

Loss of 900 trees has some Newtown residents questioning PGA plans at Aronimink



A plan to remove a large number of trees on 10 acres at Arnonimink Golf Club in Newtown Square has some residents unhappy. (PETE BANNAN-DAILY TIMES)

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A plan to clear as many as 900 trees from 10 acres of woodland for a broadcast Center at [Aronimink Golf Club](#) for the [2026 PGA Championship](#) is facing pushback by some residents.

Officials said the green shows impacted area, white will be parking or a structure. St. David's Road is just out of view at the top and the club tennis and rack courts are to the left.

The week of May 10-16, 2026, the eyes of the golf world will be on the club [as it hosts one of the four major men's tournaments of the year](#), bringing hundreds of thousands of people to the town, but not everyone was happy at the cost.

A large group of residents and their supporters came to the Newtown Township supervisors meeting Monday night questioning the project and urging the township to follow procedures.

Chairman Leonard Atieri said the project, which has been addressed at other township boards, isn't scheduled to come before supervisors until January.

Atieri said though the application is labeled as a waiver, the township asked the golf club to go through the land development process, and the club will avail itself to the township professional staff, the arborist and engineer.

At the November Shade Tree Commission meeting, officials said the footprint for the proposed media center is pretty elaborate involving tractor-trailers and a large set up.

Shade Tree officials said a survey of the property showed a lot of trees that are dead, dying or diseased and estimated 90 trees per acre would be coming down with 836 trees that would be replaced.

Big plans underway

Officials said PennDOT has approved a temporary entrance off St. David's Road.

That road will consist of an extensive gravel base that will go straight back to the location of the broadcast center and parking. After the event is over, they will remove all that gravel.

Builders will create a flat area with parking and two stormwater retention basins, which will remain following the event.

Officials discussed with the club about putting the broadcast center in another location such as an existing parking lot or field however that was deemed not feasible.

Officials said the PGA event typically goes to a course that sits on 500 acres, whereas Aronimink is about 280 to 300 acres, which limits where they could position it.

For the [2018 BMW Championship](#) event, which was held at Aronimink, the media center was near Route 252 but that is not big enough for this event, they said.

The club is currently also building a pool and rear patio on the property, which passed township plans and got permits in 2023.

One official at the Shade Tree meeting said, "I don't want to be the community that says, we're not cooperating with the PGA. I think we're going to do this. I'm not sure exactly how."

The Shade Tree Commission approved the motion pending replacing the 836 trees and working with the arborist as well as supporting the township tree giveaway.

At Monday night's supervisors meeting, one 41-year resident said she has watched wildlife in her backyard, which backs up to the course for years and the 20 acres is one of the biggest in the area with old growth trees of 100 to 300 years old.

She did agree that many of the trees have suffered from the emerald ash borer, but said old trees that die have an important role to play in our environment.

"Removal of these trees on 10 acres for three days of a PGA Tournament just hurts my soul that these should come down. Can't we please find another location and save our old growth forest?" she asked. "My goal ... is to speak for the forest, to speak for the pollinators that live in the forest and the birds that need the pollinators to stay alive."

Resident Paul Seligson said Newtown has been recognized for the past 20 years as a Tree City-designated municipality.

“I just wonder if there could be a smaller footprint than 10 acres,” he asked.

He said he also shares the concern of felling so many trees.

Debbie Warden said bringing down the trees could impact stormwater runoff and future costs, including increased flow into Darby Creek.

One resident suggested enacting an amusement tax to tax tickets to the tournament, which could bring in funding.

‘Great stewards’

A number of members of Aronimink Golf Club turned out to support the organization.

Club President Bill Barry said the club is a member of the Township Green business coalition, a certified Audubon certified sanctuary and makes an ongoing investment into the tree population.

He said the broadcast compound will be needed because of the global event, which will be streaming to 180 counties and half a billion households.

“It’s truly a global event and it’s a big deal. We’ll have 200,000 people coming through Newtown Township that week,” he said.

He noted the club has been working for several years to get ready for the event. Over the past four years they have invested \$35 million and they have been going through the supervisors to do everything correctly.

“We are proud that we follow the same rules and regulations that everyone else in the township does,” Barry said.

Club member Bob Bowman said he did initially have a concern about stormwater runoff and replacement trees.

“I’ve been very attuned to what’s going on here because we are right across the street,” he said. “I feel very comfortable with what’s happening, from a personal standpoint, that the township and the engineers have taken care of it in the right way.”

He said there are a lot of dead trees back there and he is happy that after the event at least 1 acre will be completely reforested and a commitment to plant 800 trees, which is what the township asked for.

He also said the stormwater improvements will remain after the event is over.

“We’re great stewards to the area,” he said. “Once it’s done, I believe we will all be proud of what Aronimink will do to replace things and make things just as good if not better than they are today.”

A couple of residents asked that the club goes through the proper land development project.

One resident who lives downstream from the club expressed concerns about erosion from the club saying what the erosion is going to be when all of the trees are gone.

“Imagine what that’s going to look like when all the broadcast people are gone, when all the golfers are gone and it’s just us residents left,” said Alex Skucas. “We’re going to have to look at that.”