

## NEWS RELEASE

### LOCAL DEVELOPERS PRESERVE 30-YEAR-OLD LIVE OAKS

May 22, 2000 – Houston – Imagine you're a developer with a piece of property that has a road circling the grounds. Imagine that this road is in the way of your planned improvements. And then imagine this road has 30-year-old live oaks – 292 to be exact – lining its perimeter. What do you do? To complete your improvements, you must remove the trees.

For Halliburton Company, The Staubach Company and the venture of St. Joe Commercial and Means-Knaus L.L.C., owners of the 220-acre, master-planned commercial development of Oak Park at Westchase, whether to destroy the trees was never the question. The dilemma was how to preserve them.

As the owners were seeking a way to save these magnificent works of nature, they found Environmental Design. Since 1977, Environmental Design of Tomball, Texas, has worked to preserve nature's trees using state-of-the-art equipment, refined transplanting techniques and a lot of care.

The owners teamed with Environmental Design to devise a plan to relocate the trees in a completely new site plan. The idea was to dig up the live oaks and place the trees along new roadways. This provided a win-win resolution. The trees would remain on the property, the occupants could enjoy the trees and, most important, 292 oaks would be saved from the woodpile. The problem? These trees are big – up to 26 inches in diameter. The solution? A “white elephant.”

Environmental Design is the only company in the world that has a white elephant. In fact, it has the only 14-foot spades or “white elephants” in existence. The name came from its large size, odd appearance and awesome ability to move trees. It digs a hole, plants a tree and fills the void left by the moved tree. The white elephant's process is like gardening – on the grandest of scales.

Deliberately the machine inserts its blades into the ground and cuts a 14-foot diameter circle. As the blades begin to rise, they bring up a 7-foot-tall conical dirt plug. The plug is set aside for later use. Then, with its three legs moving independently of each other, the white elephant moves toward the first tree. After a series of forward and reverse movements to center itself, the great machine opens its “gate” and envelops the tree trunk. Slowly the white elephant crouches toward the ground and one by one its ten blades pierce the earth and sink until they are no longer visible. Suddenly the entire tree is lifted out of the ground and is on its way, atop the back of the white elephant, to its new destination. With the weight of itself, a root ball, dirt and the tree equaling approximately 130,000 pounds, the white elephant moves cautiously toward the tree's new home. Again, with forward and reverse movements the machine centers itself over the hole and lowers the tree.

Once the tree is in place, the blades lift out, and the white elephant moves on to repeat the process, 291 more times. Each time, the plug from the new locations is used to fill the hole left by the departed tree, sealing the evidence of the previous inhabitant.

“The live oaks were planted by Halliburton more than 30 years ago. They are just too beautiful, important and valuable to eliminate,” said Means-Knaus Principal Doug Knaus. “It’s extremely exciting to preserve and create this landscape environment.”

It takes a bulldozer and a crew of four to run the white elephant. Moving one tree is a painstaking process taking more than an hour per tree. At this point approximately 100 trees remain to be moved at Oak Park. Each day the white elephant and its crew move about seven trees. By May 2000, all the trees should be in place – making Oak Park a development truly worthy of its name.

While roadways and live oaks are being put in place, two new office buildings are going up fast in Oak Park at Westchase.

E.E. Reed Construction broke ground earlier this year on a six-story, 300,000-square-foot building for Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc. Nearby, E.E. Reed is framing a 157,300-square-foot office building and 61,300-square-foot technical services facility for Veritas DGC.

Headquartered in Pasadena, California, Jacobs is one of the five largest engineering and construction companies, as measured by Fortune, Forbes and Engineering News Record. The 53-year-old firm, which provides engineering services for petroleum and petrochemical plants, among other markets, will have about 1,500 employees in the new building, which sits on 18 acres. Completion is slated for early 2001.

Veritas DGC, a Houston-based company, is a leading provider of integrated geophysical technologies designed to enhance the success of oil and gas drilling programs. The company has 34 years of operating experience and facilities in 17 countries. Upon completion of its new 18.5-acre campus in the fall of 2000, Veritas DGC plans to consolidate 500 employees, drawn from five separate Houston locations.

Oak Park at Westchase is located on the west side of the Sam Houston Tollway (Beltway 8) between Harwin and Bellaire Boulevard. Part of the Westchase District, the development constitutes one of the area’s last large tracts for campus-style corporate use.

Halliburton Company is the world’s leading diversified energy services, engineering, energy equipment, construction and maintenance companies. Founded in 1919, Halliburton provides a broad range of energy services and products, industrial and marine engineering and construction services.

The Staubach Company is an international real estate strategy and services firm that provides innovative solutions for companies seeking office, retail and industrial space. Areas of expertise include site selection, acquisition and disposition, financing, design and construction management, portfolio services and property management.

The joint venture of St. Joe Commercial and Means-Knaus is engaged in creating high-performance, investment-grade workplaces for corporate America. Special attention is paid to the acquisition of strategic land positions and the completion of office developments in the major metropolitan areas of Texas. Collectively the partners own 6 million square feet of buildings and have more than 2.5 million square feet under development.



Workers ready the “white elephant” for its journey. The total weight of the tree, root ball, dirt and the machine itself equals more than 58 tons.

*photo by Steve Anderson, Steve Anderson Design*



It takes patience, loving care and quite a bit of water to transplant a tree of this size. In the background, a 300,000 square-foot office building is under construction for Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc.

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