

## Monthly Representative Meeting December 13, 2005 Minutes

7:00pm - The meeting was called to order by Errol Rowland-Chair, Burgundy. Introductions were made:

| <b>Affiliation</b>                          | <b>Name</b>            | <b>Affiliation</b>  | <b>Name</b>       |
|---|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| City Council                                | Molly Markert          | Fairway 16          | Paul Manoogian    |
| City Council                                | Sue Sandstrom          | Fairway 16          | Ed Oswald         |
| Burgundy                                    | Lee Eldredge, CPA      | Fairway 16          | Barry Wallace     |
| Burgundy                                    | Richard Witting        | Fairway 16          | Sue Smith         |
| Burgundy                                    | Errol Rowland          | Fairway 16          | Ben Barnes        |
| Chimney Hill                                | Cathryn (Cathy) Thrash | Heather Ridge South | Ed Kay            |
| Cobblestone                                 | Mary Lou Braun         | Heather Ridge South | Van Lewis         |
| Cobblestone Crossing                        | Libby Toomalatai       | Sausalito           | Vinny Roith       |
| Cobblestone Crossing                        | Alan West              | Strawberry          | Jan Butsch        |
| Double Tree                                 | Sharon Gunderson       | Strawberry          | Ken Foley         |
| Double Tree                                 | Pete Traynor           | Damn East           | Ms Shane Wienberg |
| Fairway 16                                  | Dean Glorso            |                     |                   |
| <b>23 UAHR Meeting Attendees 12/13/2005</b> |                        |                     |                   |

23 people attended and all of the communities around the Heather Ridge Golf Course were represented, with the exception of Country Club Ridge and Brookshire Downs. The agenda was accepted. A vote of mission "**UAHR mission is to preserve the Heather Ridge 18-hole golf course in its current form at a golf course market price**", was unanimously re-affirmed.

The minutes of the November 8, 2005 monthly representative meeting are posted on the website. A motion to approve those minutes was made and seconded and all approved.

The treasurer, Cathy Thrash, Chimney Hill, presented the treasurers report and indicated that the budget was in its preliminary workable stage. UAHR has had \$9,655 in Contributions and the check book balance is \$9,266.23. (The check book and the contribution list are attached to these minutes.) Cathy also acknowledged the people and organizations volunteering their time, products and resources to help us accomplish our mission. Those making contributions may be viewed on this web page:

<http://uah.org/UAHR%20Thank%20You%20to%20Contributors.htm>

The treasurer report was approved.

Cathy said that we are receiving outside contributions and greatly appreciate all contributions to our cause. Anyone wishing to make a contribution may do so to: UAHR.org; 2497-D South Victor St; Aurora, CO 80014 - (303) 745-3905

**GMOR** (Group Maintenance & Organizing Residents): Sharon Gunderson, Doubletree, reported that she is working on communication with the surrounding neighborhoods. She is asking them to write letters to the Mayor, the Council and letters to the editor. She needs more volunteers and asked for every community to contribute. Designated and concentrated periods of time will be assigned. Suggestions were entertained and encouraged. 54 home-owners assoc. are contacted every time a change occurs. We need to see agreement to preserve the golf course from all the surrounding areas. We were described as "bothersome" and it was indicated that we would "wear down" and "become complacent". We need to write original letters not copy letters. The question was raised regarding letters signed by multiple people. It was suggested that we write fresh, new letters and keep with it. Each person needs to write from their experience and commitment to the golf course. We must personalize our letters, "briefly tell your story" and keep them going to the City Council Members and the news media. The

neighborhood interest and website activity greatly increases when there are articles published. We residents need to keep writing and get them published.

Arapahoe County Commissioner Chair, Lynn Myers, joined other elected officials Aurora City Council members, Molly Markert, Bob FitzGerald, Renie Peterson, Deborah Wallace and Steve Hogan in supporting the UAHR.org efforts to preserve the 18-hole Heather Ridge golf course and the formation of the Special District. The UAHR.org appreciates the support of these elected officials. Molly Markert has been invaluable from day one, offering guidance with our organization.

**GCAAG** (Golf Course Acquisition Action Group): Ed Oswald, Fairway 16, spoke regarding a Referendum vs. Initiative action suggested at the November 8 meeting by Dick Bennett, Fairway 16. He stated that he and Lee Eldredge, Burgundy, spoke with the City Clerk - Deb Johnson. Ms. Johnson said the instrument appropriate for our cause would be an Initiative rather than a Referendum. The Initiative is given to her and then the city writes it in "legal lingo".

The Initiative we would present would be a statement such as:

"The citizens of Aurora want to maintain the 18-hole Heather Ridge Golf Course in its present form as a perpetual golf course."

It then goes to the City Council and if they vote to approve it, it is done. If they do not vote it in, then we must get 6,500 signatures to get the Initiative on the ballot. What happens if the Aurora City Council decides to keep it open and someone else wants to reverse the decision? Then, they must go through the same process to reverse the decision. Registered voters can sign the petition and then we can get it on the ballot. We do not want to "piggy-back" with the special election in May as it is to raise taxes for mental health issues. We will talk about fund raising next meeting as the speaker had family commitments.

Vinnie Roith – Vice Chair, Sausalito, spoke regarding the continuing formation of our SD (Special District). We had a meeting with our SD attorney Gary White which ended late this afternoon. It is not easy to determine a budget for forming the SD because of the difficulty in negotiating an acquisition amount. We asked the attorney his advice on how to proceed in the meeting this afternoon. Together we decided to proceed with the following activities & budget:

- First, Gary White has offered his attorney fees pro-bono (free to UAHR.org). This will save the single most significant expenditure in the formation of the SD. Hard, out of pocket, expense costs however will be incurred.
- The first step in formation of the SD is to determine the boundaries, then provide the city of Aurora a SERVICE PLAN by Jan.6th. This will require non-refundable filing fee of \$3,500.00.
- Because of the continuing threat of development, Gary suggested we approach a respected LAND USE attorney to obtain a re-zoning opinion. David Clinger, original planning consultant to EDI (the 1970s Developer of Heather Gardens & the Heather Ridge community -- see minutes of October 11) also advised the UAHR.org to do the same. We are unsure of this cost. We are budgeting \$5,000- for this opinion.
- Until we are able to negotiate the golf course acquisition amount, this is the extent of the moneys we will commit. We anticipate this will cover us through the mid March time frame.

Once an acquisition amount is agreed upon, other costs will be incurred to bring the SD to an election. Gary White, who has formed and administered over 100 SD in Colorado, suggests the out of pocket expenses should be budgeted from \$15 to \$20 dollars per voter (including the \$3,500 SERVICE PLAN filing (included above)). The cost for this whole thing will be about \$55 – \$60,000. One thing the attorney said we could do is make the filing and if we are not ready for the May election, we could withdraw the offer and hold it for a later date. We do not

have to re-file SERVICE PLAN and the \$3,500 fee would not have to be duplicated. We can do the election in November instead of May. We have to encourage the community to help find ways to come up with expense money. Although the financial commitment is not urgent until the March time frame we are seeking creative support from our community and any money available in grants etc. We are exploring that possibility. Any donations will be accepted. There are also possibilities that someone will want to buy the golf course and maintain it as a golf course. If someone buys it and wants to build, is that a re-zoning issue? It is and once again it was mentioned that the PUD papers are missing and not findable. The City Attorney stated this in a previous meeting.

In answer to a question regarding alternative funding asked by Libby Toomalatai, Cobblestone Crossing, Errol responded that resident Lynn Dolan, Cobblestone Crossing, had spent a great deal of time researching and making contacts with prospective alternative funding sources including: The City of Aurora Parks and Rec. Dept., GOCO - Colorado Lottery, Ducks Unlimited, Public Land Trust and other sources. Because of a change in her personal schedule this fall, Lynn was unable to continue to work on this project. The UAHR.org is seeking a volunteer to pass the baton from Lynn to continue lead the efforts in this area.

The golf course value can be looked at as:

- 90 acres of land that can be developed or
- 90 acres of golf course land.

Here lies the divergence of agreement in the acquisition amount for the UAHR.org. There is a wide discrepancy between these valuations. Mira Vista, the old Lowry Golf course that is 5 miles closer to downtown Denver, recently closed for \$2 million. [See Denver Business Journal Oct 14-20-2005 Page A10](#). That is less than \$6,000 per acre. One developer offered to buy the golf course and sell it back to the UAHR.org for \$8 million. That amount is around \$88,000 per acre which is unrealistic as golf course land.

**IDAG** (Influencing Development Action Group): Vinny Roith continued. At the moment we know of no offers for the golf course.

Again at the advice of David Clinger and Gary White, we need to meet with a well known and respected LAND USE attorney to find out whether this land can be developed. We need an answer and can then go to the owner regarding the opinion of an expert and then can negotiate a deal with the present owner. We are asking David and Gary for their guidance in selecting this LAND USE attorney.

Recent meetings with developers have taken the approach that the UAHR.org, in forming the Special District, would support working with a developer who would build a multi-story – multi-services structure on the ground the clubhouse now resides. The UAHR.org is open to any option that is consistent with the mission: to preserve the 18-hole Heather Ridge golf course in its present form.

In a discussion about the environmental concerns, it was determined that the environmental issues should be tabled for now. A meeting last week with a pro-bono environmental engineering firm, Jack Eggleston, Fairway 16 & principal of ERO Resources Corp.; Andy Cole, environmental engineer; Nathan Mease, pro-bono attorney; and Errol Rowland, Burgundy, suggested the environmental argument is not applicable at this time. When we asked about the water area at hole-15, we were told that only active nests (those currently physically occupied) can prevent development. Nathan Mease has agreed to continue to help us as a pro-bono attorney. New areas to be looked at include the Aurora Parks & Recreation Master Plan (parks and green space required per person) and Aurora 's City Comprehensive Plan (population growth, infrastructure requirements and how the Parks & Rec. plan is included). We need volunteers to go to City Hall to find these documents and plans.

Old business - Dave Pearly - a member of the golf course is interested in seeing the golf course preserved. We need push, enthusiasm, and not to wear down. History states that "people get tired of the fight". Check the Web site please!!!

Comments by Sue Sandstrom, Aurora Council Ward V: "This group is just terrific. I am just so impressed with what a bunch of neighbors have done here...keeping the pressure on..... every time the current owner gets an offer that falls through; he has to be thinking that there is something wrong with it or the price is too high. Eventually he will come to the realization the price is too high for what he is offering right here. If it could just be developed, it would have been sold by now. They know they have a fight on their hands with the people of the area and the city to re-zone and develop it and it is not worth the fight. Don't let down, keep it up even if these offers keep falling through. Go ahead with the Special District. That is a huge weapon. That will be there. .... Right now there have been no applications for zoning changes and I am not aware of a current offer... This is really an impressive group....."

If it were not for our efforts since June 1st. the golf course would be in the process of development. We homeowners need to continue to draw together as a community and step up to the plate to keep current on the offers and all aspects of our mission. Rumors are abundant about closure of the golf course. We must stay on target with the Special District.

In conclusion:

1. The UAHR will proceed with the first step in formation of the SD by providing the city of Aurora a SERVICE PLAN.
2. We need to establish and agree upon the boundaries of the SD to be formed.
3. The UAHR will approach a respected LAND USE attorney to attain a re-zoning opinion.
4. We are seeking a volunteer(s) to assist Nathan Mease in researching the Aurora Parks & Recreation Master Plan (parks and green space required per person) and Aurora 's City Comprehensive Plan (population growth, infrastructure requirements and how the Parks & Rec. plan is included). Those wishing to volunteer should notify Sharon Gunderson 303-755-1600.
5. We will encourage developers to develop the clubhouse while working with us to form the Special District to preserve the 18-hole Heather Ridge golf course in its current form.
6. We will continue to work with the community voicing our mission, through personal stories to the media and to the city council.
7. We will seek a volunteer leader within our community to seek alternate funding.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm and we will meet again on January 10, 2006.

**Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!!!**

By Jane Klein - Secretary for UAHR, Inc.