

BURNABY SOLD PEAT AND TOOK CONSTRUCTION FILL TO PAY FOR COURSE AND CLUBHOUSE

New Riverway clubhouse is a hole-in-one

It's been a project almost two decades in the making, but when the doors opened at Riverway Golf Course's new clubhouse this month, golfers and gourmets alike marvelled at the finished product.

The main dining room seats more than 200, while the main patio can accommodate another 100 and a separate side patio has space for another 20-plus people.

The kitchen is equipped with all the newest equipment, including four different fridges/freezers, and would be the envy of every haute-cuisine restaurant in the

Lower Mainland.

For the golfer though, the delights and conveniences will be varied and abundant.

With the clubhouse situated on the site of a former putting green overlooking the first

tee, the 18th green and a beautiful lake, not only will the views be spectacular, but the opportunities for gentle and not-so-gentle chiding will be present.

The course, open since 1993, has an interesting history that goes back to the mid-1980s.

The land upon which Riverway sits was a nutrient-rich peat bog and the city began selling off chunks of that fuel.

Making the economics even better was that large construction projects at Metrotown and on the old Expo '86 site meant developers had lots of fill and few places to put it.

The city capitalized by taking that construction fill to replace the peat taken out and began plans to put a championship golf course on the site just east of Byrne Road and south of Marine Way.

One of the councillors during that time is current Burnaby Mayor Derek Corrigan.

"One of the most interesting things to us as a council was we could build a golf course for virtually no public money because we could sell the peat and accept the fill and this would generate money for the city," said Corrigan. "This was an opportunity too good to pass up, a tremendous opportunity to get a championship golf course at literally no cost to the taxpayer."

In 1988, when trucks started taking the peat out and putting the fill in, renowned golf course architect Les Furber started putting his innovative stamp on the course.

"I don't think anybody had ever done anything like this before," said Furber from the Canmore, Alberta offices of GDS Golf Design Services. "It really was innovative to sell the peat and backfill it with



Larry Wright/BURNABY NOW

Open for business: The new clubhouse at Riverway opened in late-April with a VIP party hosted by Mayor Derek Corrigan. The clubhouse has been in the works for more than 20 years and sits on the site of an old putting green that overlooks the first tee and the 18th green. This is the view of the front of the clubhouse.

construction waste."

For Furber, putting a championship course on what was a flat piece of land, with few large trees, would prove to be a challenge he relished.

"We had to add some definition to the land," said Furber.

To do that, Furber built up berms throughout the course which not only defined fairways, they acted as noise buffers from the high-speed traffic going by on Marine Way.

Furber said that watching the land and

the course develop during the next eight years was very rewarding, simply because he knew how much work had been put into the project.

"I think by the end, there were about 8 million cubic metres either trucked in or trucked out," he said. "It truly was a massive undertaking."

Furber is particularly proud of the 523-yard finishing 18th, which he designed with a future clubhouse in mind.

"Absolutely, we wanted that hole to play right toward where the clubhouse

was supposed to go," said Furber. "The way that site was set up, that was where people were coming into the course and how they would leave too."

Furber said what he remembers most about the Riverway project was how progressive the city was in moving forward.

"It was such a dynamic process," he said. "To do this without any example to follow was really interesting."

If Furber thought building the golf course was interesting, then he'd be captivated by the story of the building of the Riverway clubhouse.

David O'Connor is Burnaby's assistant director of golf operations and he said he had a clear mandate when it came to the Riverway clubhouse.

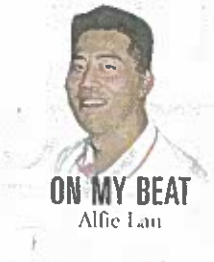
"I was told to build lots of flexibility into the clubhouse," he said. "The clubhouse had to service golfers, it had to be able to host receptions and banquets, and it had to utilize the patio space."

The clubhouse was always scheduled to be part of the second phase of the Riverway project, but as the 1990s turned into the 2000s, the clubhouse took a backburner to other, more pressing civic projects.

In 2004, the project was put in the hands of the company that helped design Westwood Plateau's signature clubhouse.

Graham D. Fligg, principal of Merrick Architecture - Borowski Sakamoto Fligg

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ON MY BEAT
Alfie Lau



Larry Wright/BURNABY NOW

Watering hole: Server Katica Vunic gets ready to go to work at the outdoor patio overlooking the Riverway Golf Course's final hole.

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FLYERS

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Golf: New Riverway clubhouse opens

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Limited, said the new clubhouse at the Riverway Golf Course has been a great project to be involved in.

"We wanted to capture a classy look reflecting the esthetic of clustered farm buildings," said Fligg. "We wanted the clubhouse to reflect the farming past of this land, but at the same time represent a realistic and modern clubhouse befitting a public golf course."

Design work would stretch into late 2005 and 2006, but Fligg and the design team discovered a "hidden surprise."

"Because the course was built on an old peat bog, we found out that course had settled about two feet," said Fligg. "The soil challenges led to some delays, and that meant we needed to build in time for pre-loading the site."

Going out to tender during this period of red-hot real estate meant there were too many projects and not enough qualified contractors to do the job correctly.

It wouldn't be until late 2009 that the project went out to tender, and the market conditions had changed very drastically.

"Contractors were literally fighting for the contract," said Corrigan, who estimated that the city saved 15 per cent by signing a tender in a soft market.

Fligg said that while he put in a lot of work on the Riverway project as principal-in-charge and project designer, a lot of the credit has to go to his colleague, Mark Zaitsoff, the project architect and sustainability manager who shepherded the delivery of the project. After the new clubhouse opens, the old café building

will become a multi-purpose room and perhaps a check-in area for golf tournaments.

"Now that you have a clubhouse that can host a big event, the sky's the limit," said Fligg. "A Canadian Open is not out of the question."

"When we were putting the plans together for the clubhouse," said O'Connor, "We were told to make this a showcase for the entire area. I'd like to think we did that."

The Riverway Golf Course and Clubhouse is located at 9001 Bill Fox Way. For more info, phone 604-280-GOLF (4653) or e-mail golf@burnaby.ca.

BC HYDRO POLE RENEWAL PROJECT

BC Hydro is pro-actively replacing 1000 existing wooden poles in Burnaby and Vancouver. These poles are reaching their end of life, which is up to 50 years old. BC Hydro is replacing the poles to ensure system reliability, and to ensure public and BC Hydro crew safety. This project will conclude at the end of May 2011.

You may have noticed the wooden replacement poles are being dropped on boulevards and in front of homes, and close to replacement pole locations. The poles are not being dropped on private property.

Teams of contractors or crews are now dropping the poles, and another team of contractors or crews will be replacing the poles.

Because of the number of poles associated with this project, there is no set schedule as to when poles will be replaced. We would like to thank—in advance—the public for their patience during this replacement project.

If you have any concerns, please contact BC Hydro Customer Services at 604-224-9376.

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FOR GENERATIONS

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GEORGE MCLEAN PARK

On May 18 and November 30, 2010 Burnaby Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services heard what the community had to say about its preferences for recreation activities and the layout of amenities at George McLean Park.

You're now invited to drop by for a third open house to view a masterplan for the park based on what the community said. Come join us for coffee and tell us what you think of the park design.



Public Open House 3
Tuesday, May 10, 2011
6:00-8:30pm
Inman Elementary School
3963 Brandon Street, Burnaby

Tell us if this is the kind of park you'd like to see in your neighbourhood - we need your input!

burnaby.ca/active



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The Burnaby NOW and New Westminster Record will be running a special section for Grads of all ages and we'd like to include as many graduates as we possibly can. Send us the name of the graduate, their school graduating photo and include a brief message of congratulations and who it's from.

This section will run Friday, June 3
Deadline is Monday, May 30

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