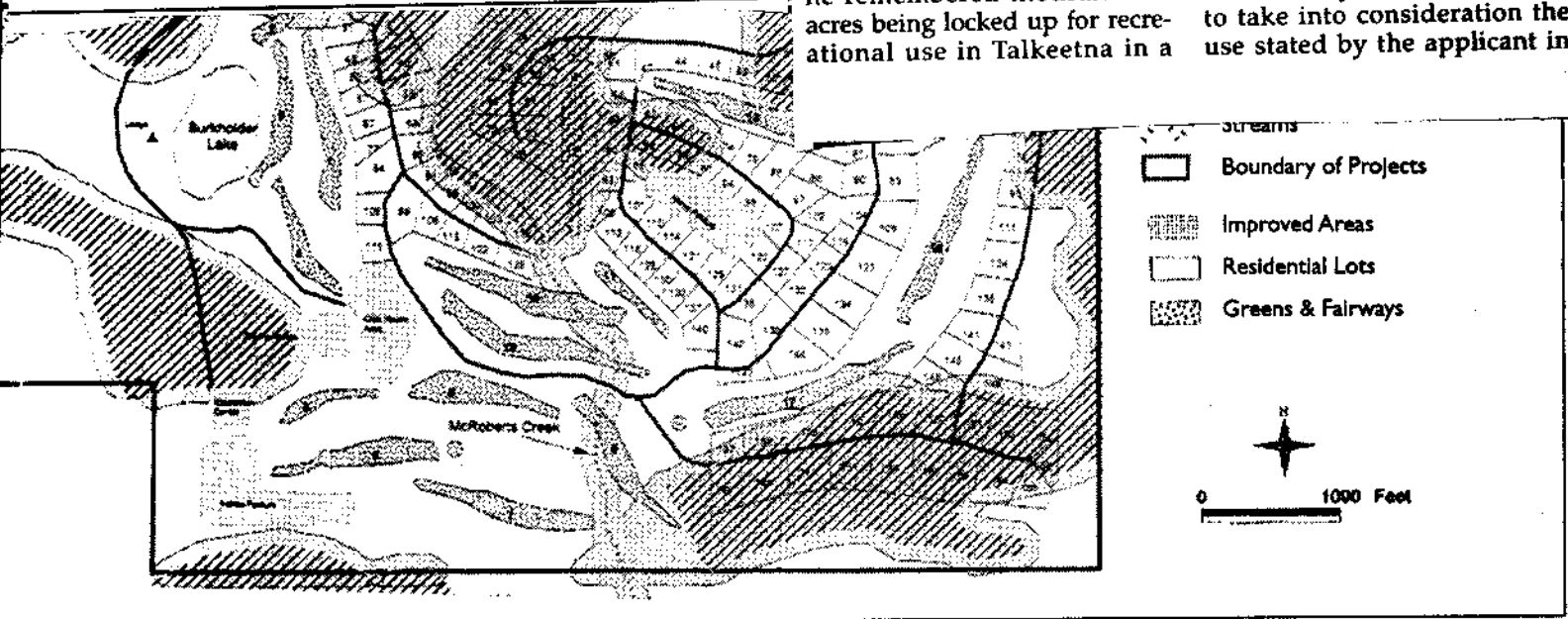
comprehensive plan at the urging of a vocal minority of about 200 people. Recalling that, he said, even though Trygstad's project seemed to be a good one, he did not think it was right to vote against the wishes of what he described as about 90 percent of the 2,000 people in the Butte area.

And Commissioner Jim Colver, before he voted in the affirmative, took a swipe at the assembly for putting the commission on the spot.

"This is a political football," Colver said, "and it's been dumped right in our laps. This thing is going to go, and it's up to us to protect the community as best we can," he added, referring to the strict stipulations amended into the resolution.

Planning Director John Duffy admonished Colver, reminding him the matter had not yet been decided by the assembly.

Duffy also took exception to a comment by commission chairman Tim Anderson. Anderson said the commission was only voting on a recommendation to reclassify land, and not deciding its final use. Duffy said it was the duty of the commission to take into consideration the use stated by the applicant in



Courtesy Mat-Su Borough Planning Department

Proposed location of subdivision lots and layout of golf course in the Butte, as planned by Homestead Resort Properties.

each such case.

"Then the sale part ought to be written into the resolution," Anderson replied to Duffy.

Before joining Anderson and Colver in voting yes, Commis-

sioner Craig Savage said the only reason he voted against the measure in February was because of missing data that was now available. And commissioner J.C. McCavit said he

didn't really understand why there was such strong opposition to the project. "Maybe" he said, "because of propaganda by just a few."

The commission voted 4-1,

with Kracker again dissenting, to table indefinitely a rival petition from Butte residents that would have reclassified the same land for recreational use, to be kept in public ownership.

IPASS: Resort plan has 4 development phases