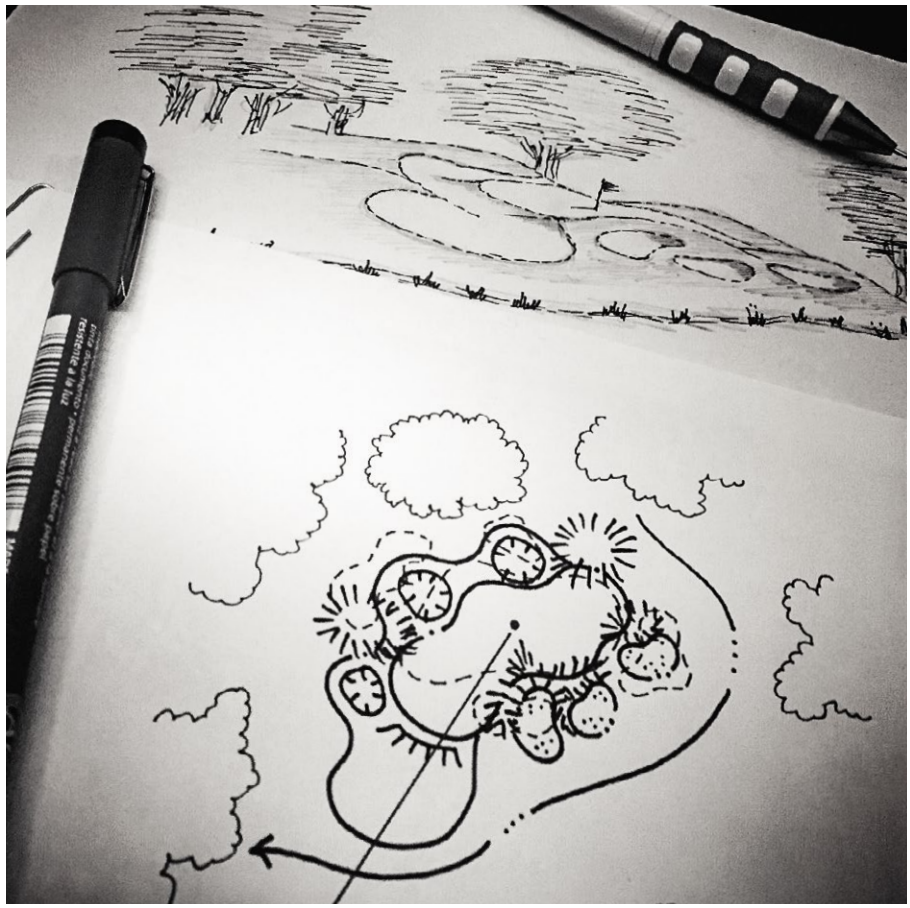
Colonial Country Club

***By Design* inspects a couple of pages from the sketchbook of Nathan Crace, ASGCA.**

Over the past few years, Nathan Crace, ASGCA, has been working toward a renovation master plan for Colonial CC in Memphis, Tennessee.

His proposal for the par-three fifth hole includes a creek running in front of the green. "The hole plays slightly uphill with a shallow swale that runs across the hole from the right of the green back towards the tee on a diagonal," he said. "That area stays wet after big rain events, so I wanted to convert that to a dry stone-lined creek bed dotted with native plantings for color. The existing green's surface needed to be recontoured and enlarged, but the positioning of the existing four bunkers left little or no room for players to miss the green without finding the sand that surrounded it.

"I wanted to maintain the existing angle of the green from front-left to back-right while opening the front-left pin more and creating a much-needed bailout and collection area to the left with mounding to help mis-hits back towards the putting surface. To give the green a feeling of more separation, I would elevate the surface slightly while lowering the areas around it from the hillside behind the green. The result would be elevating the green along the front and back where it would tumble down into the connected chipping area and approach while the traditional 'Sunday pin' would still be back-right."



The project remains on hold following changes in management, the pandemic and new development plans for the adjacent property, but Crace is optimistic about the possibilities.

"The new hole would be more forgiving for the average golfer while still requiring precision for aggressive play by better players," said Crace. "With the pin back-right, higher handicappers can play safe to the left of the three bunkers and if they miss the green, they'll likely end up in the collection area behind and left of the putting surface. Better players, however, will want to challenge the bunkers to get closer to the pin. That said, the front-left pin is no pushover with the green elevated above the approach, which will require some creativity to get up and down for par."