Written by Don Mann
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What was the Wellington Hills Golf and Country Club for 79 years will become Wellington Hills County Park. File photo. Snohomish County Parks and Recreation recently revised its concept design plan for the regional sports complex to be built where Wellington Hills Golf and Country Club sat for 79 years.

The revised plan calls for seven soccer fields — four synthetic turf, lighted fields and three grass fields — a 50,000-square-foot community activity center, a 60,000 square foot indoor mountain bike facility, a mountain bike course, a maintenance facility and two dog parks — one for large dogs and one for shy dogs.

It also includes a playground, three picnic shelters, two comfort stations and — perhaps most galling to its detractors — over 700 parking spaces spread across two large asphalt parking lots, one north of 240th St. SE which bisects the property east to west, and one south of it.

It will be called Wellington Hills County Park, a super-sized soccer facility seeking to host regional and national “pay-to-play” tournaments.Snohomish County purchased the 100-acre property from the University of Washington earlier this year for $9.7 million using Brightwater mitigation funds negotiated in a 2005 agreement. The UW purchased the land in 1991 as a possible site for its Bothell campus, which was relocated elsewhere.

The massive sewage plant sits about a mile north of the property.

According to Snohomish County Parks and Recreation Director Tom Tiegen, following purchase the county embarked on an extensive public outreach process to develop a master plan. The process included 13 Ad Hoc committee meetings (consisting of neighbors, stakeholders, community organizations and Northshore School District and City of Woodinville representatives), four public community meetings, and six neighborhood meetings.

From those meetings, Tiegen said, a plan was devised to reflect at least five community concerns: maintain appropriate site buffers between the park and neighbors; preserve view corridors and significant fairway trees; improve water quality by addressing run-off, daylighting Vintage Creek and enhancing wetlands; improve road infrastructure, address traffic issues, employ traffic calming and provide pedestrian access.

Tiegen said the county will complete a State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) checklist prior to County Council adoption of the Wellington Hills County Park Master Plan.

But not all residents living near the old golf course are thrilled with the project. Neighbors to Save Wellington Park (NSWP), on its website, said the mind-boggling scheme defies logic and will cause havoc on both sides of the King County/ Snohomish County line.

“Their proposed ‘park’ will create a regional headache and a terrible traffic mess on Hwy. 9 from Woodinville to Costco and from 240th St., along 156th St. to the Woodinville-Duvall Road and beyond.”

NSWP has also voiced concerns about nighttime noise and lighting, environmental and sanitary issues, as well as increased crime.

According to Tiegen, the revised plan will be presented to the Snohomish County Park Advisory Board for review on Tuesday, Nov.. 13, 2:30 p.m., at the Willis Tucker Community Park, 6705 Puget Park Drive in Snohomish.

The public is encouraged to attend.