

Larchmont GOLF COURSE

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November 15, 2021

Board of County Commissioners
199 West Pine Street
Missoula MT 59802

RE: WGM Group proposal

The Larchmont Advisory Board of Directors discussed in length the pros and cons with the proposal set forth from the WGM Group.

Listed below are a few of the highlights from our discussion.

- The Board recognizes the need in Missoula for affordable housing however we feel that Larchmont Golf Course is not the best site to meet this housing need.
- Larchmont has been in the same location for 40 years.
- Larchmont is more accessible at its current location.
- Golf courses lower the median temperatures in their surrounding vicinity.
- A change in location would have a negative effect on the income and number of rounds played.
- Larchmont is a piece of larger recreational complex that has taken years to develop.
- The central location of Larchmont makes it easily accessible to a large portion of the Missoula County.
- Visually, the Larchmont Golf Course provides a pleasant and scenic view off the Reserve Street corridor. The view would severely change with a new development.
- The community reaction to development of this area would be large and loud. The ramifications of this can only be imagined, but would be severe.
- If the proposed development would occur it would only add to the already busy nature of Reserve Street.
- Larchmont stands as a pleasant and peaceful viewing from Community Hospital complex and Village Retirement Center. The development would take that away.
- If Larchmont is moved to the proposed site and doesn't make money or isn't self-sustaining, than what does the County end up with...a piece of property they can't do anything with or unload because it is in a floodplain.
- Larchmont has 40 years of mature trees, the proposed site has none. Trees reduce noise and air pollution and the proposed site is right by a busy highway which is very busy, noisy, and there will be emissions from the traffic.
- Larchmont has become a haven for a large flock of geese. Some even winter at the course. Housing development would probably destroy this habitat.
- A residential housing project would eventually lead to a static and potentially stagnant population. Currently, Larchmont provides an outdoor exercise opportunity for thousands of people. These participants are numerous and diverse.

- Larchmont has golfers from all over the United States. Golfers from outside the area also bring in revenue for lodging and restaurants.
- Larchmont provides a rich variety of opportunities who are numerous, diversified, and evolving.
- Larchmont is too big of an asset to Missoula to risk losing it by starting over in a floodplain across the river.
- Missoula needs housing but also needs green space: Larchmont Golf Course, Fort Missoula Regional Park, fairgrounds, and River Front just to name a few. This is what makes Missoula the 'Garden City'.
- With some of the worse intersections in the State of Montana on Reserve Street in Missoula, why would we want to add more traffic and congestion to Reserve Street with a housing development?
- Last year during the height of the pandemic, golf was one of the few things people could get out and do because golf is an outdoor sport. Larchmont was an integral part of providing some welcome relief (both physical and mental) from being home quarantined for people in the Missoula valley.
- Golf is a sport where people can socialize without having to wear a mask due to the fact that it is outdoors and the majority of golfers are more than 6' apart.
- WGM Group proposed have raised greens and tee boxes to keep those areas out of the floodplain. That doesn't address the fairways and rest of the course because of the ground water. Ground water on the course, even if you can't see standing water, would make the course unplayable.
- Saturated turf with non-visible water would cause damage to the turf, carts, and maintenance machinery (mowers, sweepers, utility vehicles).
- Missoula Country Club's #17 hole floods from ground water every year. This hole looks to be higher than the proposed site for the golf course.
- Our men's and women's golf leagues start in April and end in July with golfers paying for carts, greens fees, and purchasing food and beverages. With high water usually starting around the middle of May and could last until June, the possibility of the proposed site being unplayable for a month or more would make having league virtually impossible. A major revenue loss.

The Larchmont Advisory Board of Directors have voted unanimously to reject the proposal from WGM Group and leave Larchmont Golf Course at its current location. Commissioner Juanita Vero has abstained from all discussion and voting in this matter.

We strongly feel that leaving Larchmont Golf Course at its current location is the best way to meet Missoula County's vision and mission to protect and enhance the well-being of the people, communities and environment of Missoula County.

Thank you for your time and we strongly hope that the Board of County Commissioners reject WGM Group's proposal to relocate Larchmont Golf Course.

Sincerely,

Larchmont Advisory Board of Directors

Brent Harshbarger, Chair

Dan Adcock

Dave Miller

Carol Weekin

Janet Dean, Vice Chair

Max Good

Stacie Stensrud

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