

# **RANCH AT CYPRESS CREEK**

## **HOA NEWSLETTER**

### **Board of Directors**

Heather Affleck

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Troy Fielding

Newsletter: Dee Yetter

**MARCH 2012**

**[www.ranchatcypresscreekhoa.com](http://www.ranchatcypresscreekhoa.com)**

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **EASTER EGG HUNT**

*WHERE: Rachel Ridge Park  
(corner of Rachel Ridge & Del Roy)*

*WHEN: April 7, 2012*

*TIME: 1 P.M.*

### **HOA GARAGE SALE**

*WHEN: April 28, 2012*

*TIME: 8 a.m. - 1:00 pm*

*RAIN DATE: May 5, 2012*

HOA will advertise in the American Statesman, HillCountry Flyer and Craig's List. The HOA will also put signs up advertising, you will need to put out individual signs to your home. The HOA has also invited the NON-HOA portion of the Ranch to join in on all of the fun.

### **ANNUAL HOA MEETING ON MARCH 15**

The Annual HOA Meeting was held at Deer Creek Elem. School March 15 at 7:00 P.M. There were enough Proxy Votes to re-elect Troy Fielding to the Board. The Budget was reviewed and questions answered from the floor. Among some of the items discussed were projects the Board had worked on during the year. You will see those below.

### **WHAT HAS YOUR HOA BOARD BEEN WORKING ON THIS PAST YEAR??**

As all of you are aware of, last summer was extremely dry with blistering heat. There were massive fires destroying many, many homes. Behind Rachel Ridge is a natural preserve called "Discovery Wells", behind DelRoy is another preserve called "Westside Preserve". It was discovered that at some time during the year, scrub cedar had been cut down and stacked up in the Discovery Wells Preserve. Of course it had dried out and was a potential fire hazard. Behind Westside Preserve it was discovered that

if there was a fire behind DelRoy there wasn't a fire road that would enable fire trucks to get into that area. The Board approached Cedar Park Parks dept. to see what could be done.

The cedar piles were mulched and removed from Discovery Wells Preserve and some fire lanes cut in Westside Preserve in order to allow fire trucks access. These Preserves have to be kept as natural as possible because of the caves and several endangered species living in these areas. With this in mind the habitat has to be preserved as natural as possible.

### **COVERING AND SOLAR LIGHTS OVER MAIL BOX CLUSTERS**

Going to the mail box in the evening can be daunting. The Ranch is street light poor. These mail boxes can be quite dark. The Board is looking into putting up covers over the mail boxes with attached solar lights. There is a lot of information to gather and as you can imagine there are a lot of varieties.

Whatever version is

decided on it also has to be submitted to the Cedar Park Postal authorities for approval. You know how red tape goes.

### **DEER CREEK ANNEXATION**

I'm sure most of you've read about this annexation in the local papers, here is some reasoning as to why they were annexed and the Ranch at Cypress Creek was not.

This process probably took them close to a year to accomplish. Why were they able to be annexed and not the "Ranch"? Here is the difference.

DEER CREEK: They got petitions signed wanting to be annexed. (I believe they had to have 2/3.)

Their whole area is a dues paying HOA. Their HOA pays for all of the landscaping, pools, etc. this is not a cost to Cedar Park.

Homes range in price from \$300,000-500,000. There is a lot more tax money for Cedar Park to collect.

Cedar Park would pick up their Bond debt, but other than that there is no cost to Cedar Park and with taxes on these homes, it wouldn't be long before Cedar Park makes money.

RANCH@ CYPRESS CREEK: Only 331 homes in the HOA and MUD pays for landscaping. This means that Cedar Park would be paying for water, upkeep of sprinkling system, mowing etc. Without a HOA for all of the RANCH they are concerned about property values, as there would be no way to enforce the covenants of the NON-HOA Homeowners.

Homes range in price from \$190,000-270,000. This is not as much tax revenue.

Sun Chase and Zeppelin need a major road overhaul. Cedar Park said this would be one of the first things that they would have to spend money on.

*(About a year ago your HOA Board was walking around with papers for our HOA Homeowners to sign to see if they wanted to invite the NON HOA homeowners to join our HOA. We needed 2/3 vote of YES. Then the NON HOA homeowners would have to sign papers saying YES they wanted to join the HOA. If that had gone thru then everything would have been like Deer Creek and Cedar Park would have annexed the Ranch.)*

Annexation is a foregone conclusion. The issue is that of timing. It will have to make both financial, and political sense to move forward on annexation of the Ranch. Financial is the most important thing to overcome and right now, and likely for the next 2-3 years, it will not make financial sense for the City to annex us. They need to be able to do so with no increase in the tax rate which right now, they could not do. The Ranch remains a key annexation target for the City, and both the City and the MUD board are confident it will happen and continue to keep an open dialog going on the subject, it will likely be a few years before it will make financial sense for the City to move forward.

### **LANDSCAPING AND LAWN MAINTENANCE**

Now is the time to be taking a close look at our lawns. Last year was a rough year on all of the landscaping. Grass was stressed as well as our shrubs, flowers, trees etc. We have had some pretty good rains that have certainly relieved a lot of the stress on the plants. Some homeowners have lost portions of their grass. If you don't see any green by now, you're going to have to re-sod. If you want to throw out some Bermuda seed, it's still a little early for that, the evenings are still too cool. If you need to re-sod don't just pick up some squares of St. Augustine and throw it down, you're wasting your time and money. You need to loosen up the soil, get some bags of good soil with some nutrients mixed in, spread it loosely in the area of re-sodding, then put your sod down and water. You'll need to water this area enough to keep it damp for several weeks. Once it has taken hold then water as you usually do. For those of you who have grass, but it looks stressed now is the time to spread out compost approx. ¼" thick, then in about a week come along with a slow released fertilizer. A good one that we have used for a long time is "Milorganite" (spelling?). It's a slow release and won't burn your yards. There are several links to landscaping sites on the HOA website as well as the MUD's.

Watering tips: You don't have to water often, but water **deep**. You need for those roots to go down so they don't burn up in the heat. A way to check how much water you're putting down is to take a tuna or cat food can and put them in several locations in your yard. You should put down close to an inch with each watering. Last yr. we had our sprinkling system set for every 6 days on the lawn and every 3 days for the flower beds. About the end of July we moved it to every 5 days. When Cedar Park put the restrictions to twice weekly, we were actually watering one extra time a month with their restrictions, so we cut back a little on the length of time we were watering. The lawn was green and healthy all summer.

## **XERISCAPE PROPOSAL FROM THE MUD**

TexaScapes, the District's landscape services provider, has developed a concept and proposal for a Xeriscape/Naturalized StreetScape conversion of the right-of-way along Sun Chase Blvd. This is an effort to create a more sustainable landscape throughout the M.U.D.'s public right-of-ways by:

- Eliminating a majority of the water thirsty turf grass.
- Improving existing soil quality and moisture retention ability by tilling in compost, additives, and nutrients where bedrock is not too shallow.
- Implementing native, naturalized, and adapted plant material that can survive our summer heat and even flourish during normal rainfall and temperature periods. Hardy agave, yucca, cacti, clump grasses, yaupon, coral berry, agarita, along with flowering small trees and perennials as well as adapted ornamentals will create a pleasing and varying naturalize appearance throughout the annual seasons.
- Creating bio-swales for on site water retention of rainwater in order to use less potable water and to aid in aquifer recharge.
- Utilizing indigenous stone, river rock, gravels and mulches for groundcover, path nodes, and dry creek type drainage ways to replace open turf and high maintenance plantings.
- Modifying the existing irrigation system utilizing bubbler, limited sprays and drip emitters for less water use.

You can view exhibits illustrating the concept using these links: If you go to the HOA Website ([ranchatcypresscreekhoa.com](http://ranchatcypresscreekhoa.com)) scroll down the left hand side to MUD, click there and it will take you to their website.

- Aerial of the phase one location of approximately 400 linear feet
- "Before" image of a typical section
- Concept in perspective of approximately 100 linear feet
- Concept in plan view

### **There are also pictures at the end of this Newsletter**

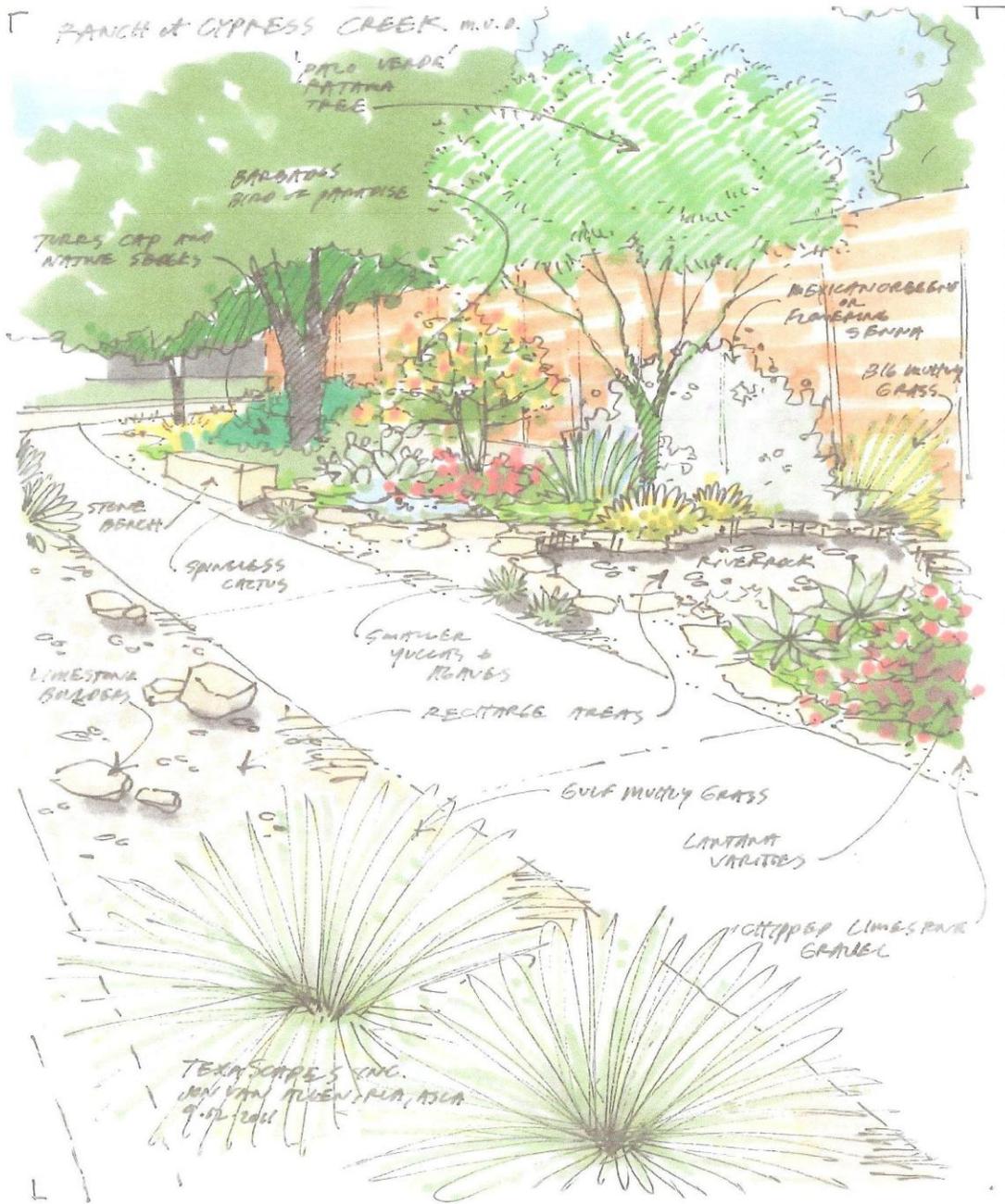
The estimated cost for a typical 100 linear foot section of Sun Chase is \$20,000 (+ or -) and includes:

- removal of turfgrass and other high maintenance elements of the landscape
- preparation of the soil where bedrock is not too shallow
- modification of the irrigation system to bubblers, light spray, and drip
- materials and labor for the stone-aggregate-mulch-trees, shrubs, perennials

Cost for the Phase 1 area totaling 400 linear feet is approximately \$80,000; that estimate will be refined after TexaScapes completes a more detailed conceptual design.

There are around 58,000 linear feet of turf and landscape along both sides of Sun Chase. TexaScapes estimates the cost in 2011 dollars to convert the total area is \$1,160,000; they stress that this is a rough estimate as at this point they are not sure how much shallow bedrock they will encounter and how it will affect the design and implementation decisions.

Once the area is converted and the plantings established for 2 seasons, they expect as much as a 60% reduction in irrigation water use and a 40-50% reduction in landscape maintenance efforts (turf grass and high maintenance planting maintenance costs would decline, while landscape tree and planting care along with irrigation system routine maintenance would increase.)



RANCH at CYPRESS CREEK M.U.D.

