

Rockport Transcript

A PUBLICATION OF THE CITY OF ROCKPORT

How the City Works

In previous issues, we've focused on departments, personnel and their contributions to the operation of the City. This time, the spotlight is on the Tree and Landscape Committee and their work in preserving the environment and enforcing ordinances and regulations.

Rockport is renowned for the majestic live oaks and native plants that grace our area. They have been a draw not only for those of us who reside here, but for hundreds of different wildlife species that choose to live or winter in this unique environment.

It is well known that if undeveloped parcels of land are for sale,

there will always be individuals or businesses who wish to purchase them. To help preserve our natural beauty and prevent clear cutting within our boundaries, City Council had the foresight to establish a tree preservation ordinance in the 1980s. Along with these regulations, a citizens advisory committee was established, now known as the Tree and Landscape Committee.

This Committee is tasked with the enormous responsibility of preserving the integrity of our natural environment while working with businesses, government agencies and residents that wish to develop their property. It's a delicate process requiring days, weeks or even



Recommended plants are native or adaptable species that are both attractive and low maintenance.

months of review, recommendations and planning to formulate an arrangement that adheres to city ordinances of preservation and replanting while accommodating the needs of the land owner.

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40 GALLON CHALLENGE

The City, in cooperation with the AgriLife Extension Office, is calling for residents and businesses to reduce our region's water use on average by 40 gallons per person, per day. The challenge began in 2011 as a voluntary campaign to increase water conservation.

Called the *40 Gallon Challenge*, the program encourages people to save a minimum of 40 gallons a day by adopting new water-

saving techniques. A pledge card outlines water-saving practices and the daily water-savings to expect. For instance, if you are turning off the water when you brush your teeth, then you are already saving up to 8 gallons a day. You can use the pledge to review the water-saving practices that you and your family currently put to use.

Reducing water usage not only saves this precious resource, it also helps users keep more money in their wallets. Saving a

minimum of 40 gallons a day for 30 days adds up to more than 1,000 gallons per month. Based on current rates, that would be a savings up to \$5.29 per month depending on total usage. In other words, you should see real savings on your water bill if you follow through with your pledge and put to use the recommended water-saving practices.

For more information, or to make a pledge, please visit www.40GallonChallenge.org or contact the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Office at 790-0103.

How the City Works (continued)

In many cases, the behind-the-scenes work and future outcomes are not easily visible. For this reason, it's important that concerned citizens come to Committee meetings or visit the city's Building Department to get the background on a project and review the criteria that's been established for that particular project.

Based on the City's Code of Ordinances, Chapter 106 "no clear-cutting of land is allowed and no person shall intentionally damage, transplant or remove any protected tree on any real property within the city unless specifically authorized through approval of an official landscape plan, site plan, building permit or on a case-by-case basis". The Ordinance goes on to identify protected trees, like the windswept live oak tree; replacement tree schedule; protection of existing trees during construction; and a recommended plant species list that is hardy and adaptable to our environment.

All protected trees over 6 inches of diameter at breast height (DBH) have a schedule for recommended replacement. For example, a single tree between 9 – 12 inches DBH must be replaced by **three** trees with each one having a 2 inch DBH. This process is somewhat like reforestation for the City.

A good example of the convergence of preservation and re-



Replacement trees and attractive landscaping surround this new church.

placement is The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, located at the intersection of Woodland and Pearl Street/FM 2165. When the land was cleared and approved trees removed, it had all the makings of a potential eyesore. Fortunately, that's not the case today. New trees and landscaping, as well as flood prevention practices, have made this both an attractive and unobtrusive addition to Rockport.

Earlier this year, construction of the new Stripes convenience store raised a lot of concern in the community. However, it's not a case of "what you see is what you get." The city's Building Department and the Tree and Landscape Committee worked on this project for months to develop a comprehensive plan, which has since been implemented.

The plan called for 55 oak and pine trees (6" – 22" in caliper) to remain, 69 trees to be removed (including two large oak trees that were not windswept oaks), and 39 new trees to be planted --

Parking lot landscaping at the new Stripes store.

a net gain of 25 trees. Using the point and caliper system called for in the ordinance, Stripes was required to have a minimum of 2,438 points and 570" of tree caliper. The plan had 7,051 points and 676" of tree caliper, well above anything required by the ordinance.

On its own volition, the company chose to enhance the undeveloped back portion of the property to provide a greenbelt and park setting, which will be enjoyed by patrons and residents. With its close proximity to Tule Creek, it's also expected to be a draw for birds. The architectural plan calls for approximately 38 percent of the property to be landscaped.

In addition, the plan included a retention structure on the north and east sides of the property, which will aid in stormwater retention and prevent potential flooding of the site and its neighbors.

In extreme cases where the plan does not allow for replacement on the property, the City will consider "mitigation." This is where the owner or developer will relocate or plant new trees upon public property, parks and within rights-of-way, subject to approval.



Visit us on the Web
@ www.cityofrockport.com

Be Water Wise



Although residents and businesses using water wells are not subject to current water restrictions, the City encourages you to utilize best management practices. This includes watering between midnight and 10 am, checking sprinklers to reduce overspray, and replacing broken sprinkler heads. Doing so saves you electricity, wear and tear on your pump, and helps maintain the water table.

The Buzz on Mosquitoes

The Environmental Services division of Aransas County is responsible for mosquito spraying operations in our area.

If you notice a significant increase in mosquitoes or standing water, call the Mosquito Hotline at 727-0606 ext 29.

For a funeral, sports event or large gathering, please contact their office at 361-790-0121.

Should you have standing water on your property, you may want to visit their offices at 1931 FM 2165 to pick up free larvicide tablets. Go to www2.epa.gov/mosquitocontrol for prevention and control tips.

Hurricane Season is Here

Mother Nature has been wreaking havoc throughout the world and there's no guarantee that she's going to spare the Coastal Bend this season. With so many extreme weather occurrences taking place across the nation, it makes sense to start your hurricane planning ... if you haven't already done so.

The Emergency Operations Center has a disaster plan that includes a revision to the timelines for voluntary and mandatory evacuations. This information is available on the City's web site by clicking "Emergency Information" on the home page. At www.cityofrockport.com You'll also find recommendations for preparation, emergency kits, evacuation routes and more.

If you do not have access to a computer, we will be happy to provide copies at City Hall.

And, don't forget that the City's Hurricane Response Plan includes a provision to turn off water, sewer and natural gas service in the event of a disaster. We strongly urge you to review the materials and establish safety plans for you, your loved ones and pets.

New Trail Markers



Location markers have been installed along the Tule Hike and Bike Trail. Should an emergency situation occur, look for the nearest market and call 9-1-1. Inform the dispatcher of your location by stating the location id consisting of two letters and three numbers. They will then contact the appropriate service and direct them to your location. Similar markers will also be installed at Memorial Park.



**Shop Rockport—
Keep your retail sales taxes
working at home**

Rockport City Council

Mayor



C.J. Wax

Ward 1



Rusty Day

Ward 2



J.D. Villa

Ward 3



Pat Rios

Ward 4



Adelaide Marlatt

Sharks Swim League Popular with Youth

More than 50 children ranging in age from 5 – 18 years are participating in the “Sharks” competitive swimming program at the Community Aquatic Center. The program is sponsored by the Friends of the Pool and the City’s Parks and Leisure Services Department. Operating under the guidelines of the Texas Amateur Athletic Federation, the Sharks compete against other swim teams in Portland, Odem and Corpus Christi. Individual swimmers have the potential of going forward to the regional level and then on to the state competition. Twenty seven Shark team members qualified for the Regional meet in Victoria and five qualified for the state meet in Corpus Christi.



Send Us Your Photos

Over the next few months, the City’s web site will undergo a makeover with a new look, more content and easier maneuverability. We all know how wonderful it is to live in Rockport and we’d love to feature your photos of “what makes Rockport special to you.”

Simply send your high resolution photo via email with your name and contact information to: communityrelations@cityofrockport.com

If we use your photograph, we’ll post your name as well.

Who Do I Call If ...

Emergency	911
Non-Emergency Public Safety	729-1111
Utility Bill Questions/Concerns	729-2213 x 234
Street Issues and Repairs	790-1160
Sewer, Water and Gas Issues	790-1160
Trash Pick-Up	729-2213 x 234
City Administrative Offices	729-2213 x 221
Building and Development Dept.	790-1125

For additional questions or concerns, visit the “FAQs” or “Fix It” sections on the City’s web site (www.cityofrockport.com) or call City Hall at 729-2213.



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