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City Park Board of Commissioners approves plan to redevelop golf complex

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The City Park Board of Commissioners on Tuesday voted unanimously to add to its master plan a controversial multi-million dollar redevelopment of the park's golf complex.



Michael DeMocker/The Times-Picayune City Park's North Course will remain open during Phase I of the newly adopted golf plan.

The 36-member board of commissioners, which convened for its monthly meeting at the Botanical Gardens-Pavilion of Two Sisters on Tuesday afternoon, decided to go along with Phase I of the project despite objections from local preservationists.

Phase I would cost approximately \$24.5 million and include the construction of an 18-hole championship course designed by Rees Jones, a clubhouse and parking, driving range, range clubhouse and maintenance facility. It will be built between Interstate 610 and Filmore Avenue.

• [Map: View Phase I and Phase II locations, as well as details about each phase.](#)

When the first phase is completed, the board will reconvene to decide if it wants to move forward on Phase II, which would cost \$21.5 million and consist of a second 18-hole course, a nine-hole par-3 course and a First Tee teaching facility.

In deciding to move forward, the board of commissioners adopted the plan sponsored by the non-profit Bayou District Foundation, which submitted the \$46 million overhaul proposal of the park's golf and recreational facilities to the City Park board, headed by Bob Becker.

The plan had been a hot topic of discussion since March 10 when several hundred people gathered at the pavilion to voice their opinions. Several suggested the event was little "more than a dog and pony show" and that the project had already been "rubber stamped," a charge that several board members vehemently denied.

The North Course, which reopened in September 2008, would remain open during construction of Phase 1.

Becker said the park still needs to raise approximately \$9 million to finance the first phase. Although Bayou District Foundation is prepared to offer a proposal to finance the remaining balance, Becker said the commission is open to anyone making a "cooperative endeavor agreement," which in essence is a partnership with City Park.

Becker said that could take two to three months, followed by the park taking bids for the course design and construction. The earliest a course would open would be fall 2011 but Becker said a more reasonable date would be 2012.