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Negotiations for Raveneaux Country Club stormwater detention basin fail to gain traction



Located near Cypress Creek, the Raveneaux Country Club in Spring sustained heavy damage after some recent flooding events, including Hurricane Harvey. (Courtesy Harris County Flood Control District)

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By [Wesley Gardner](#) | 1:18 PM Dec 22, 2021 CST | Updated 1:44 PM Dec 22, 2021 CST

Negotiations to construct a regional stormwater detention basin at what was previously the site of the Raveneaux Country Club in Spring have failed to gain traction between the Harris County Flood Control District and the Cypress Forest Public Utility District, leaving the proposed project's future in limbo.

In January 2020, the HCFCD [acquired](#) roughly 27.6 acres of land in an \$11.4 million deal that included the grounds of the Raveneaux Country Club clubhouse and adjoining facilities with the goal of constructing a [regional stormwater detention basin](#). The remaining 206 acres encompassing the golf course are owned by the CFPUD.

According to the HCFCD, adding stormwater detention at the site, and in the other areas around the Cypress Creek watershed, is necessary to reduce flooding in the area.

HCFCD Deputy Executive Director Matthew Zeve said negotiations had been in the works with CFPUD officials to swap the portion of land purchased by HCFCD with a parcel of

land owned by the CFPUD that was closer to Cypress Creek.

Had the negotiations been successful, Zeve said CFPUD would have worked with an outside group to construct a new golf course on the property previously designated for the detention basin, and that the detention basin would have been constructed on the property closer to Cypress Creek.

“I’m disappointed,” Zeve said. “I really thought we could work together with the public utility district to get a win for the flood control district, a win for the public utility district and a win for the local community.”

According to Greer Pagan, an attorney with Allen Boone Humphries Robinson LLP who represents CFPUD, the appraisals of the properties presented by the county did not match the appraisals presented by the CFPUD, making a deal unattainable.

“The way that the county put value on their property and our property created a substantial gap,” Pagan said. “We don’t necessarily agree that, that gap is there, but to have two parties in a transaction, they both have to agree, so we’ve been looking at other options to try to find a way to make it work for both sides.”

Zeve noted that a deal had been in the works to make up the difference between the appraisals that ultimately failed to gain traction.

“We were negotiating a deal where ... the public utility district could make up the difference by paying for the excavation of the future stormwater retention basin, and we were going to give them 10 years to do that so that it wasn’t a huge cost up front,” Zeve said. “They came to the conclusion that they couldn’t make the finances work on that deal, and because they couldn’t make the finances work, they wanted to call off the talks.”

Pagan, however, said it was not accurate to characterize the negotiations as stalled.

“We haven’t given up by any means,” Pagan said. “We’re looking at different options now. I think we just have to continue talking about what some options might be that work for both parties.”

While Zeve said he thought there was potential for a deal in the future, he noted the flood control district is still moving forward with portions of the project outside the construction of the detention basin, including the demolition of the tennis courts and swimming pool.

“[Also,] we’re going to plant trees and vegetation along Cypresswood Drive so that folks who are traveling down Cypresswood have a nice-looking vegetative buffer so that they’re not looking at an empty lot,” Zeve said. “Hopefully at some point in the future, we’ll have a different path moving forward.”

Zeve said other flood mitigation projects are still moving forward, including a storm water detention basin at TC Jester Boulevard and Cypresswood in Spring, which is currently in the design phase of the construction process. He noted an additional detention basin is in the works that will be located near Ella Boulevard and Cypresswood.

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