

The Sugar Mill Fence Committee Report 05/27/20

Dear Sugar Mill resident

We want to share the latest information from our Sugar Mill Fence Committee, working with your Sugar Mill Board of Directors. Based on the size and scope of this project, many hours have been spent making sure we choose the best materials and obtain the best value in both the product and the installation. This has not been an easy task. We had also been given an option to fund a portion of the project through the City of Sugar Land with a special grant. However; with COVID19 visiting our city, that process has been slowed dramatically. We hope to tag onto those benefits in the future. But with the current status of our almost four decades old fences, we need to begin moving forward now. The plan is detailed below. Should you have any questions, we would welcome your thoughts; and finally, we appreciate your patience as we move forward.

The Sugar Mill Fence Committee proposes a phased approach over four years to replace community fencing. This report provides information about the project scope, cost, progress to date, and homeowner responsibilities. Now Covid-19 has delayed our process with the city to receive grant monies until August or October. We must move forward; as the Bayou wooden fences are in extremely bad shape. Repair of those thousands of feet of fences would be a waste of money. This large project of replacement will be undertaken with an eye to balance budget constraints with the goal of securing replacement fencing that will aesthetically reflect our neighborhood values.

Project Scope

The project scope includes replacement of the following:

- Bayou wood fence – First phase currently in the final stage of specific order of section rebuild.
- Highly visible entrance fences along the following streets - that will be staged over the following 3 years:
 - 7th Street
 - Jess Pirtle
 - Parts of Burney comprising an entrance fence that will reflect the highest values of our neighborhood

The scoping documents for the bayou fence replacement will be available so that every homeowner that will be impacted by this first phase is identified.

The decisions about the type of fencing along the highly visible entrances will involve our community as this project is (as with the wooden fences), a balance of budget constraints and how the aesthetics reflect our neighborhood values. Considerations currently

- A more decorative wood fence
- "Panel" fences like the ones along Burney (Gannoway Lakes recent replacements)
- A TREX composite or other available specialty types proven to last a bit longer.

Cost The approximate cost of the first phase of the bayou fencing is \$350,000 based on the selected bidder. This fence is constructed to last 15 years or more so that replacement and repair costs over the life of the fence can be controlled within our HOA budget.

The selected contractor for the bayou fence should be used for any other wooden fence replacement to maintain continuity.

The "entrance" type fencing will be more expensive than the cost of the "bayou" fencing. Current estimates show that the overall costs could approach one million dollars. To ensure that budgeted reserve monies are adequate, this phase of fencing will extend over a minimum three-year period. A detailed plan for this part of the project will be developed later this year.

Homeowner Participation

Once bayou fence replacement begins, the contractor will notify each affected home owner of the scope of work, dates and duration of the replacement, and what is expected of the homeowner in preparation for the work. Preparation will include removal of large brush, bushes, gardens and trees along rights of way, which will be about two feet away from the current fence line. This includes removal of any existing owner placed fencing. Irrigation systems should be marked and all underground utilities will be marked by the fence contractor's contact company.

The contractor will document how they will protect the homeowners while the fence is being constructed with temporary fencing, taping off, etc.

KEY POINTS

The fence will be a single color using a top-quality deck paint that will be sprayed and back-brushed to further ensure long life. The color will be a light color similar to the current fence stain to promote extended life of both paint and fence. As the bayou fence is less visible than other fencing, this quality, yet simple, design should give us the best value for our money.

- A more simplified and cost-effective design is recommended for the walkway entrances that tie some of the cul-de-sacs to the bayou walkways. Each entrance walkway itself will end near where the sides of the fences begin to decline or reduce in height. This "stop" will be full height with a 4"x4" post with a decorative top. We will install some examples along the sample fence at Jess Pirtle and Oak Knoll to help neighbors decide which to use. This design will match the same long life as the fence itself.
- Fence construction will include 4x6 inch posts sunk 3 feet into the ground, secured with double bags of concrete, then structurally reinforced with treated 2x12 inch rot boards along the bottom. Five-foot pickets will be placed above the rot board so that rapid rot, which is currently occurring along most of current fence bottom as a result of trapped water behind the current 1x6 inch bottom board, will not be a problem in the future. A 2x6 inch cedar top trim will protect the top rot of the picket that normally occurs.

Progress

The bid request process for the "bayou" fencing is complete. The Committee and the Board met May 21 and selected Fence Keeper based on their early work in our community. As you can see, this entire project has been carefully researched. We move forward with confidence, knowing that we have done our homework. Again, your comments and questions are always welcomed.

The Sugar Mill Fence Committee

Your Sugar Mill Board of Directors

If you are interested in Community updates regarding Capital Improvement Projects, Activities, Questions etc. go to the sugarmillhoa.net website and tap "Contact Us" or "Email Notification" to sign up for email Blasts.