

Residents: GARDEN OAKS 'best kept secret in Houston'

By **HEATHER NICHOLSON**
Real Estate Correspondent

Garden Oaks homeowners call their community the "best kept secret in Houston," partly because it lives up to its name with a heavy population of trees and stringent deed restrictions protecting the neighborhood's green space.

Nestled among towering pines and grand magnolias, this quaint and architecturally unique neighborhood of approximately 1,400 homes continues to attract home buyers wanting to live in close-in Houston. North of Loop 610,

Garden Oaks is bordered by Ella Boulevard to the west and Yale Street to the east.

With its 1930s and '40s cottages, bungalows and ranch-style homes, most of the real estate in Garden Oaks has been remodeled or updated for resale. There is some new construction in the area, but it is mostly custom-built projects that adhere to the community's deed restrictions. Garden Oaks' charm has been compared to West University and Bellaire communities.

Deanna Zugheri is a Garden Oaks resident and Realtor with Keller Williams Metropolitan.

She said that green space and community involvement keep home buyers coming.

"Garden Oaks is a neighborhood with a country feel close to the city. Buyers are attracted to the large lots, beautiful trees, parks, gardens, winding streets, friendly neighbors and community involvement. The proximity to downtown (Houston) makes it a desirable location also," Zugheri said.

Some events the neighborhood organizes for residents are Fourth of July Bike Parade, Home and Garden Tour, Fall Festival, GO-Kids for Families, GO Sisterhood, and there is an



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1083 W. 41st

active garden club and civic club.

Some of the new homes for sale in Garden Oaks are modeled after the original cottages and preserve the look and feel of the neighborhood. Some aesthetic features include wrap-around porches, Hardiplank siding and trim, stone accents, wood-stained shutters and porches with copper awnings. And there is no worrying if these new homes will blend in with the old ones, either.

"The (deed) restrictions are in place and are enforced to

preserve the feel and look of Garden Oaks by having space in between homes and setbacks from the street. The Garden Oaks Maintenance Organization reviews plans to make sure new construction and additions are within the building lines," Zugheri said.

Garden Oaks was established in 1937 by Edward L. Crain. He purchased a tract of land just north of the Houston Heights neighborhood. Comprised of five sections, Garden Oaks offers mostly pier-and-beam cottages.

The western edge of the neighborhood is comprised of old G.I. homes built for returning veterans after World War II.

Among the Garden Oaks homes currently on the market, Zugheri said, are a three-bedroom, one-bath cottage at 1083 W. 41st. For \$269,500, this home is on a 9,310-square-foot lot, has a two-car garage and hardwood floors.

At 236 W. 34th is a three-bedroom, 2½-bath home for \$395,000. This house was built on a 13,360-square-foot lot and has a pool.



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236 W. 34th