

## Residents weigh in

Robert La Belle of Downing-Frye Realty, who lives in the community, also handles many listings there. He confirmed that members were almost unanimous in their support of Garrett's plans.

"All country clubs are a little bit in trouble because of the membership," he said. "Golf courses are less and less. We had different offers of \$4.5 million to \$8 million for the club and golf course. Everything he wants to do makes a lot of sense to attract the younger people. We're very happy about it."

The United States built golf courses at a rate of 400 a year during the 1980s and 1990s, but it has since declined from a peak of 16,000 courses. The nation has lost 800 courses in the past decade, according to the National Golf Foundation, which says the number of U.S. players dropped from an all-time high of 30 million in 2005 to 24.1 million in 2015.

La Belle thinks it's smart to focus on amenities beyond golf, and believes the upgrades will be a hit.

"When this is all complete, the one big difference is it's going to increase the value of the properties in Gateway," he said. "It's going to be very spectacular. This is a good thing for the new buyer and present members here ... it'll be so much more than just golf."

Terry Dwyer lives across the street from the club, in Hampton Greens.

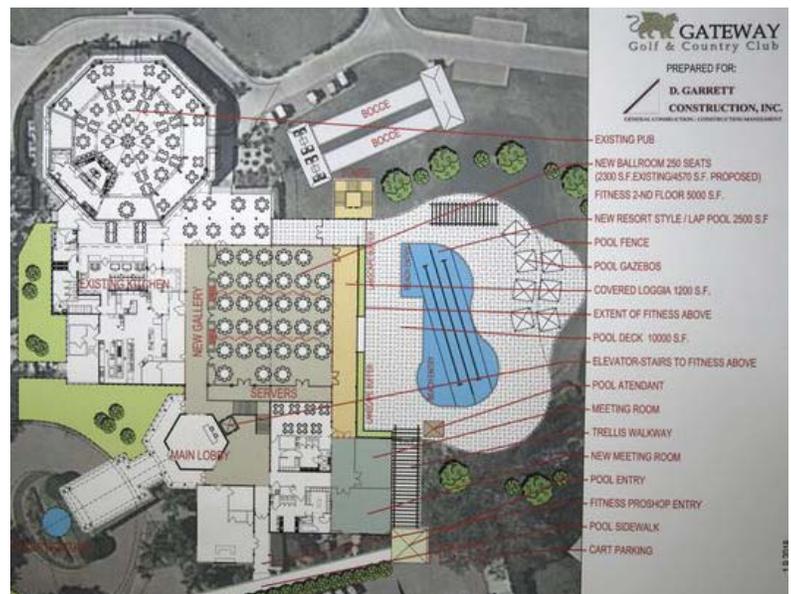
"I'm thinking good things," said Dwyer, who had just finished a round of golf Thursday. "It's going to be good for people who live here and for people who use the golf course. It makes sense to me."

Jim Jasenak lives in Gateway's nearby Waterford Village.

"I think the plans are good," said Jasenak, who also had just finished playing golf. "You've got to bring it into the 21st century. It's exciting. I think the upgrades to the clubhouse are the most important. You have to be more things to more people these days."

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email [clogan@news-press.com](mailto:clogan@news-press.com) and follow on Twitter @caseylo



*Plans for expansion of The Club at Gateway.*

(Photo: Special to The News-Press)

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### About The Club at Gateway:

Conveniently located near the airport, shopping, beaches and entertainment, The Club at Gateway is a private, yet casual country club, known as having the friendliest members. The Tom Fazio Signature course features six sets of tees, playing over 7,000 yards with a par of 72. Meticulously maintained and included in Golf Digest's list of "Top 100 Private Courses," Tom Fazio rates the 10th hole as one of the top four greatest golf holes he has ever designed. With a 20-acre trend-setting "Golf Improvement Center," it's also the home of the Golf Channel Academy and testing facility for Wilson. Created by course architect Ron Garl, this first-class facility features a double-sided range, four short-game areas, fantastic putting green, and two practice holes, a par 3 and par 4. Club amenities include The Griffin Grille & Pub offering panoramic views of the course is just steps from the tee box. The Tennis Center is home to 6 lit Har-Tru clay courts and offers comprehensive programs for players of all ages and abilities. Members have access to the Fitness Center, Pool and can participate in array of clubs, classes, games and social events. Under new ownership, with the Club renovations and additional amenities, Members will not be required to pay any future assessments.

For a tour or information on Membership Opportunities at The Club at Gateway, please contact M.J. Chappy at (239) 561-1012, email [Membership@GatewayGCC.com](mailto:Membership@GatewayGCC.com) or visit [www.GatewayGolf.com](http://www.GatewayGolf.com).