

Member Update on the Golf Course Master Plan

1) When was the previous Master Plan initiated? When did the new Master Plan process start? What is the vision for the new Master Plan?

The original Master Plan was initiated in 2005. FCC has chipped away at pieces of it over the past 20 years building new greens, adding bunkers, doing major tree work, adding cart paths, etc.

The new Master Plan Committee was formed in 2023 with the goals of:

- Making playability enhancements for all levels and swing speeds. This will include improving fairway landing areas, green drainage, tee boxes (e.g., forward tees), sight lines, cart path routing, turf health/durability and bunker improvements.
- Returning some elements of the course to original designs such as fairway widths, tree lines, and bunkering.
- Embracing the natural topography, elevations, and sight lines of FCC and ensuring the design remains a timeless treasure.

2) How is the Master Plan Committee structured? Who is on the committee? Is it in synch with the Greens Committee?

The Master Plan Committee is a sub-committee of the Greens Committee ensuring that all the work done and investments made are consistent. The Master Plan Committee is a long-term group that will remain together throughout the multi-year Master Plan process. Its members include:

Mike Silva – Chair, Master Planning Committee

Tony Costa – FCC Greens Chairman

Keith Smith – FCC Board Member, Greens Committee Member, FCC Club Champion

Nelson Glassman – 2005 Master Plan Chair

Bill Roache – Former FCC President, USGA Course Rating volunteer

Jill Priselac – Women’s Club Champion

Brian Higgins – FCC Club Champion, 14x USGA tournament participant

Jeff Kinney – FCC Member, works for USGA

Mike Luccini – Greens Superintendent

Anthony Maki – Head Professional

Steve Brennan – FCC General Manager

3) How was the selection of a golf course architect managed?

The Master Plan Committee invited the USGA to FCC to conduct a detailed assessment and review of our course. Their team included experts in golf course design and maintenance, as well as experts in agronomy and arborists who reviewed all aspects of FCC including turf quality, tree coverage, drainage, playability, and routing.

Concurrent with the USGA visit, four widely renowned golf course architects were invited to review FCC and to bid on our master planning project. Over an 18-month process, the Master Plan Committee met with, interviewed, and hosted site visits for each firm. The Master Plan Committee compared the recommendations of each architect to the assessments provided by the USGA. The Committee closely examined the qualifications of each architect and reviewed their portfolios. Each committee member devoted more than a hundred hours to this process.

4) What feedback did we get from the USGA and competing architects?

There were several themes that were consistent across the USGA and each of the architects. Among the consistencies were:

- 1) The need for improved playability across all swing speeds. This means tee boxes designed, built and maintained for all levels of golfers. It means landing areas need to be more receptive from whichever tee box is selected. It means greens that have better drainage and growth. It means better sight lines to landing areas and greens. It means the proper level of risk and reward for shot selection.
- 2) The USGA and the architects all strongly communicated that our tree lines need to be managed. There are three goals here:
 - a) Agronomics (Turf health) - Tree management is needed to ensure turf growth is full and healthy at the periphery of our course, near tee boxes and adjacent to bunkers.
 - b) Playability – Tree management to open up access, sightlines to fairways and greens, and improve playability on the course for all swing speeds.
 - c) Aesthetics – Tree management to expose the unique topographic and design characteristics of FCC. This includes exposing sight lines, vistas, rolling terrain, stone walls and elevations.

The goal is not to make the course inherently easier. FCC is a tree-line course and will remain that way, but the USGA and all of the architects recognized the elevation changes, topography and terrain as an incredible, but often hidden, asset that should be highlighted. Therefore, in addition to turf improvement and playability, aesthetics are part of the consideration for tree work. Our intent is not to change the nature/spirit of FCC nor to transform it into something it's not (e.g., a links-style course).

Each of the architects recommended, based on examining existing trees and reviewing satellite imagery of FCC from the 1960s and 1980s, that restoring FCC to original designs would require some significant tree management. White Pines were a particular area of focus because they have damaging (shallow) root structures that rob surrounding soil of moisture and nutrients and their needles acidify the soil further deterring turf growth. They were also consistent in identifying trees that encroach and shadow tee boxes, critical areas of rough, and bunkers. These are key priorities.

5) What firm was selected for the FCC Master Plan and why?

The Master Plan Committee unanimously selected Jim Nagle Design (website: [Nagle Design Works](#)). There is a fantastic Golf Channel interview of Jim regarding his restoration of Lancaster CC, site of the 2024 Ladies US Open ([SL-LCC | Golf Channel - Nagle Clip DND-HD 1080p on Vimeo](#)). Further information on Nagle Design is on the FCC member website under the golf tab.

Jim demonstrated a true understanding of FCC and its members, had a clear and compelling vision for how to best leverage FCC's unique terrain, elevations and design, and was incredibly proactive and hands-on regarding site visits. He provided incredibly valuable guidance on how we can get started now and is willing to spend time with FCC membership to ensure everyone understands how we can execute on the plan.

6) What are the next steps with the architect and when might the real work begin?

Jim has already walked the course several times with the Master Plan Committee and Mike Luccini. Over the next few months, he will return to FCC to conduct detailed site reviews and to begin his architectural drawings. The final architectural plan will be submitted for approval in the August/September 2025 timeframe. Once the design is submitted, reviewed and approved by the Master Plan Committee, membership will vote. If approved, the committee, with Jim, will interview construction firms. This will be a multi-year process and the entire effort (alternatives, timing, costs, and impact to members) will be transparent to the membership. The Master Plan Committee will communicate frequently to FCC members via the member website, email, member meetings and videos.

7) What is happening on the golf course now? Is the work currently underway on the course in synch with what the architect recommends?

As announced at the October annual meeting, FCC's board has increased the annual funding for tree work, bunkers, and cart paths. Jim Nagle spent two days at FCC earlier this month (December) where he identified the best areas to allocate those funds. Tree work is in process now and is totally in synch with the priorities set by the Committee and Jim. Mike Luccini's crew is handling as much of this in-house as possible, but contractors will be used as needed. The areas targeted for this winter are largely weather dependent. If we get a solid freeze, equipment can be moved to sensitive areas more easily and with less damage. Currently, the crews are focused areas that can be reached via roadways and cart paths. Bunker rehabilitation and cart path work will also take place as needed this winter.

Jim is working with the Master Plan Committee, greens committee, and greens superintendent to ensure that any investments we make now are consistent with the final master plan and that any work we do now will not have to be revisited later. All the work that is happening on the course now was prioritized by Jim.

Specific tree work undertaken so far focused on turf health and ongoing damage to cart paths, and

protecting greens and bunkers from roots. As noted earlier, there are three reasons for tree management: Turf health, playability, and aesthetics. Our priority is turf and playability, but when we have equipment in an area, we will address all three items for efficiency.

Look for future communications from the Greens and Master Plan Committee with progress reports.