

Plan calls for 6,000 new homes

Development to be built near airport

By Jack Snyder

OF THE SENTINEL STAFF

Two giant British firms are purchasing 6,750 acres in southeast Orange County for a massive resort/residential development that could take 30 or more years to complete.

Plans call for construction of 6,000 to 7,000 housing units — from condominiums to single-family homes — golf courses, commercial buildings and shopping centers on a sprawling tract on the southeast side of Orlando International Airport.

The first phase will include a 750-room hotel and conference center and the full range of types of residences, said Robert Hendry, of the law firm Hoffman, Hendry, Stoner, Sims & Sawicki, which is representing the developers locally.

Work on the 1,350-acre first phase could start in the first quarter of next year, Hendry said. The initial phase will take 12 to 15 years to complete, he added.

Steps to have the project reviewed by the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council as a development of regional impact are being taken this week, the attorney said.

The developers are two English-based groups with heavy development and construction experience worldwide.

The two are operating locally as Sunley-Crowngap Development Corp.

This company's major stockholder is Sunley Holdings Ltd., an English firm that has development and construction activity throughout the world. The holding company also is involved in a number of other businesses, including movie making, commodity trading, plant and equipment leasing, finance and investments.

Crowngap Ltd., also English based, has current construction projects under way in the United States, England, Spain and Nigeria. Crowngap's first Orlando area development was Windsor Pines, a residential community under construction in Osceola County.

For the time being, the southeast Orange County development is simply being called the Lake Nona Project after a lake on the property.

The huge tract, which Hendry said the developers have under contract, abuts State Road 15 about a mile south of the Bee Line Expressway. The land also abuts the airport at its southeastern boundaries.

Hendry said the developers are proceeding with planning on the assumption they will provide their own sewage treatment and water service. He said no dollar value could be placed on the completed development because of the extended build-out period.

The golf courses will be designed by Tom Fazio, widely known golf course architect whose work includes the three courses at PGA National in West Palm Beach.

Maury L. Carter, president of Maury L. Carter Associates, and Dr. Robert E. O'Brien, broker/salesman with the firm, represented the sellers of the property — a Massachusetts family with other investments in the area.

Hendry said the planning process on the development is still under way.

Among those involved in the planning are Edward D. Stone Jr. and Associates, a Fort Lauderdale planning firm; Miller and Miller, an Orlando engineering and environmental services company; Glattings, Sellen, Lopez and Anglin, a Winter Park planning firm; and Goodkin Research, a nationwide economic consultant firm.

