FACT VS. FICTION:  
Camarillo Springs Redevelopment Plans

Dear Neighbor:

For over 2 years, the Camarillo Springs Golf Course Redevelopment Communication and Advisory Committee has volunteered our time to provide an effective channel of communication and planning between the Residents, Developers, and the City. We have paid particular attention to providing factual and timely information and to making sure every side and all voices of our residents are heard and represented. In doing so, we have held over 50 community meetings, attended by over 900 residents from all 6 HOAs. The latest was a presentation of the proposed redevelopment attended by over 250 people. We have also sent out 9 newsletters and numerous emails. All of this is being done to keep our residents informed of the facts, and to give them the opportunity to review, comment and critique plans during the process. Where we did not have the needed expertise, we insisted that professionals be brought in to study and offer suggestions on situations such as golf course design and operations, irrigation, and flooding/drainage.

We have repeatedly asked the OPPOSE group to join with us in presenting one unified voice for Camarillo Springs residents to bring forth concerns, preferences, and issues. They have chosen not to join us, and we respect that decision, and welcome their voice.  But, their stated objective of just preventing the approval of the proposed redevelopment plan and hoping that the owner will then rebuild the 18-hole golf course is not a plan. It is not based on the realities of the market, golf industry or finance.

Put simply – we believe our community deserves better than someone just opposing without any positive suggestions or plans based on the facts of the issues. And we need to assure that there are no conflicts of interest or hidden agendas involved in the process. The Advisory Committee has always respected those with differences of opinion. However, misinformation and fear-based tactics must end. In order to understand the potential benefit of the proposed development and reconstruction of our golf course, we urge you to study the facts, ask questions, and get involved.

Our Advisory Committee has put together this “fact or fiction” sheet that lays out what we know about the plans after over 2 ½ years of extensive work.  Work done with known experts in the fields of engineering, hydrology, golf course architecture and operations. The facts are not ours, but those of experienced professionals who are real industry leaders in their respective fields. We hope that it corrects some of the misinformation that has been put forward

The truth is that our golf course is certain to close at some point due to its failing 50-year-old infrastructure. It cannot sustain itself. The cost of buying the course and refurbishing it is not financially feasible unless there are millions of dollars of subsidy from a home developer, the City, or our Camarillo Springs residents.

We are confident that the current development proposal is in fact a “win-win” compromise that will assure a brand new 12-hole regulation course, new clubhouse, new restaurant/bar, parks, and open space as well as protecting over 150 CCV homeowners that are currently subjected to flooding with an entirely new flood protection / drainage system.

And the new golf course will be protected from further development by a perpetual deed restriction.

Now, not all the facts are available yet. Many of our concerns will be addressed and presented in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR or CEQA) currently being analyzed and prepared by a City-contracted specialist. But, isn’t it prudent to reserve final judgement until all the facts are available, discussed and then can be openly considered?

We invite you to study the attached brief highlights on multiple subjects / questions that have been raised. Over the next several weeks and months we will provide you with more detailed information on each topic.

As always, we openly welcome your comments, questions and feedback. Please contact us at [csgccomcom@gmail.com](mailto:csgccomcom@gmail.com) or call Ron Kester at 805-458-9095, or John Gardner at 818-292-7156.

Sincerely,

The Camarillo Springs Advisory & Communications Committee

**FICTION: FACT:**

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| The golf course makes money and can survive “as is”. | Not true! Truth is, years of deferred maintenance and neglect has taken its toll. It is open today only because it is being subsidized monthly by NUWI (the developer). If that subsidy stops, the course will close. The golf course is but one major breakdown from closing…permanently. This statement has been verified by local and national consulting agronomists in recent reports. To merely survive, the course will require an estimated 8-12 million dollars in upgrades (not  counting the cost to buy the land). If golf is to remain at Camarillo Springs, doing nothing, and hoping for someone to buy it and redo it, is simply not an option. The only answer is for a redesign/rebuild and a small development to subsidize the costs. |
| The proposed plans make flooding worse and homeowners will pay for any upgrades. | The plans significantly reduce flooding risks for over 150 existing residents – all at no cost to current homeowners. The developer will pay for all flood improvements, estimated to be in excess of $3 million. The flooding plans were developed by a professional engineering firm with 40+ years of experience serving as an expert on flood control for Ventura County. Homeowners that currently pay flood insurance will no longer have to do so. The flood plans must be approved by three governmental agencies – FEMA, Ventura County and The City of Camarillo. |
| FEMA will not approve the flood plans until the land is graded. | This is false. FEMA will issue an approval of the plans once they have satisfied the exhaustive health and safety requirements. FEMA approval must occur prior to any construction occurring. Final approval and remapping of the flood plain will then follow. It has already been reviewed by Ventura County Flood Control. |
| Construction in the golf course will disturb former farmland that contains chemicals. | The City is requiring the developer to fully study and test the soils. The development cannot proceed without following extensive precautions in moving dirt required by local, state and federal agencies, until any contaminated soils are properly removed or remediated in accordance with state, local and federal laws. |
| The proposal will result in huge increases in traffic in our area. | Doubtful. The City is studying every car trip that will be generated by the proposed project. Because the homes are for seniors, the project generates far less traffic than a normal development. The developer will be required to build and fund improvements to our roads if traffic exceeds City standards. |
| The ultimate plan by the developer is to build homes on the entire golf course. | False. The Advisory Committee has asked the City to require the developer to place a binding deed restriction on the property; expressly prohibiting any future development on the golf course. Any future building on the golf course will be illegal. |
| The proposed 12-hole golf course is not economically viable, and nobody will play on a 12-hole course. | This is not true. History has proven that people will, in fact, play golf courses of less than 18 holes. Locally, Saticoy Regional (of just 9 holes) is very successful. In many places across the country, 9-hole courses do very well.  Truth is, there is much support for the 12-hole concept (in some instances) by some the world’s leading golf architects including Jack Nicklaus, Greg Norman, Hale Irwin, Tom Fazio and, Damian Pascuzzo. The 12-hole concept also addresses why the two largest golf market segments (millennials and retirees) aren’t playing golf more often…”it takes too long and it costs too much”.  The proposed 12-hole course at Camarillo Springs was designed by a member of the American Society of Golf Course Architects with input from a group of experienced professionals well versed in golf operations ONLY after significant due diligence on the local, regional and, national levels.  Again, especially in this location, and knowing the quality of the proposed design and operation, we are very confident people will, in fact not only play this course, they will enjoy it! |
| The proposed golf plan really results in a 9-hole course. | Again, not true. The proposed golf plan calls for 12 regulation length holes: 3 par 3’s, 3 par 5’s and 6 par 4’s. All good golf holes of varying lengths and playing direction. The course can be handicapped (by the USGA) allowing for club tournaments and events. This will be a fun and challenging test of golf skills, maintained to high quality standards. |
| The golf industry is doing well – 1 in 9 Americans play golf. | According to the National Golf Foundation, in 2018, 198 golf courses closed and only 12 new ones opened. Further, more courses are closing every year. Anybody that denies traditional golf courses are closing at a rapid rate is ignoring facts and reality. |
| The project will have a negative impact on wildlife. | Doubtful. The development has been designed specifically to accommodate wildlife movement through the area. The City has hired a biologist to do a complete survey of the area and those findings will be included in the environmental impact report. |
| The project proposes to build condos on the golf course. | False. All proposed homes are single-family, detached homes for seniors aged 55+. No condos will be built. While the City Council authorized the developer to study up to 300 units, the plans show 248 senior homes. |
| The project destroys existing views and open space. | Over 80% of the property is preserved for golf and open space. All new homes are at least 250 feet away from any existing houses and are placed only along Ridge View Street. That is nearly a football field in between new and existing homes. Preserving views and protecting viewshed is a primary goal of the development design; and the developer is positioning the new homes such that views are minimally impacted. |
| The project results in a decline in our quality of life and serenity. | The City has hired experts to evaluate all environmental impacts of the project. Living next to an abandoned former golf course will have significant negative impacts on our whole community – especially on property values. Development of senior homes on a small area of the golf course alongside a new course, major flood improvements, restaurant and park space is a sensible compromise. |
| The Advisory Committee and Golf sub-committee is being paid by New Urban West or the property owner. | This is completely False. Nobody volunteering on any of the committees has received one cent of compensation from New Urban West or the property owner. Only professional consultants (i.e. Hydrology Engineers, Golf Course Architects, Financial/Market Analysts) are being paid, and their work products are subject to review and acceptance by City/County/Federal agencies. The developer also pays the complete cost of the Environmental Impact Report (CEQA), even though the contractors that perform the studies are chosen, contracted and managed by the City of Camarillo. |
| Much of the golf course will be under water during the rainy season. | Let’s be clear. The golf course IS physically in a flood plain, always has been. That said, this new course has been designed with specific storm water trends and tendencies in mind. The analysis, modeling and design was done by PACE Engineering, who is the hydrological engineering firm also used by Ventura County Flood Control. As a result, there WILL be times, during major storm events, water will encroach onto some of the fairways, primarily on the south basin. The tees and greens, throughout, are at an elevation to remain out of any storm water encroachment. Every knowledgeable golf course operator understands this and plans and budgets for such events. The key is not that the course will flood, it is how fast the water will recede. The golf course is designed to handle flood waters to protect homes. The big difference with this new golf design, is that over 150 homeowners will no longer fear having their homes flooded or destroyed. |
| The largest cost to operate a golf course is water and Camarillo Springs gets that for free. | False. The single largest cost to operate a golf course is labor. And nothing is ‘free’. The existing wells that supply water to the course need to be deepened and refurbished; as well as supplemented by other water sources, which are being researched at this time. And, expanding the existing water wells and securing supplemental water for irrigation WILL come at a cost. However, the good news is that a 12-hole course will require less water and labor than the current 18-hole configuration. |
| New Urban West (NUWI) was picked by the property owner and they work together. | False. When the Advisory Committee learned about the sale and possible closure of the golf course, we did extensive research on reputable developers. New Urban West came highly recommended as having a 60+ year track record of good faith efforts to listen to the community. The Advisory Committee asked New Urban West if they would be interested in the project. They do not currently own the land or work for the property owner; and effectively insulate us from the owner.  NUWI has ‘worked’ with the property owner once before, at Escondido Country Club. However, they were brought in at the request of the City of Escondido not the property owner; after the owner was prevented by the City from any future dealings. We vetted that project closely and used it as a learning situation on what to do and what not to do. The homeowner’s group, ECCHO, who had opposed development, ended saying “NUWI is the best choice we could have as a developer”. |

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| Preserving Camarillo Springs Golf is very important to us, so we have involved experienced golf professionals in the analysis, design and operations planning for the future Camarillo Springs Golf Course:  **Golf Expertise/Credentials** | |
| **Camarillo Springs Golf Design Team** | **Opposition** |
| Richard Wagner   * + Golf superintendent and Director of Agronomy for 6 golf courses   + Managed construction and successful grow-in of Sterling Hills Golf Couse and Sherwood Country Club   + Named the Jack Nicklaus Superintendent of the Year for work on Sherwood Country Club   + Lives in Camarillo Springs   + **50+ years in golf business** | **0** |
| Gary Lewis   * + Developed numerous golf courses around the country   + Involved in the operation of over 150 golf and country clubs across the nation   + Originally managed Camarillo Springs Golf Course   + Lives in Camarillo   + **45+ years in golf business** | **0** |
| Damian Pascuzzo   * + Golf course architect   + Studied under famed designer Robert Muir Graves   + Designed courses all over the world, including Monarch Dunes in Nipomo, Sterling Hills in Camarillo and renovation at La Costa Resort in Carlsbad   + President of American Society of Golf Course Architects   + **40+ years in golf business** | **0** |
| Steve Pate   * + Veteran of the PGA and Champions tour   + 6 PGA Tour wins and on 2 Ryder Cup teams   + Designing golf courses for over 13 years   + **30+ years in the golf business** | **0** |
| Gene Krekorian   * + Partner at Pro Forma Advisors LLC, a commercial recreation economic consulting firm which specializes in golf course market and economic analysis   + Handled economic planning and development of dozens of courses all over North America, including Pinehurst and Ventana Canyon among many others   + Authored 2017 Report for City of Ventura evaluating its Municipal Golf Course System   + B.A. in mathematics-economics from Pomona College, M.S. in Business Economics from UCLA   + General Commercial Appraiser certified by the State of California.   + **40+ years in golf business** | **0** |
| Terry Buchen, CGSC, MG   * + International 3rd Party Independent Consulting Agronomist for Golf Agronomy International, LLC   + 1 of only 80 Master Greenkeepers in the world   + The Technical Editor-at-Large for Golf Course Industry Magazine and published dozens of articles in numerous golf publications   + Superintendent and agronomist for golf courses all over the country   + Worked for USGA and PGA Tour   + **50+ years in golf business** | **0** |
| **255+ years of Golf Experience/Expertise** | **0 years of Golf**  **Experience/Expertise** |