

## MEMO

**TO:** Members of the Wilderness Ridge Homeowners' Association

**FROM:** Wilderness Ridge Homeowners' Association Board of Directors

**RE:** Recommendation on proposal for installation of curbs

**DATE:** October 7, 2013

The potential for installation of curbs throughout the subdivision has been discussed among homeowners for several years. Your Board of Directors has informally noted a definitive split of opinion on the curbs issue among members of the Wilderness Ridge Homeowners' Association. Accordingly the board has undertaken a study of the matter in an effort to provide members with the board's recommendation on the issue and the factual basis for that recommendation in hopes that such information might serve as the basis for an informed decision by members of the association.

The Wilderness Ridge Subdivision was specifically designed without curbs, street lights or major arterial streets in an effort by the developer to create a unique semi-rural residential community. The grass swales<sup>1</sup> between streets and sidewalks in the majority of the subdivision exist in order to reduce the amount of pollution which enters the storm sewer system, a technique utilized and promoted in the development of many contemporary urban and suburban communities. Water which enters the storm sewer drains from the current grass flumes is channeled directly into the system of lakes and streams which exist throughout the golf course community. Curbs were included on cul-de-sac islands solely to protect landscaping thereon from vehicular traffic.

According to Olsson Associates, a respected local engineering firm, the capacity of several existing storm sewers is insufficient to accommodate additional storm water runoff which would be anticipated as a result of increased volume and velocity created by curbs. Accordingly the installation of curbs would require significant alterations to the existing storm water system. Property owners would necessarily be responsible not only for the cost associated with the installation of curbs, but for the cost of upgrades to the storm sewer system as well.

Driveways which currently exist on residential lots must be reconfigured in the area between the sidewalk and the street in order to accommodate drainage changes which would result from the installation of curbs. This would require one of two modifications. The first option would involve the reconfiguration of that portion of the drive by raising it to allow storm water to run down the driveway and into the street rather than being channeled into the strip of grass between the sidewalk and the street. Alternatively, the problem could be remedied through the installation of a drain on the downstream side of the driveway in order to channel storm water into the storm sewer system.

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<sup>1</sup> See, Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, Restrictions and Easements for Wilderness Ridge, Article III, Paragraph 23 (as amended), which requires that "[e]ach Lot Owner shall be responsible for maintaining a ditch section parallel to all roadways abutting their Lot. The ditch section shall be a minimum of one (1) foot deep from the edge of the roadway. Each Lot Owner . . . shall be and does hereby assume any and all responsibility for contracting with a contractor . . . to tap the private storm sewer main located between the edge of roadway and the Lot property line and install/relocate an area inlet for such Lot on the upstream side of the driveway, centered in the ditch section . . . Each Lot Owner shall be responsible for providing positive drainage to the Lot's area inlet for the roadway ditch section for stormwater flowing onto such Lot."

Sprinkler heads adjacent to the street will need to be relocated to accommodate the installation of curbs. Such sprinkler system modification is not included in the cost estimate for curbs since each system is presumably unique and will be the responsibility of the homeowner.

The current configuration of the storm sewer system utilizes the grass strips between sidewalks and streets as a filtration system designed to catch numerous pollutants (salt, gravel, oil, brake dust, etc.) before they enter the storm sewer system. The installation of curbs will increase the entry of pollution into the storm sewer system because it will bypass the current filtration system and allow storm water to flow directly from the streets into the storm sewer system.

The board's investigation suggests the installed cost of curbing will be approximately \$13.00 per linear foot of lot frontage. It is critical to understand, however, that the following cost estimate reflects only the cost of installation of curbs and does not include associated expenses which must also be borne by lot owners for such items as sprinkler relocation, driveway modification and/or replacement, reconstruction of storm sewer pipes, reconstruction of storm sewer inlets and fill dirt necessary after the installation of curbs.

### **APPROXIMATE COST PER LOT**

<b><u>Lot Frontage</u></b>	<b><u>Installation Cost</u></b>
60 feet	\$ 780
70 feet	\$ 910
80 feet	\$1,040
90 feet	\$1,170
100 feet	\$1,300
120 feet	\$1,560
140 feet	\$1,820
300 feet (corner lots)	\$3,900

Given the foregoing information it is the unanimous recommendation of your board of directors that the street system remain in its current configuration and that curbs not be installed.

We certainly hope the information contained in this memo will assist association members in arriving at an informed decision with respect to the potential installation of curbs. The curb issue will be included on the agenda as a topic of discussion for the 2013 annual meeting of the Wilderness Ridge Homeowners' Association. If you wish to offer additional insight, your comments will be welcome at that time.