

Hold Trygstad to terms of lease

Those who have been following the "Homestead Resort" controversy may recall that the assembly voted to lease Victor Trygstad a 320-acre parcel of public land in the Butte.

The lease was to have 13 conditions to guarantee the property would actually be used for a Jack Nicklaus-designed 18-hole golf course.

After all of the effort and money spent on this issue over the past year, Trygstad has again been successfully lobbying the assembly to disregard all previous testimony and sell him the land outright.

Now, Doyle Holmes has said he will introduce an ordinance to do just that. Trygstad has been using the "golf course" angle to get non-competitive access to the property.

What started out as a public resort with hay rides, sleigh rides, wealthy Japanese tourists, and glass-domed railroad cars coming through Palmer, changed to a private members-only country club after the Planning Commission approved a lease with the 13 conditions.

SPECTRUM

Jim Courtney

He still has not provided a resumé, plans or any financial documents the Planning Commission requested nearly a year ago. Why should anybody believe he will be able to raise the millions of dollars it would cost just to design the golf course? Real banks and investors, unlike the assembly, won't fork over hard assets whenever someone feeds them meaningless marketing drivel. Without the lease, he keeps the land if he can't (or won't) get financing. That would be equivalent to a non-competitive outright sale based on nothing other than fluff.

It appears the assembly wants Trygstad, and Trygstad only, to have the parcel for whatever use, regardless of public input. Some justify not applying any logical thought processes by stating it's just their

inate philosophy to get all land into private hands. I noticed Larry DeVilbiss recently voted against a land sale to an organization that has a record of cruelty to animals. I hope that Larry will see fit to apply the same thought processes for the sake of our human friends. There may be some resolution by the assembly somewhere, but it is definitely not the interests of the people that are being considered.

I don't believe Trygstad will sign anything that doesn't give him the parcel and clear. I don't think he ever had any intention of signing a lease. Therefore, if he should be held to the lease. If he signs it, the parcel should be rezoned recreational. If the assembly must sell on philosophical reasons, a competitive process is the only one that's acceptable to the public. If he does sign the lease and actually completes the project, I'll eventually sell my house for big bucks and move somewhere that hasn't been screwed up yet.

Jim Courtney lives in the Butte.