



# Deerfield Forum

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## LATE CATCH



**THE SUN ALSO SETS** A couple of boys fish along the canal at Villages of Hillsboro Park in Deerfield Beach. SUN SENTINEL/ROLANDO OTERO

## Water district to answer questions regarding canal

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Wondering which exact trees are slated for razing when the South Florida Water Management District's canal project gets underway?

District 4 Commissioner Bill Ganz has invited residents and the

merely curious to a water district meeting on Thursday. SFWMD staff will be on hand to answer questions about a project designed to rectify 50 years of encroachment by foliage and property owners — removing brush, trees, some docks, and grading the canal bank and dredging the waterway.

For canals from Military Trail to the Florida Turnpike, district officials have set aside \$20 million to ensure they serve their purpose: flood control.

As Rod A. Braun, director of the Office of Intergovernmental Programs, explained, flood protection for the surrounding area depends on making sure the canal

can move water the way it was designed to do for another 50 years.

Randy Smith, district spokesman, has said the district's 2,000 miles of canals are on a maintenance schedule, with those in the worst shape scheduled for work first.

On Thursday, staff will be on hand to provide updates and answer questions with aerial maps and displays.

The South Florida Water Management District's meeting with residents will be from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Thursday, at Broward Sheriff's Office substation at the water tower, 580 S. Powerline Road.

For information, call 954-480-4417.

## Company proposes business park on golf course land

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A myriad of Broward County golf courses are going to seed. As of two years ago, 10 had closed, crushed by escalating maintenance costs and dwindling memberships.

The latest to take a mulligan is Deerfield Country Club.

Representing developer Butters Construction and Development in Coconut Creek, attorney Dennis Mele painted a picture last week of a 75-acre green space converted to what he described as a world-class business park. Offering light industrial and office space, it would be similar to Lyons Technology Park in Coconut Creek, he said, where Butters Construction lists its address.

But first, it would require changing the land-use plan from commercial recreation to a new category: employment center. City Attorney Andrew Maurodis said failure to get the new category will

derail Butters' plans.

Mele said that in exchange for the new designation, Butters would dedicate 27.7 acres and a 7-acre lake — 34.7 acres of the 74.4-acre plot — to a park that it will "maintain in perpetuity."

Over the years, developers have contemplated various forms of life support for dying golf courses in Deerfield Beach.

The owners of Crystal Lake and Tam O'Shanter golf courses wanted to build 500 multifamily units on 20 acres and offered the city the remaining 77 acres for a park in exchange.

Residents objected.

The next proposal was to build a water theme park for boaters.

Residents didn't like that, either.

In October 2011, the city commission agreed to a plan that traded some of the land to the city for recreational space in ex-

change for permission to turn the rest into a cemetery

The only green space envisioned in the Deerfield Country Club plan is the portion developers have pledged to set aside for a park.

As for the rest, Mele described buildings a maximum of 40 feet in height, buttressed by \$2 million in roadway improvements, in a project that would net the city \$1,349,632 the first year in permit and other fees and \$908,152 to the city annually thereafter.

"This proposal has no more ability to provide jobs than any other zoning category," District 4 Commissioner Bill Ganz said.

With the exception of Ganz, the city commission seemed to support the project.

The city commission will vote after a second and final hearing on June 18.

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