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Community in harmony with environment

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Bob Rheudasil, Flower Mound's first mayor, is revered as a giant in the town's history. Now he's planning a new subdivision with environmentally friendly features that many hope will point the way to a greener future for the Town. The Town Council approved zoning for Rheudasil Farms to be changed from agricultural to single family residential at its May 4 meeting. Mayor Jody Smith and several members of the Town Council praised Mr. Rheudasil for the foresight and creativity that has gone into its development.



Flower Mound's first Mayor Bob Rheudasil and his wife, Naomi, among the bluebonnets.

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The subdivision is located on a naturally beautiful piece of property that will be served by a gated cul-de-sac off Lexington Avenue between Gerault and Spinks Roads. Development will preserve most of 200 large trees on the property as well as bluebonnets and other natural wildflowers. The subdivision's innovative design will have eight homes on 11 lots with three lots set aside for a private park with public access. Among the innovations is a permeable paving system that not only slows the flow of runoff into streams and lakes, but also filters out many water pollutants. The paving design has been described as something that looks like a giant Rice Krispie® treat made out of concrete. There are no curbs and gutters to speed water flow, but rather gently sloping grassy depressions that will provide slower drainage. Outdoor gas lighting will give the neighborhood a special ambiance since the gaslight does not attract insects and stays in the area of intended illumination, allowing for dark skies and a view of the stars. The homes will be built to such high efficiency standard they will use less than half the energy required by homes of more conventional construction.

Rheudasil is modest about his own contributions to development of the property. He credits his son-in-law, Mark Glover, a commercial real estate pro, for coming up with many of the planned innovations. He also thanks the Town of Flower Mound, which went through a painstaking process to approve the plans because they were so different from others that have been presented before. "I'm thrilled to do something that will be good for the future of the community," Rheudasil said in an interview with the News Connection. "We're trying to set a leadership example," said Glover. "We think this is the way planning ought to be done and we're hopeful that in 10 years this is how it will be done." Glover said he plans for all homes in the new subdivision to get LEED Certification, Gold or Platinum. LEED is an internationally recognized certification system that measures how well a building or community performs across metrics that include energy savings, water efficiency, CO2 emissions reduction, improved indoor environmental quality and stewardship of resources, according to the U.S. Green Building Council website.

Residents will be encouraged to incorporate features like solar panels, rainwater capture, geothermal energy and other technologies in harmony with the environment. An important part of the subdivision design

is Leadership Park planned around the concept of honoring past community leaders and inspiring those of the present and future. Glover said it's important to remember people like Edward Marcus who owned 4000 acres in the area and had a vision for how it should develop. Pat Rheudasil, Mr. Rheudasil's first wife who died in 2000, was the first Town Secretary. She handled everything from reading water meters to animal control issues. Mr. Rheudasil and Doc Wilkerson, the town's second mayor, worked to get signatures on petitions to incorporate the town to prevent annexation of the area by the City of Irving. "We want to tell those stories," explained Glover.

The environmental friendliness and open space in the subdivision will come with significant up front cost. Home prices will likely fall in a range from \$500,000 to \$1 million. However, the neighborhood will offer buyers a combination of environmental friendliness and open space that is unique in North Central Texas, Glover said. Part of the high cost is due to the relatively small size of the subdivision. Glover believes that in open areas with more home sites, environmental compatibility will come with a lower unit cost.