

Two long-planned projects closing in on construction

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More than a decade after unveiling its plan, Crossroads Ventures has gained more supporters than foes for its planned Belleayre Resort at Catskill Park, and it appears the proposed five-star facility planned for adjacent to the state-owned Belleayre Mountain Ski Center in Shandaken finally is poised to get the green light for construction.

On the other side of the county, Hudson River Valley Resorts last month received the final land-use approval needed for the construction of a resort and residential community at Williams Lake in Rosendale.

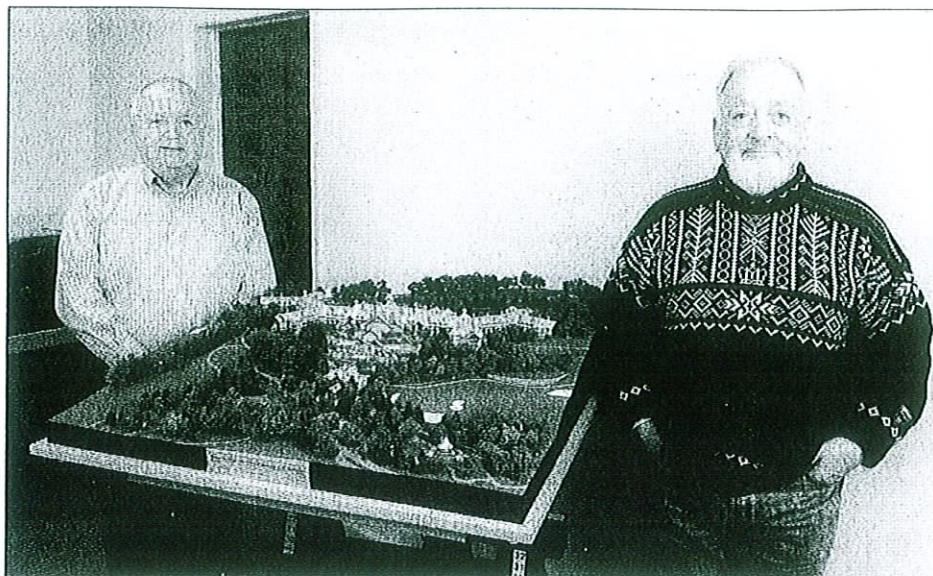
Like the Crossroads Ventures project, Hudson River Valley Resorts plan, unveiled in 2007, initially met with staunch opposition from people who felt it was too big for the site.

But the years, a changing economic environment and the willingness by the developers of both projects to alter their plans to address the concerns of the public have swayed the tide and to acceptance, if not enthusiastic support.

"It's been 13 long years of examining the project, having changes made to reflect the wants and desires of the state and regional and local municipalities," said Gary Giles, the project manager for the Belleayre Resort.

"The public attitude has changed," he said. "People want to see something happen."

At Belleayre, that something is the construction of



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Gary Gailes, left, project coordinator for the Belleayre Resort at Catskill Park, and Dean Gitter, president of developer Crossroads Ventures, stand with a model of part of the proposed resort complex.



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This landscape model shows where the Belleayre Resort will be in relation to the Belleayre Mountain Ski Center.

\$364 million resort on 739 acres (a far cry from the 2,000 acres called for in the first plan), although developers say only 218 acres will actually be developed. The resort will comprise two hotels. The Wildacres Resort will include an 18-hole championship golf course and the Wilderness Activity Center,

which will provide concierge service to guests, local residents and day trippers who want to get out and enjoy the plethora of recreational activities the resort will offer. The Highmount Spa Resort will offer a much more upscale spa experience, Giles said.

The project is waiting for

the state Department of Environmental Conservation to complete its environmental review, which Giles hopes will happen by spring, and it then will be up to the two local planning boards (the project straddles the border of Shandaken in Ulster County and Middletown in Delaware County) to issue the necessary special permits and site plan approvals.

Giles said that due to state regulations banning the developers from disturbing more than 5 acres at a time, full build-out of the project will take six to eight years.

The Williams Lake project is much further along in the approval process. The state has issued its final environmental report, and the Rosendale Town Board recently approved the site's master plan.

Under recently adopted

zoning regulations, each phase of the \$200 million project still undergo town Planning Board review, but the number of residential and lodging units has been approved as part of the master plan.

Plans call for the construction of 59 detached single-family residences, 83 attached residences, 12 units of duplex workforce housing and a 130-unit resort at the

site of the former Williams Lake Hotel.

The 70-acre resort will include a 500-seat conference center, two restaurants, a spa, fitness center, pizza cafe, recreation center and historic interpretive center for a trail network that will give the public access through the property.

Developers hope to break ground on the project this year.