

SCOTTSDALE REPUBLIC

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Aren't we glad hockey team didn't end up in Scottsdale?

Capella resort hits right note this time

Many Scottsdale planning cases end with neighbors leaving the Kiva angry, sure they've been done in by backroom deals and pro-developer conspiracies.

That's what makes the 7-0 approval of the Capella resort prize-worthy. Everyone left the Kiva happy.

It didn't start out that way. The original plan for the luxury resort at the base of Pinnacle Peak raised hackles among the upscale neighbors. Some residents hired an attorney.

Then, developer John Wanninger listened. He sat down numerous times with the neighbors to hear their objections. He changed his plans. He strung parts of the project. He pledged to build more parking spots, not for the resort's guests but for hikers at Pinnacle Peak Park.

When the project went to the City Council this week, neighbors who had prepared torches and pitchforks instead gave a thumbs-up.

"It's refreshing to see a situation where you worked with neighbors and took their concerns to heart," Councilman Bob Littlefield told Wanninger. "I wish it could always happen like this."

Scottsdale lucks out with its SkySong

SkySong just seems looking better all the time.

Thankfully, the site at Scottsdale and McDowell roads is not a hockey arena.

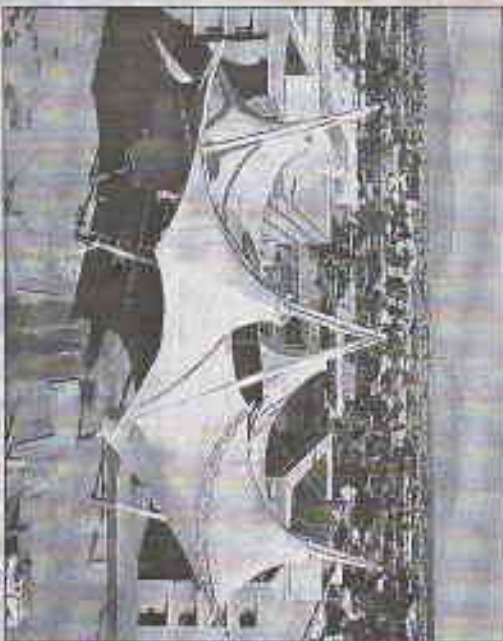
Voters twice approved one, only to have financial surprises change that plan. Developer Steve Fillman walked away, taking the arena to Glendale, which ever since crowed about how it beat Scottsdale.

The crowing has been subdued lately. The Phoenix Coyotes aren't much of an amenity.

The team is lousy, and the finances are worse. The team lost \$73 million over the past three fiscal years, court records reveal. Jobing.com Arena's

concerns lost an additional \$20.1 million. The team fell into arrears in making lease payments to Glendale.

And now team owner Jerry Moyes has decided \$300 million is his limit. He took the team to U.S. Bankruptcy Court to



SkySong's white sails rise 125 feet over south Scottsdale on the land first proposed as the site of a hockey arena.

arrange a sale and send the team back to Canada. The NHL is fighting this. Glendale, meanwhile, is

trying to persuade Chicago Bulls and White Sox owner Jerry Reinsdorf to take over the team. It seems safe to bet that negotiations will include additional investments of incentives from the city. Meanwhile, at Scottsdale and McDowell, SkySong houses companies developing new high-tech products.

It is employing people and paying its bills. SkySong is providing a solid anchor for whatever Motor Mile is becoming. Borning? Sure. Stabber? Absolutely. But let's not crow about it.

You've heard the old joke about going to a fight and a hockey game breaks out. It's funnier when the hockey is worth watching, the fights don't involve lawyers and we're not thanking our lucky stars this is all Glendale's problem, not Scottsdale's.

WEEK IN REVIEW

Give democracy a try, join board

We get the government we deserve. This is especially true of local government, which touches us more directly than any other level but also gives us more opportunities to touch back.

One of those opportunities is coming up. Scottsdale is soliciting applications for 13 city boards and commissions. They include high-profile ones such as Development Review, McDowell Sonoran Preserve, Parks and Recreation, and

Transportation, as well as ones that generate fewer headlines but are just as important. You can find a full list and an application form at the city's Web site, scottsdaleaz.gov, under "Mayor, Council and Government."

Some people have found time on city boards prepared them for service on the City Council. Others have been content to contribute their time and expertise to a board and then move on. Either way, they kept city government vibrant and in the hands of citizens. Applications are due by