Legislation Text

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Authorizing the Parks and Recreation Commissioner, on behalf of the City of Philadelphia, to enter into an agreement for the use of Cobbs Creek Golf Club, Karakung Golf Club, and the City Line Sports Center, under which the operator will restore, maintain and operate those facilities as a single, first-class public golf course, under certain terms and conditions.

BACKGROUND

1. Cobbs Creek Golf Course is famous in United States' golf history. It was designed in 1912 by Hugh Wilson, the noted golf course architect who also designed Merion Golf Club, which hosted the U.S. Open in 1971, 1981, and again in 2013.

2. Since its initial development, Cobbs Creek Golf Course has been reconfigured and changed significantly. In addition, Cobbs Creek periodically floods portions of Cobbs Creek Golf Club and Karakung Golf Club, which interrupts play for extended periods and requires repeated repairs. The golf courses are also subject to vandalism, including from unauthorized persons driving all-terrain vehicles, motorbikes, and other vehicles over them. The City Line Sports Center is in deteriorated condition.

3. The City wants restoration of Cobbs Creek Golf Club to include important environmental and recreational improvements that will benefit nearby neighborhoods and all Philadelphia's citizens, including the following:

A. Conversion of approximately 160,000 square feet of impervious paved surface into landscaped recreation space, which will create a net addition of approximately four acres of new landscaped recreation space.

B. Extensive improvements to Cobbs Creek to greatly reduce the frequency and severity of the creek flooding.

C. Creation of not less than 40 acres of new wetlands, which will help protect Cobbs Creek and help support plant and animal species that thrive in wetlands.

D. An economic opportunity program that emphasizes hiring employees from the local community.

E. Reduced fees for Philadelphia residents and subsidized golf and education programs for Philadelphia youths.

F. A restaurant open to members of the public.

G. Support for public high school golf programs and a high school golf team.

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

SECTION 1. The Parks and Recreation Commissioner, on behalf of the City of Philadelphia, is authorized by this Ordinance to enter into an agreement for the use of Cobbs Creek Golf Club, Karakung Golf Club, and the City Line Sports Center, under which the operator will restore, maintain, and operate those facilities as a single, first-class public golf course.

SECTION 2. The agreement authorized by this Ordinance must comply substantially with the term sheet attached to this Ordinance as Exhibit A.

SECTION 3. The City Solicitor is authorized by this Ordinance to review and to approve the lease and all instruments and documents necessary to effectuate this Ordinance, and to make changes to those documents as the City Solicitor deems necessary or appropriate to protect the interests of the City, as are consistent with the attached lease, and to carry out the purposes of this Ordinance.

Exhibit A

Agreement For Use Of
Cobbs Creek Golf Club, Karakung Golf Club, and the City Line Sport Center

1. Term: Up to 70 years.

   Initial Term: 30 years.
   Renewal Terms: 15 years, 15 years, and 10 years.

2. Location: Along Cobbs Creek Parkway and Lansdowne Drive.

3. Operator's obligations:

   A. $20 million capital investment for improvements, including

      (1) flood control improvements to Cobbs Creek;
      (2) creation of not less than 40 acres of new wetlands;
      (3) remove acres of impervious surfaces (paved golf cart paths).

   B. Restore Cobbs Creek Golf Club, Karakung Golf Club, and the City Line Sports Center into a single, first-class public golf course on the level of the very best public golf courses in the country.

   C. Construct a new clubhouse building with modern facilities and a restaurant open to the public.

   D. Manage and operate the Premises as a public golf course.

   E. All maintenance and repairs.

F. Create and maintain a Capital Reserve Account to help fund future capital repairs and replacements to the Premises.

4. Special programs and offerings:

A. A “Community Engagement and Access Plan” for community support for the restoration, programming at the Premises, and access to employment opportunities at the Premises.

B. Course availability for Philadelphia residents at rates below regular fees during set times of day, set days of the week, and set weeks or months of the year.

C. Free or subsidized introductory golf instruction, sportsmanship, and other educational programs for Philadelphia youths and adults.

D. Caddy scholarship program for Philadelphia youths to help pay higher education costs.

E. Permit the First Tee of Greater Philadelphia, Inc. to operate youth golf instruction programs.

F. Support for high school golf programs and a high school golf team.

5. Permitted Uses:

A. Public golf course.

B. Clubhouse:

(1) food and beverage sales (including alcoholic beverages);
(2) rest rooms and locker rooms;
(3) offices;
(4) learning space for the golf and educational programs;
(5) fundraising events;
(6) equipment and supplies storage;
(7) a pro shop;
(8) souvenir and merchandise sales.

C. Host professional and amateur golf tournaments.

D. Rentals for public and private events.

6. City’s financial obligations: None.