

There is a piece of empty land just outside our community that can insure or destroy a bright future for all of us. All that is needed to help it flourish is a little bit of care and recognition. We need to realize the possibility of enriching our economy and environment through a golf course on this land. Of the many options presented to develop this land into, a golf course is the only one that brings in a large sum of money and still helps our natural ecosystem. We need this course. We need to accept the idea that no matter what, our lives will forever be changed. Will we accept this growth, preserve our ecosystem, and purify our watershed, or will we pollute our environment and lose money?

Most importantly, a golf course would boom our tourism industry and thus our economy. Just last year in South Carolina, golf courses directly brought in \$2.716 billion. That does not include the 4872 million in other industries associated with tourism that sprung up around the golf course. Golf courses are unique in the fact that they start up industries and businesses that otherwise would be non-existent such as hotels, restaurants, stores and tourist attractions. These businesses only add to the 35000 jobs golf courses provide in South Carolina. (Jackson). The facts are undeniably economically in favor of this solution for our lonely plot of land. On the other hand, building a golf course on our property preserves our natural ecosystem as opposed to every other proposed development. The shape of any specific golf course can be altered to fit around an important clump of trees or large pond. This preserves nearly 70% of natural vegetation in the area. (USGA). Consequently, the original environment is only just affected by the transition. Golf courses not only protect plants, but they *need* vegetation for aesthetic and difficulty purposes. For this reason, soil erosion is minimal and the soil becomes a safe place for burrowing decomposers such as worms. (Green Section.) Finally, a golf course would improve our local air and water quality. In the air, golf course turf transforms more than five tons of

carbon dioxide into breathable oxygen per acre every year. That is enough oxygen for over 4000 people a year! Truthfully, grass lawns produce more oxygen than trees. Grass also removes heat from the air through evaporation transpiration, preserving the natural temperature for local animals that is raised by sunlight reflecting off of asphalt and concrete. On the water side, thick grass roots hold and purify dirty runoff, reducing the chance of flooding and poisoned water. They also hold in loose soil so that the dirt does not reach our tributaries and therefore, our water supply. Very few plants can claim to be able to do all of this, so it is obvious that plentiful grass is the answer to cleaning our environment. If we in fact want to conserve and improve our environment, a golf course is the solution. (Novak and Addink)

Of course, every great thing must have a few downturns, and golf courses are no exception. To be able to upkeep beauty and durability, a golf course needs dangerous chemicals such as fertilizers, pesticides, and dyes. If properly and scarcely used, these chemicals pose no threat to the environment. The problem is that it is nearly impossible to use them perfectly. On the same idea, during the hot, dry, summer months, golf courses absorb gallons and gallons of irrigation water every day. Much of the water evaporates into the sky, leaving the ground thirsty for more water. This wastes what could be necessary water to keep up the ability to use water for everyday activities. Luckily, there are innumerable strategies for preventing water waste. There may be a few downsides to maintaining a golf course in our community, but when one turns and looks at the big picture, it is obvious that the economic and environmental positives greatly outweigh the few and easily correctable setbacks. (Geography Fieldwork).

Some may be asking, "Why should we care about the ecosystem? Why do we not just accept the proposal with the highest payroll?" Well, if we build just anything upon this land, our local groundwater and surface water will be poisoned until there is no clean water left in the area.

If we are left paying enormous prices for treated and bottled water, the rich development will barely be able to pay for itself on the local level. Yes, a golf course may bring some pollution into our community, but nothing in the extremity that our community's water treatment center cannot filter. Sometimes, even, the golf course plants will filter themselves by absorbing the dirty runoff. We need to keep our water cheap, clean and safe for us and those after us by constructing a golf course on our open land.

In conclusion, I would like to say that our chance at a bright and prosperous future in this community lies in the land we have been entrusted. We must not let it go to waste and lose our chance at billions of dollars, but we also cannot allow the environment around our community to be poisoned by pollution and waste. Our hope is in this much needed golf course to brighten our home for this generation and the generations to come. Thank you.

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