

Why is the Association cutting down perfectly good mature trees?

The tree replacement project has been temporarily suspended until after the November 2, 2011 board meeting where more information will be provided to homeowners.

This question above is on the mind of many Cortina Residents seeing that some mature Sissoo trees that were planted right next to community walls have been removed. Some 150 trees were planted in Cortina that are too close to community walls and foundations of homes. As these trees mature, they will reach more than 40 feet with



very large strong roots that will destroy anything in its way. Over the last two years, evidence of the destruction has begun to manifest on community walls. We are not yet aware of any home foundations that have been cracked or lifted yet. Left unchecked, these trees would cause significant damage to walls, pools, and homes.

Why is the Association doing this now?

Rather than wait until the walls are significantly damaged, pools cracked, and homes destroyed the board felt the responsible solution is to deal with the problem before it's too late. Some homeowners have reported there is currently no damage to their walls. This is true. The property damage does not begin to occur until the trees are mature and are reaching further distances for water.

Once the board became aware of the impending danger to walls and private property, sound business judgment was used to prevent the damage by replacing the trees now instead of when costly repairs are required. The board has a responsibility to take a long term view of the community and do its best to seek the opinion of experts to help understand current and future issues. In this case, the board met with two Certified Arborists and discussed it at open board meetings for over a year before making this difficult decision.

There are over 4,600 trees in Cortina and 138 of them will be replaced with less invasive trees as part of this project. Please feel free to do any internet search on "Sissoo tree roots" and you will immediately discover why this decision was so important.

Why didn't the board tell homeowners before the removal started?

Each month the board makes many decisions that affect the community. You may recall the decision to take responsibility for landscaping in the boulevards, granite replacement throughout the entire community, painting the metal rails on the common area walls, converting from keys to "key fobs" for pool access, re-paint of all the metal roofs in the community, re-surfacing the pool decking, replacement of thousands of plants and trees and construction of retaining walls and sidewalks, just to mention a few.

The board didn't feel the tree damage remediation decision was any different than the decisions mentioned in the above paragraph. Once the board discovered that the community wants more information about this decision, the project was halted to provide an opportunity for homeowners questions to be answered before the project continues.

What will the trees be replaced with?

Many trees will be replaced with 15 gallon Mexican Bird of Paradise trees which will not damage the walls and still provide beauty and some shade. You can see quite a number of them on Longwood Blvd, south of Ryan, on the east side of the street. Where possible, the board is investigating the potential use of other less invasive trees.



This project started September 27, 2011 and will last through the winter as there are close to 150 trees that will be removed, stumps ground and re-planted.

The replacement of the trees in the boulevards in front of homes will continue for those damaged due to the extreme heat or disease that has killed many Evergreen Elms in the community. However, those will be replaced with Southern Live Oak trees that are more immune to disease.

Thank you for your patience through this process.

Cortina HOA Board of Directors.

CORTINA
Homeowners Association

Dear Wayne,

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. I'm grateful that you understand our situation. It is difficult to help homeowners who don't see significant damage yet, to understand what the future holds.

I have done my best to summarize the information you suggested I provide. Please let me know what else I can do to help.

Why is the Association replacing trees? – Trees planted too close to walls and sidewalks are beginning to show signs of buckling walls and sidewalks. Two certified arborists have informed the board that these trees will cause substantial damage to Association and private property if left unchecked.

How many trees are being replaced? – 138 trees have been of different species have been targeted for replacement. They will all be replaced with another tree, number for number.

What are we replacing the trees with? – The board has been experimenting with the Mexican Bird of Paradise tree along Longwood, just south of Ryan where there is very limited space. It is still early, but the test seems to be successful. The Mexican Bird was selected because the flowers it produces are consistent with the theme of the community and the roots are far less invasive in space restricted areas. They should grow to 12-15 feet tall, but will never be the towering huge tree that the Sissoo can become.

The board has also asked the landscaper to make other recommendations for areas that have a little more space, such as the Mulga Acacia.

Who should homeowners call? – We would prefer that homeowners come to the meeting November 2, 2011 at 7:30 PM at Cortina Elementary. The entire meeting will be devoted to this issue and there will be ample time for discussion and people to be heard.

Official Statement of the Board – This is the message the board is communicating to all concerned parties.

We want to thank all of the Cortina residents who have expressed great concern and appreciation for our community. It is an outstanding place to live, raise our families and enjoy the many qualities of life Queen Creek has to offer. To treat everyone with respect that have voiced concerns in the Cortina tree replacement asset protection program and allow equal voice to all we want to encourage attendance of the monthly Cortina HOA Community November 2 meeting at 7:30 pm at the Cortina Elementary School to come and share in the conversations at that time. To better manage the conversations and show the greatest respect we will hold our comments until all interested homeowners are able to attend and express their individual concerns. Again thank you for your involvement to improve our community both for today and for the many years to come.

I have included a map of the trees and species that are targeted and the announcement. I have also included a couple picture of Mexican Bird of Paradise trees I saw yesterday in Shamrock Estates and Western Skies Estates. You can see the one row of trees has been planted by a

homeowner too close to the walls, but there appear to be no problems so far. We are monitoring the situation.

I have also attached a couple pictures of Cortina streets that are a couple years old. The homeowner next to picture 06-038 emailed me this week pleading for us to replace the trees along his wall. The pictures labeled 03-035 are across the street from Libby Vincent who called your office. The trees in the picture are marked for replacement.

I hope this is helpful, I appreciate your support.

Kevin Bishop

480-813-6788