



# Steeplechase

## NEWSLETTER



The Official Newsletter of The Steeplechase Community Improvement Association, Inc. and Steeplechase

Volume 4, Issue 1

January 2006

## Greenbelt Fence Project

As with any significant issue, there have been many opinions expressed over a number of years about the "greenbelt fence". A fence project survey was conducted last spring that included all homeowners. The results of the survey, which were published in the July newsletter, were clear: homeowners supported the use of association funds in sharing the cost of replacing all perimeter fences "with similar design and materials as currently exists and with NO maintenance fee increase or assessment for this project". That is exactly what is being done.

In this newsletter there are two editorials about the fence project: one from a Greentree homeowner who lives along the fence line and is eager for the work to begin and another from a Sturbridge homeowner who opposes the project. The Steeplechase Board welcomes all constructive comments and suggestions from homeowners on all issues. Decisions are then made based on overall community input along with financial considerations. The planned fence project can be completed now without requesting a special assessment or maintenance fee increase from all homeowners.

The Fence Committee completed specifications for the new perimeter fence in November and bid requests were sent to five contractors in December. In January a contractor will be selected and once the cost is established the Home Owner Associations will meet with each perimeter fence owner in Greentree, Saddlebrook, Churchill and Cobblestone. Construction should begin in February.

## 2006 Maintenance Fees

The 2006 Homeowner Association maintenance fees are due in January. Every homeowner should have received a statement from their respective association. Your annual assessment funds community operations from landscaping to security to street lights as well as capital improvements. If you need any additional information please contact our management company, PCMI at 281-870-0585.

**The Houston Postal System has been experiencing delays in mail delivery. Your January newsletter entered the Postal System on December 30, 2005. If you didn't receive your newsletter by January 6<sup>th</sup>, please contact the Copperfield Annex Post Office at 281-859-9014. Thanks.**

## Holiday Decorations

Thank you to everyone who helped light our holidays with their home holiday decorations. Special thanks to Regina Abruzzese and Mable Butler for decorating our community entrance signs.

## Did You Know...

The next quarterly Open Residents Meeting will be held on Monday, February 6 at 7pm in the clubhouse.

- ◆ The pool committee will begin meeting soon for the 2006 season - to join call 832-922-8030.
- ◆ The clubhouse is available for private rentals on weekends - for more information call 832-922-8031.
- ◆ The Steeplechase Seniors Group meets on Tuesdays at 12:30pm in the clubhouse. Call 832-912-7881.
- ◆ Holiday decorations should be removed within 30 days of the holiday.

## How to Report Curb Damage for Repair

All curb repairs, except those of driveway aprons/transitions to street are the responsibility of Harris County Precinct 4 Road Maintenance. Driveways are the responsibility of individual homeowners along with their sidewalks.

Please report any broken curbs with the specific address directly to Harris County Precinct 4 at (281) 353-8424 or via <http://www.cp4.hctx.net> on line work orders for street maintenance. Your efforts to report these items help to keep our neighborhood beautiful! Thank you!

**View the Steeplechase Community Association newsletter each month on-line at [www.PEELinc.com](http://www.PEELinc.com)**

# STEEPLECHASE

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Cy-Fair Fire Dept.....	911
Cy-Fair Hospital.....	281-890-4285
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HL&P (Street lights) .....	713-207-2222
Library.....	281-890-2665
Post Office.....	713-937-6827
Steeplechase Community Center .....	281-469-CLUB
Deed Restriction Issues (PCMI) .....	281-870-0585
Water/Sewer .....	281-240-1300
Architectural Control (PCMI).....	281-870-0585
Trash Pick-up (Waste Management).....	713-686-6666
(Monday & Thursday)	
Harris Co. Pct. 4 Road Maintenance.....	281-353-8424
Community Events.....	281-469-CLUB
Clubhouse Rentals:	
Private Events (Phyllis McFarland).....	832-922-8031
Community Group Events (Jinnie Kelley) .....	832-922-8030

### NEWSLETTER PUBLISHER

Peel, Inc. Sales Office ..... [advertising@PEELinc.com](mailto:advertising@PEELinc.com), 512-989-8905  
 Adver: Donna Sommer ..... [dSommer@PEELinc.com](mailto:dSommer@PEELinc.com), 832-237-4684

**Steeplechase Information Line:**  
**281-469-CLUB - Option #3**

### Steeplechase Board of Directors

Cobblestone	Churchill	Green-Brook-Bridge
Betty Hattman	Jon Lavallee	Jim Andrews
Sandra Jordan	Philip Ramirez	Kevin Swicegood
Virginia Kelley	Nace Peard	Barbara Lopez
Dan Carr	Regina Abruzzese	Clark Fredenburg
	Mabel Butler	David Gerow

If you need to contact a director within your subdivision, please contact **PCMI** at **281-870-0585** and they will forward your request.

### Steeplechase Sanctioned Committees

Security  
Communications  
Pool  
Playground

Welcome  
Landscape  
Clubhouse  
Tennis

## COMMUNITY CENTER CONTACTS

### Community Maintenance Concerns

PCMI ..... 281-870-0585

### Clubhouse Rentals

Private Events (Phyllis McFarland) ..... 832-922-8031  
 Community Groups (Jinnie Kelley) ..... 832-922-8030

### Weekday Use of Club

Jinnie Kelley ..... 832-922-8030

### Private Pool Parties

Sweetwater Pools ..... 281-988-8480

### Board Member Contact

PCMI ..... 281-870-0585

## NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

For the February issue is

**January 10<sup>th</sup>**

Please send all articles and photos to:

[ehattman@yahoo.com](mailto:ehattman@yahoo.com)

(high quality digital photos up to 2 MBs accepted)  
 or mail your submissions to the Steeplechase clubhouse at  
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## Give 'Em The Old Razzle Dazzle!

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For ticket prices and show times, please call Cy-Ridge High School Drama Department at 281-807-8000.

### Classified Ads

**Personal classifieds** (one time sell items, such as a used bike...) run at no charge to Steeplechase residents, limit 30 words, please e-mail to [newsletter@steeplechasetx.com](mailto:newsletter@steeplechasetx.com).

**Business classifieds** (offering a service or product line for profit) are \$45, limit 40 words, please contact Donna Sommer @ 832-237-4684 or [dsommer@PEELinc.com](mailto:dsommer@PEELinc.com).

## Business Classified

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# STEEPLECHASE

## Editorial ~ by Judy Durham

*The following letter is unedited and listed in it's entirety. It reflects the opinions of the author.*

My name is Judy Durham and I've been a homeowner in Steeplechase since 1988. I'm also a member of the Steeplechase Master Association's Fence Committee. The following comments are strictly my opinions as a homeowner, and are not the views of that committee.

I have very serious concerns about the current Steepleway Boulevard fence project. I believe the Board is being short-sighted and financially irresponsible in their handling of this project.

As a homeowner in a 23 year old community, I am very concerned about the aesthetics of this aging community and how they affect all of our property values. I am disturbed by the Board's lack of communication with all homeowners regarding the fence project, an expensive project (\$160,000+) for the replacement of a vital community asset. Are we all really willing to simply throw money at it again for a short term solution? The Boulevard fence is a permanent community structure that provides privacy, security, and value to everyone living here. The original design was developed to clearly differentiate our first class, equestrian-themed neighborhood from the ordinary. It has a significant impact on all our property values and I believe it is in the community's best interest for the Master Association to take complete responsibility for all fencing along the Boulevard. By this, I mean budget for, repair, maintain and replace

when necessary. The Board needs to add fence maintenance to its annual budget and contract for its periodic inspection and repair in order to preserve this valuable community asset. It also needs to save and invest annually in a fund specifically designated for its inevitable future replacement.

This is the first time that replacement of the entire fence has been proposed. What better time to make a good faith effort to do the job right. The Board may be willing to share half the cost of the fence, but it's not willing to share any part of its planning. Their plan was developed before the Fence Committee was even called to its first meeting; 7 months after many fence-line property owners had volunteered in the hopes of having some input into the development of this project. It's easy for the Board to imply that the community has had a voice through the committee, but it hasn't. The Board seems unwilling to listen to any plan other than its own. One survey, last spring, that made no attempt to detail construction and long term maintenance costs, design and material options and evaluations, multiple financial alternatives, or property value impact, does not constitute sufficient communication for a community of this size on which to base the Board's plan.

And why are only the 80 homeowners along the fence line being

*(Continued on Page 7)*

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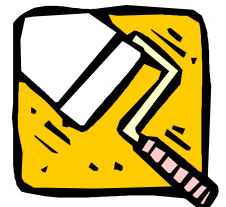
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If you would like to help start off our BUSY PARENT FUNDRAISER please make a check for \$20.09. On a separate piece of paper, please include: Parent's Name, Freshman's Name, Phone Number, and Email Address and turn it in with the check to Mr. David Garcia's office (Counselors Office). They will put it in the RAP mailbox. If you would prefer you can mail it to our treasurer:

Cy-Ridge RAP  
ATTN: Linda Johnson  
5543 Honor Drive  
Houston, TX 77041

If you have any questions, please contact Leslie Peard at 281-894-6905 or Linda Johnson at 713-937-6399.

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# STEEPLECHASE

**Editorial - (Continued from Page 4)**

charged for its replacement? They will each be billed hundreds of dollars, yet have not been allowed any input into its design or into the development of any long term maintenance plan for it. The Board has even refused to commission a property survey to verify ownership of the fence. These homeowners will be expected to sign easement agreements allowing access to their properties prior to any work being done. As our management company's representative wrote to one concerned, inquiring homeowner, "Owners can chose (sic) NOT to participate, then they will have to repair or replace their fence to match the ARC Standards and will have to bear the full cost themselves." How would you feel receiving such a directive? Yet they are the ones who'll be receiving the bills for "their" fences. What this community does not need is for these individual 80 homeowners to be forced to make their own repairs or replacements. An Architectural Control Committee does not always guarantee consistency in design, materials, or quality of construction. To see that - just drive about two miles north to Fallbrook Road and drive east through Harvest Bend. We don't need our main boulevard looking as shabby as that.

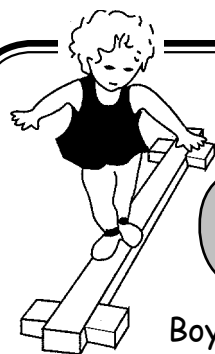
I appeal to the Board to seek additional legal advice, conduct appropriate research, and call another special homeowners meeting about the fence. Undertake another more informative survey. Publish all votes and homeowners' comments on the website or in the "Steeplechase Newsletter." Incorporate the community's suggestions into the plans. Take your time!

This really is a COMMUNITY fence, affecting us all. It will continue to be an unending problem for this community until the Board accepts full responsibility for it. This Board has an opportunity right now to be courageous and take measures to resolve a problem that should not be addressed again with a "quick fix." There is plenty of room for compromise here, but no one is being given a fair opportunity to have their suggestions heard.

To share your comments about this project please contact your association directors, post your comments on the Message Board at [www.steeplechasetx.com](http://www.steeplechasetx.com), or contact me at [Jdurham5@houston.rr.com](mailto:Jdurham5@houston.rr.com).

## Advertising Information

- Please support the businesses that advertise in the Steeplechase Community Association Newsletter. Their advertising dollars make it possible for all residents to receive a newsletter each month at no charge. No homeowners association funds are used to produce or mail the newsletters. If you would like to support the newsletter by advertising, please contact our sales representative, Donna Sommer @ 832-237-4684 or [dsommer@PEELinc.com](mailto:dsommer@PEELinc.com) for ad information and pricing. The deadline for ads is the 10th of each month for the upcoming month's newsletter.



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Courtesy of "SUPER DAVE"

This market information report is provided to keep you informed of resale market activity in your subdivision.

	June 05	July 05	Aug 05	Sept 05	Oct 05	Nov 05
\$160,000 & Above	0	1	0	0	0	0
\$140,000-159,999	5	1	4	1	2	1
\$120,000-139,999	1	2	7	2	2	4
\$110,000-119,999	0	2	0	2	0	2
\$100,000-109,999	2	1	0	0	1	0
\$100,000 Below	1	3	3	1	2	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>
Highest \$/Sq Ft	71.79	78.97	77.12	75.76	75.55	74.87

This chart represents the homes that have sold and closed in the past 6 months according to the Houston Multiple Listing Service.

## Recent Sales By "SUPER DAVE" in Steeplechase

- 9615 Cannock Chase
- 9503 Secretariat
- 9559 W Savile Cir
- 9627 Top Gallant Ct
- 12022 Flaxen
- 9734 Chiselhurst
- 11426 Autumn Chase
- 12238 Fetlock
- 9606 Oldenburg
- 9527 W Savile Cir
- 9835 Meadow Bend
- 12103 Hedgedown
- 9803 Meadow Bend
- 11214 E Travelers Way
- 11411 Springland
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\*\*According to information taken from the Houston Business Journal 3/2005

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# Steeplechase

## NEWSLETTER



PART II

Volume 4, Issue 1

January 2006

### Editorial ~ by Gayle Owens

*The following letter is unedited and listed in it's entirety. It reflects the opinions of the author.*

My name is Gayle Owens and I've been a homeowner in Steeplechase for a little over a year. I own a home on the Steeplechase Greenbelt fence (fence) line. We knew the fence was an issue, and would have to be replaced at our cost when we bought the house. We were also told that the Steeplechase Master Association Board (board) was "working on something that would potentially share in half of the replacement cost."

I was notified, as **every other homeowner**, that there would be an open board meeting in February where the fence would be discussed. All input was welcomed at that meeting, names were taken down for volunteers of a fence committee, and the legal issue of ownership was asked. After further investigation the board was informed by Legal Counsel that the only section that is owned by Steeplechase MA is the 16 houses on Yearling Circle that backup to Steepleway Blvd. **ALL** other homeowners who backup to Steepleway Blvd. own their fence. The Board asked me to be the committee chairperson and design a fence "with similar design and materials as currently exists." In the survey that was sent to **all** homeowners, the response was overwhelmingly in favor of the community's funds being spent to rebuild the fence "with similar design and materials" and share the cost with the individual homeowners.

The concerns that have been raised:

1. *The board has not demonstrated a willingness to communicate or receive feedback from the homeowners of the community.* The Board has posted meeting notices in the newsletter, sent mass mailings, sent mailings to the fence homeowners, posted meeting notifications, and conducted a survey about the fence.

2. *The board is unwilling to listen to the homeowners who wanted to participate on the committee.* I personally contacted everyone who signed up for the fence committee at the February 2005 open Board meeting. After making those individual phone calls, we ended up with less than eight (8) people on the committee.
3. *The suggestion has been made that the Board take full financial responsibility for the fence.* This would incur a need of a special assessment to **all** homeowners, not just the fence parameter homeowners.
4. *Accusations of "throwing money" at the situation for a "short term" gain.* Three fence experts have told the committee that fences should last 10-15 years when built correctly. This is not throwing money a short-term solution.
5. *The board is unwilling to look at alternative materials.* The committee examined several different fence options such as; corrugated steel frame with wood pickets, vinyl, and brick costing approximately \$40-\$90 per linear foot. The highest wood fence cost would be approximately \$25 per linear foot. The Board and fence committee have explored alternative fence options, all would require a special assessment to **all** homeowners.

Yes, this is a COMMUNITY fence that affects all Steeplechase property owners. The Board has spent the last 1 1/2 years investigating, communicating, surveying all homeowners, requesting feedback, and begging for participation to move forward on the fence. Accusations of short-sightedness, unwillingness to communicate, lack of responsibility, and lack of planning are untrue and unfounded.

I'm excited to have a Board who is willing to be a good neighbor and share in the cost of replacing my fence. The homeowners who do not want to move forward with the current plan have zero cost investment, no sections of fence currently down, and suggest that we take our time. Is 1 1/2 years of investigation enough time or do we want to see all property values decrease as we continue to debate this issue? It is time to move forward with this well thought out, thoroughly investigated plan.

**View the entire January issue of the  
Steeplechase Community Association  
newsletter on-line  
at [www.PEELinc.com](http://www.PEELinc.com)**

**This editorial was submitted for  
inclusion in the January 2006 newsletter.**