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Park Hill Golf Club land sells to Denver-based developer for \$24 million

The impending sale sparked outcry from locals who want the area to remain a golf course.



The Denver skyline stands tall behind the Park Hill Golf Club. (Kevin J. Beaty/Denverite)

[Estepan L. Hernandez](#)
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The George W. Clayton Trust has closed a deal to sell the Park Hill Golf Club land to Denver-based developer Westside Investment Partners for \$24 million, the two parties said in a release on Thursday.

Its impending sale and potential redevelopment had become another flashpoint over change in the city, pitting folks wanting to see the area remain a golf course space against those hoping to see some housing development. Clayton leased the 155 acres to the golf club.

The release said Westside acknowledges “this property presents a unique opportunity to create a positive transformation” in the area. They plan on launching a community listening tour.

The release did not specify future plans for the site, though it mentioned a comprehensive survey involving 750 people from the area. The survey showed 87 percent of respondents wanted a use other than golf for some or all of the property. Alternative options suggested by respondents included providing open space, affordable housing, neighborhood services and retail.

“We are looking forward to engage in specific, thoughtful conversations with the community to hear their opinions about the need for open space and recreation, affordable and diverse housing options for existing and new residents, and neighborhood services to enhance the existing community,” Andrew R. Klein, principal of Westside Investment Partners, said in the release.

Both parties announced last month (<https://denverite.com/2019/06/19/the-park-hill-golf-club-land-may-be-developed-after-all/>) they were discussing the golf course. Clayton notified the city in a June 10 letter that they would terminate the agency agreement for the property’s title. Clayton said in the same letter they intended to close the sale of the golf course on July 11. Clayton was interested in selling the site to raise money for the Clayton Early Learning Center.

Charlotte Brantley of Clayton Early Learning said in the release said they’ve always been clear about using the property to help “the long-term financial sustainability” of programs for children.

“Toward that end, we spent nearly two years in an active and thorough community visioning process,” Brantley said in the release. “The team at Westside has fully acknowledged our process and is committed to thoughtfully considering the potential of the property with the very best interests of the community and the future of Denver at heart.”

Among those opposed to the sale were former Mayor Wellington Webb, who last month urged residents who didn’t support the sale to speak up and call on their elected officials to speak up as well. During his administration in the 1990s, the city paid Clayton \$2 million to restrict development on the course.

“Let’s preserve this open space for future generations and not see another concrete edifice change the landscape,” Webb said last month. “Form your own groups to save our last large tract of open space. We are Denver, and there is nothing we can’t do when we put our minds to it.”

Save Open Space Denver is one group who mobilized in opposition of the sale. The group circulated an online petition, receiving more than 2,200 signatures (https://www.change.org/p/denver-city-council-members-preserve-and-uphold-the-park-hill-golf-course-conservation-easement?recruiter=982191582&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink&recruited_by_id=9289a760-a1b8-11e9-a1f2-571c62a0d2f4) as of Thursday afternoon.

Group member and former Denver City Council candidate Blair Taylor said Thursday the group wants more information about the deal struck between the Clayton and Westside. She called the entire situation “suspect.”

“They’re not going to buy it to keep a park,” Taylor said.

Mayor Michael Hancock’s administration unsuccessfully tried buying the land in 2017, offering \$20.5 million (<https://denverite.com/2018/06/27/park-hill-golf-club-extends-its-lease-for-five-years-disrupting-plan-to-develop-land/>).



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