

Historic Mesa golf course razed for homes

By Parker Leavitt

For more than five decades, the Dreamland Villa Golf Course provided nine holes of wide-open, grassy paradise amid the sprawling retirement communities of east Mesa.

The historic executive course with its ponds, forgiving fairways and pitched-roof clubhouse is gone now, with the 30-acre site slated for a redevelopment project that will build more than 200 new homes.

Homebuilding company William Lyon Homes plans to have the first models open for its Albany Village community, at 56th Street and University Drive, by early 2016, and the first residents could move in later that year.

Unlike the sea of retirement housing that surrounds it, Albany Village is expected to attract younger homeowners, including professionals and families. The neighborhood will offer quick access to the U.S. 60 employment corridor to the south in an area where there aren't many opportunities for new development, said Troy Wahlberg, land acquisition manager for William Lyon Homes.

The homebuilder paid about \$4.3 million for the land late last summer and already has zoning in place for the homes, Wahlberg said. The company has submitted an application for Design Review Board approval, which could come this summer.

Development plans show a relatively dense collection of single-family homes, with six houses facing a shared courtyard. In the center of the neighborhood is a community pool, playground and grassy areas.

Seven home plans range from 1,165 square feet to more than 2,500 square feet, and include one- and two-story houses. The number of bedrooms ranges from two to five.

While home construction is likely several months away, the golf course has already been demolished and William Lyon Homes has begun some grading work.

The site's history as a golf course made the preliminary work more expensive and complicated, as the company had to fill in ponds and tear out bermuda grass that can be a resilient foe. Excavation work also turned up old, abandoned piping from the course, likely some of the original lines buried in the 1950s, Wahlberg said.

Pricing for the new homes has not yet been set, he said.

The Farnsworth family in Mesa started construction on Dreamland Villa in 1958, with the first home sold to Eugene Hatch in January 1959, according to the Dreamland Villa Community Club's website.

(Site plan on next page.)



A site plan shows the proposed layout of the Albany Village neighborhood in Mesa, which is replacing the former Dreamland Village Golf Course