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New Mono golf course gets the nod

By DAN PELTON Staff Reporter

In 2007, Khwaja Ajib approached Mono council with plans to construct a 4,000- yard, 18-hole golf course on the site of his Dufferin Glen Golf Academy and Practice Facility on the Second Line EHS.

Little did he know, at the time, that he was about to embark on a bureaucratic odyssey of Homeric proportions.

At its meeting Tuesday night, Mono council was finally able to give its stamp of approval to the project, nearly two years after agreeing to it in principle.

Council was told that the project has met all the conditions set forth by a number of provincial ministries that had sent their final reports to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, which sent its report to the Town of Mono, the official "final approving authority," which has been waiting to give its final approval for two years.

"It has been a long and frustrating process," Mr. Ajib told council. "There have been so many reports, consultants and sub-consultants. We've spent a lot of money and it's been a long haul."

One of those consultants, Bob Long, said much of the eventual success of the project was due to the patience and civility exhibited by Mr. Ajib throughout the ordeal. It was approved "due to Mr. Ajib's candour and integrity dealing with the neighbours and agencies," he said in an e-mail release.

"He fostered the co-operation of the County, Credit Valley Conservation and the Ministry of Natural Resources."

Dufferin Glen had addressed the concerns of property owners adjacent to the course site in April, 2007. A number of those neighbours showed up Tuesday night to lend their support to Mr. Ajib.

"I have no problem (with the project)," said Brian Baker, who owns land to the south. "I support it completely."

The project fell under the scrutiny of the provincial ministries of the Environment and Transportation, as well as Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) and Natural

Resources. All of which were to address their concerns to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs which would, in turn, pass them on to the Town of Mono who would pass them on to Mr. Ajib.

Approval of the golf course also involved a relatively complex interpretation of the Greenbelt Plan, 2005.

The site features a mature woodlot and two small but provincially significant wetland areas. The Hand barn, west of the 2nd Line introduced agricultural separation issues.

Mr. Ajib is hoping for construction to commence in late June or early July and be completed in a year at an estimated cost of between \$2.5 million and \$3 million. He is planning for a clubhouse to be built by 2011.