

A Letter to the Saddle Creek Community Services District Board and General Manager:

I am a 17 year resident in the Saddle Creek Community and have watched the many evolutions and changes that have taken place over the years. I know operation and maintenance of the community have been a challenge to the Community Services Board over the years. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your commitment and service. Since I have become more and more concerned in recent years about the condition of the roads, landscaping, and other issues I have recently made it my goal to become better informed about the role of CSD, Castle and Cook, and Architectural Design Committee in the mitigation of these issues. I have always tried to do my part as a resident and voter in making Saddle Creek Resort the desirable place to live that it was when I elected to make it my home.

I am writing this letter because I would like to address a number of these issues directly to the board. I believe I can contribute some valid solution-oriented thinking to the process. Some of the items are small in comparison to the larger issues that require additional funding such as roads and landscaping, but are also easily within the current budget. Others items are intended for consideration for future budgeting.

1. Entrance to the Saddle Creek community:

- a. Truck entrance sign has been in disrepair for several years. This is an immediate item that affects the aesthetics of the community for which I have obtained a quote from the Sign Shop in Copperopolis - \$110.00
- b. Christmas lights at the gate house - We are now entering the second month of the New Year and the gate house holiday lights have been on 24/7 since before Christmas. The solution is to immediately take down these lights and in the future follow the lead of the community HOAs which require that holiday lights be taken down no more than two weeks after the holidays.
- c. Street light pole on island immediately outside of the entry gate - Pole is so faded that it looks "tagged". I have obtained a quote from Kelly Moore for a DTM acrylic enamel commercial semi-gloss paint at a cost of \$55.00/gallon. The pole will require approximately 1 quart of paint. This same paint could be used on the Main Gate which is also due for painting soon.
- d. Colored flags – Six flags outside of the gate and the additional three in front of the Sales Office. These flags, and the Saddle Creek flag as well, have been deteriorating over the past 3 months and are now faded and in shreds. The purpose of these flags is, I believe, to raise attention to the area in a positive and welcoming way. They currently give an extremely unfavorable impression that says "Look how poorly we take care of our facilities." These flags should be replaced immediately and a second set should be kept in stock at all times to avoid the currently unacceptable situation. CSD Maintenance and Sales Office personnel should work together to be more diligent in observing and maintaining all of the flags.
- e. Landscaping outside of the gate - I know that we have legal issues here regarding when and where we will be able to put grass or other vegetation in the future. But the Gate House and landscaping just outside the gate serve as the "front door" to the community. As such it is the first thing that people see when they enter and depicts our community as a whole. This should be a priority budget item regardless of the limitations we will have to work within so that the initial presentation of the Golf Resort and Community is aesthetically pleasing to the resident and guest.
- f. Signage throughout the community: Directional, sales, and construction signage is regulated per the CC&Rs so that it will be both effective and aesthetically pleasing. The "Exit" sign at the corner of Saddle Creek and Oak Creek roads is neither. It should be service oriented and inform the visitor as much as possible, utilizing the Saddle Creek logo branding. A sign that reads "To Lodge and Main Gate" will be more effective, service-oriented, and aesthetic. Again, such signs will be of very minimal expense and can be done locally. Quoted at \$35.00 per sign.

- g. Fire hydrants and utility boxes – These are in need of paint and are at differing levels of need due to the different times of installation. This will never be done by the Fire Department, PGE, Caltel, or CCWD. This can be accomplished using the same type of long lasting paint as the light poles and entry gate.
- h. There are more than 50 street light poles in the community that are in need of paint. This could be done at a cost of \$1000.00 in 2017. Additionally, it could be included in the budget to be done at least every 10 years so that they don't deteriorate to the present condition. As noted above we are only looking at 1 quart of paint per pole at \$55.00/gallon to maintain these light poles.

2. Construction Sites:

- a. I have enclosed pictures of some of the sites which are in violation of rules established by the ADC concerning weekly site clean-up, port-a-potty placement and screening, along with posting of rules.
- b. Rules state per the ADC and CC&R that a home shall be completed within 18 months. There are multiple homes in the community that are well past this time and are still nowhere near completion.
- c. I have heard multiple complaints concerning the home on Oak Creek Drive that has "No Trespassing" signs posted and unfinished materials sitting at the driveway street entrance. These are areas where the ADC and CSD need to enforce the rules that are in place.

3. Street Trees:

- a. Trimming - It was not communicated to me until recently that maintenance of the street trees are the responsibility of the owner. If I had known this I would have been trimming my trees years ago. I believe the vast majority of homeowners are unaware of this policy. However, since these trees are meant to be uniform throughout the community and were planted without homeowner consultation, I believe it should be a CSD responsibility to maintain them. An expectation for each homeowner to maintain their trees will result in inconsistencies. CSD funds should be budgeted for this maintenance and taxes levied as needed for a program in which an arborist recommends and trims trees in different neighborhoods on a rotating annual basis. This would guarantee the best possible uniformity and care of the trees in the community. I am willing to do the research on this as directed by the CSD as a consideration for future budgeting.
- b. Future trees in the community - If the CSD will ultimately be responsible for all street trees, I would like to recommend implementation of a program whereby the CSD would have input on the type and location of trees planted by Castle and Cooke for the future success and maintenance of the trees. For example the London Sycamores on Saddle Creek Drive were a poor choice for the area - they are susceptible to disease, are messy, and planted in locations that will disrupt the sidewalks and streets in the future.

4. Maintenance Personnel: The Maintenance operations are the most observable arm of the CSD to the residents and visitors to this community. I have spoken with many residents who share my feeling that it is important that maintenance personnel be aware of the impression their activities have on the public. Some, but not all, employees often do not appear to work efficiently or productively. We have observed workers –
- a. standing at a jobsite using their phones for long periods of time
 - b. sitting on buckets pulling weeds and taking all day to do a small area
 - c. taking three weeks to prep soil for new seed in a small patch of lawn
 - d. a maintenance employee dressed in full rain gear in the pouring rain walking down the street with a power trimmer trimming one or two low hanging branches per street tree. This is not only unproductive but unsafe.

- e. workers using blowers for hours to blow a few leaves on what must be “leaf blowing day” long after the leaves are gone and again in the pouring rain.

This is busy work and a waste of budgeted funds. Their time could be much better spent on some of the aforementioned maintenance needs. The pace and attention of some employees is often unacceptable and not of a standard expected in this community. Whether they want it or not the Maintenance department serves as the community’s most accessible ambassador to the CSD, and creates an intended or unintended perspective as to the effectiveness of this elected board. I believe that the solution to this is that the Supervisor make himself aware of the perspective of the resident and visitor and hold himself accountable. His job is to then hold the employees accountable to a productive and efficient use of their time and educate them to the fact that when they are doing their work they are a representative of the CSD and effectively employed by the homeowners whose taxes pay their wages. Every car that drives by and every resident, or indeed visitor, who passes these employees while they are on the job is forming an impression. Even one person can put the crew and team in a bad light. The relationship and rapport between CSD maintenance and homeowners is important and should be a priority in the everyday awareness of the Supervisors and their personnel.

In closing I would like to say that I believe that if we expect Castle and Cooke to begin to move forward and do what we expect of them – build new homes and advance this area within a set timeline - we need to lead by example. The CSD, ADC, SC Golf Club and Castle and Cooke need to work harder and better in collaboration to achieve the goals of this community - making it appear to be the wonderful place to live and play that we all know it can be. There have been many instances in the past where there has been such collaboration and cooperation to a positive end.

We would like to extend our appreciation to the CSD for their hard work in getting the gate issue resolved with Castle and Cook. We now have a truly gated community which is a huge step forward. We would also like to thank the members of the CSD board for their commitment to continually work toward resolution of our road repairs and post-drought landscape repairs. I am willing to do any research that is needed regarding such things as an arborist, signage quotes, and any other items identified. I will also be making it a priority to discuss with my neighbors the importance of the pending ballot measure in May.

Thank you,
Paul Filson and Terri Gray

Cc:
Larry Hoffman – President
Skymoose@caltel.com
Ken Albertson – Vice President
kalbertson@ptsmail.com
Darlene Debaldo – Secretary
dargogolf@gmail.com
Roger Golden – Director
4cornerspd@sbcglobal.net
GM/Treasurer – Peter Kampa
pkampa@kampacs.com
Linda Stefanick – Sales Manager Castle and Cooke
saddlecreeksales@castlecook.com

PHOTOS:

FLAGS:



GATE HOUSE HOLIDAY LIGHTING:



LIGHT POLES:

CURRENT:



PROPOSED:



SIGNS:



UTILITY BOXES:



FIRE HYDRANTS:



CONSTRUCTION SITES:



OAK CREEK DRIVEWAY:



APPROPRIATELY MAINTAINED CONSTRUCTION SITE:



STREET TREES ON HAWKRIDGE:

