The Detroit News

Resorts hope slump is over

Artist's Rendering of the LochenHeath Clubhouse

■ **Northern owners count on real estate market rebound.**

By R.J. King
The Detroit News

Owners of Northern Michigan resorts are hoping the real estate market will rebound during the summer travel season following a three-year slump caused by a national recession and high unemployment.

"We recently completed a survey among (200) tourism operators and most were forecasting a better year in 2005," said George Zimmerman, senior vice president of Travel Michigan in Lansing. "But we are dependent on the weather. We got off to a slow start last year due to heavy rain in May and June along with a colder summer."

Last year, tourism in Michigan topped $16 billion, up from $15 billion in 2003, according to Travel Michigan, which helps market state attractions.

LochenHeath Golf Club near Traverse City is joining a growing number of private clubs and resorts that offer recreational amenities to attract families and buyers.

LochenHeath, which offers an 18-hole championship golf course, was recently discovered by Pinnacle Development Group LLC in Scottsdale, Ariz. The company has developed two highly acclaimed private clubs and residential communities in Arizona – Estancia and The Club at Seven Canyons.

Pinnacle plans to develop 375 residential lots and custom villas at LochenHeath that will be priced from $175,000 to $950,000, though some parcels that offer views of Grand Traverse Bay will top $2 million, said John Lang, Pinnacle's president. A Homesite Selection Weekend is planned for June 3rd. "We're going to add amenities geared toward families like a fitness center and clubhouse and make some of the golf holes more playable by widening the fairways," Lang said.

The improvements will cost $60 million, Lang said. For more information regarding LochenHeath, visit www.LochenHeath.com or call 1-888-562-4364.

This article has been modified from its original version.