



Construction of new PGA Tour headquarters to commence summer 2018

By Samantha Logue
April 19, 2018

Construction on the new global home of the PGA Tour is scheduled to begin this summer, according to officials in the company. The 187,000 square-foot building will be located off of Palm Valley Road and is projected to be completed by late 2020.

"Our sitework is anticipated to begin in June or July, and that will include mobilization, clearing, grading, utilities, digging of the lakes," said Kirsten Sabia, vice president of integrated communications for the PGA Tour. "The building construction is anticipated to start sometime in the late fall, when they actually start to lay the foundation itself."

Ponte Vedra Beach has been home to the PGA Tour since the late 1970s, but according to Sabia, as the organization has expanded, it has become increasingly challenging for the Tour to maintain a well-organized operational structure.

"We've grown into a global tour," she said. "We have employees not only here on the First Coast, but also in our tournament offices around the country. We have 16 different buildings here in Ponte Vedra where our employees are spread out, and it's not very efficient. For us to be in one building, it will make us not only more efficient, but more effective, more cohesive and integrated as a global organization."

Designed by Foster + Partners, a London-based architectural firm, the office building will be set 880 feet back from the main road, according to a recommendation for approval St. Johns County submitted to the Ponte Vedra Architectural Review Committee (PVARC). It will be mostly obscured from view by landscaping and will be surrounded by a large pond. Designed in a sleek, modern style, the three-story building will be made of steel, concrete, metal panel and glass, and will feature columns, a flat roof and outdoor decks and balconies made of wood.

"What we really liked about Foster + Partners was the way that they took the environment here – of Ponte Vedra, of TPC Sawgrass, of our sport – and how they brought that into their design of the building," Sabia said. "There's water, there's light, there's external walking paths. We are a

sport that is played outdoors, somewhat rain-or-shine, and we feel like they really grasped that part of the nature of our sport in our future building.”

According to the county’s report, the environment was an inspiration not only for the building’s aesthetic design, but also its functionality. The design is proposed to be certified LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold, a rating given by the United States Green Building Council to buildings that achieve the second-highest level of sustainability and energy efficiency possible (the highest rating being Platinum).

“We’re a sport where the environment is important to what it is and to our athletes and where they participate, so having our building be one that takes the environment into consideration is extremely important to us,” Sabia explained.

Even so, for those in the community who have outspokenly opposed the new building’s construction, the main point of contention has been a possible increase in traffic through Ponte Vedra Beach—an issue that has become increasingly vexing for many residents as St. Johns County’s population continues to grow. The PGA Tour, however, contends that its new headquarters will not adversely impact current traffic.

“We have a lot of employees who live here in Ponte Vedra Beach and the surrounding area,” Sabia said. “I drive on A1A everyday and have for 19 years, so I get it, but the future traffic generated by our headquarters is not expected to exceed the traffic volumes that currently exist. In fact, as we consolidate our employees into one building, many of our employees who are residents of Ponte Vedra Beach and travel on A1A for their normal work – especially for those coming from the west – they won’t even hit A1A. So, to a certain extent, we’re going to be taking traffic off of A1A, and we’re going to be taking traffic off of Solana to that one point of location.”

Sabia conceded, however, that traffic patterns may be affected this summer as construction begins on the building’s entry point, which will be located where the County Courthouse Annex building currently stands at 5430 Palm Valley Road.

“We are working to widen County Road 210 at that point of access, and that will be for probably about six weeks this summer when school is out to minimize the traffic impact,” Sabia said.

While the PGA Tour’s primary focus is on THE PLAYERS Championship next month, according to Sabia, moves to begin construction will follow shortly after.

“It’s going to be fantastic,” she said. “We’re in buildings that were built in 1980 and now it’s 2018, so the idea of having something new where we can all be together ... it’s just going to make us a more tight-knit unit than we already are, and I just think it’s going to be great to be able to see our colleagues on a more regular basis.”