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ESG Associates plans for sports complex at The Downs

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Scarborough, ME According to The Downs development team, Crossroads Holdings LLC, ESG Associates Inc., a company specializing in recreational developments, has signed an agreement to pursue an athletic venue at The Downs. The Scarborough facility could include pools, ice rinks, indoor and outdoor fields, spectator areas, and other activity space. Currently, EDGE Sports Group (ESG) is conducting a feasibility study to determine what type of amenities should be included within The Downs facility.

“This is particularly exciting for us, because we’ve long known that our community wants these types of athletic and recreational amenities,” said developer Rocco Risbara.

“The town is pleased with the progress of The Downs project, particularly the accelerated pace of the non-residential buildout,” said Scarborough town manager Tom Hall. “The involvement of the Edge Sports Group and the construction of a commercial recreation center could serve as a catalyst to anchor the downtown portion of the project. We are eager to participate in the feasibility analysis and see if there is an opportunity for the project to meet the long-standing recreation needs of the community.”

Founded in 2008, Massachusetts-based ESG has consulted on and created athletic venues, sports programs and organized league play throughout New England. The company creates “sports ecosystems” that are geared to meet the unique recreational goals of communities and deliver on unmet needs.

“Greater Portland is a growing region and is currently underserved in this capacity. We see a bright future for this type of athletic complex in Scarborough,” said Brian DeVellis, president of ESG Associates, Inc. “We look forward to this process and plan to design something specific to the recreational needs of the community and the region.”

In early 2018, two lifelong Scarborough families purchased the 500-acre property at Scarborough Downs. Two sets of brothers – William, Marc and Rocco Risbara III, of Risbara Bros., and Peter and Richard Michaud, formerly of Michaud Distributors, purchased this property for \$6.7 million, after it had been on the market for nearly two decades.

The vision for the project is to create a mixed-use community that provides the right balance between residential, commercial and light industrial development in Scarborough. The master plan for The Downs preserves 200 acres of open space and creates ten miles of recreational trails and

sidewalks that will carry pedestrians from one end of the property to the other. The center of the project will be anchored by a downtown district, where the sports complex will be located. This venue will not disrupt or displace harness racing at Scarborough Downs, instead could act as a catalyst to increase visitors to the track.

The first phase of residential development at The Downs is underway, which includes 30 single-family homes, 48 condominiums and 48 apartment units. Within weeks, more than 50 % of the units were sold or under contract. A residential-scale memory care facility will also be under construction later this year as part of this area.

The second phase of development, the Innovation District is designed to attract light industrial, technology, manufacturing and retail end-users. This part of the project recently received preliminary subdivision approval from the town's planning board.

Development will begin this July, following final state and local approvals. ESG intends to complete its due diligence this summer, with design and permitting immediately following. The facility could be open in spring 2021.

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