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**TAXPAYERS WOULD PAY \$500,000 TO PAVE 10<sup>TH</sup> FAIRWAY AT EVANSTON'S CANAL SHORES GOLF COURSE SO CULLERTON-CONNECTED DEVELOPER COULD BUILD \$1M+ HOMES**

***Metropolitan Water Reclamation District Set to Vote Thursday, November 1***

Evanston, Ill. (Oct. 30, 2018) – Cook County taxpayers would be on the hook for an estimated \$500,000 if the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) approves a request by a politically-connected developer to pave over the 10<sup>th</sup> fairway of 100-year-old Canal Shores Golf Course in north suburban Evanston.

The MWRD board is scheduled to vote on the matter at a 10:30 a.m. meeting Thursday, Nov. 1 at 100 E. Erie St., Chicago.

The proposed 60-by-300-foot road would effectively obliterate the 10<sup>th</sup> hole of the public, not-for-profit golf course, rendering it useless and making Canal Shores a 17-hole course. The fairway is 80 feet wide.

The sole purpose of the road would be so that Dick Keefe Development Corporation could build four \$1 million-plus homes on property it owns adjacent to the golf course, which never has been accessible from nearby streets.

Illinois Senate President John Cullerton (D-Chicago), lawyer for Keefe, has an ownership interest in the Dick Keefe Development Corporation, according to Cullerton's 2018 [Statement of Economic Interest](#).

The property is located in the district of Cook County Commissioner Larry Suffredin.

“Keefe has known for many years that his property was effectively landlocked,” said Canal Shores board member Karl Leinberger. “Why should Cook County taxpayers pay for a road that solely benefits the developer’s family trust and is strongly opposed by the local community?”

The municipalities of Evanston and Wilmette, which have operated the course for decades under a lease agreement with the MWRD, oppose the road, as do local residents and golfers.

The \$500,000 cost estimate comes from the engineering department of the Village of Wilmette. The road, just north of the border of Evanston in Wilmette, would be as long as a football field.

In addition to building the road, the Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways also would incur the cost of maintaining it.

The area to be paved contains environmentally sensitive wetlands as well as 100-year-old trees.

Canal Shores Golf Course hosts more than 12,000 golf rounds per year. Its junior golf program attracts 500 youngsters annually who learn how to play golf as well as the etiquette of the game. Local golf teams – including Evanston Township H.S., Niles West H.S., Loyola University, Northwestern University, and others – use the course for practice.

The course hosts several charity golf events each year, including Joel Murray’s 120-player outing that raises money for first responders. This year, Canal Shores hosted two concerts organized by SPACE Evanston that featured Mavis Staples and the Indigo Girls, attracting over 2,500 people per event.

Environmentalists, birdwatchers, dog walkers, cross country skiers and joggers are among those who utilize the course as a “community green” reminiscent of St. Andrews in Scotland, the home of golf.

The MWRD has jurisdiction over the property because the North Shore Channel of the Sanitary and Ship Canal winds through the golf course. The canal was built in the early 1900s as part of the engineering miracle that reversed the flow of the Chicago River in order to keep Lake Michigan clean enough for Chicago residents to drink.

## **ABOUT CANAL SHORES GOLF COURSE**

Established in 1919, Canal Shores Golf Course is an 18-hole, par 60 public golf course that winds through Evanston and Wilmette along the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District canal from Green Bay Road on the south to the Baha’i Temple on the north. Canal Shores is managed by the Evanston Wilmette Golf Course Association, a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization that promotes the combined use of the land for the community. For more information, visit [www.canalshores.org/dontapave10](http://www.canalshores.org/dontapave10) and [www.canalshores.org](http://www.canalshores.org).

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