Army Corp of Engineers- New Orleans
C/O Amy Dixon
7400 Leake Ave
New Orleans, LA 70118

sttammanyfs@usace.army.mil

9/4/2023

To whom it may concern;

I am writing to state my concerns with regards to the proposed Levee project that excludes much of unincorporated Slidell. I am deeply disturbed by the lack of transparency surrounding this project. This affects not only my personal home on [redacted] that my dad built for me, but also my family home, which we have owned and lived in since 1974. My family purchased the first home built in the French Branch in 1973, and we have resided here since.

I believe this levee would cause lasting and far reaching repercussions way beyond the currently estimated 20 percent loss of assessed value of our homes, which is already a matter of substantial harm for tens of thousands of us who would find ourselves outside the levee.

There are too many factors that I don't see being taken into consideration, such as reasonable studies on the effects of a very limited levee breaking up an integrated drainage system which could potentially lead to a bowl effect in incorporated areas and increased flooding in areas outside the levee. There is the matter of massively accelerating flood and insurance costs that are already at all time highs for most of us. There is the concern of fairness in excluding a vast portion of this area's residents – and primarily those most in need of flood mitigation and protection-resulting in serious and lasting future harm for generations to come, while boosting the values and assets of those within the proposed limited wall, which largely seems to benefit the town of Slidell and a select amount of residents included within that circle.

I would like to see the time taken to thoroughly consider and study alternatives, including levees that would extend protection to all of Military road and the surrounding subdivisions. I personally feel the use of the existing rail way bed/modifying roadways/ bridges/highway 90 provides maximum potential for at least some valuable protection for all, while also providing increased property safety, value to assets, and fair treatment of everyone.

This levee as currently proposed, would cause lasting and permanent damage to this community in the form of personal loss for many thousands of residents, affected job market and growth, education quality and opportunities, decreased values of long time assets, and the health and well being of some of Slidell's longest term residents, that I believe would extend far beyond what has currently been mentioned or discussed.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards,
Ray Adams
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Subject: Concerning the proposed levee plan as it stands

I'm writing with grave concerns about the proposed plans from the United States Army Corp of Engineers. This is people's lives. I moved here in 2012 to help care for my husband's ailing mother. I fell in love and the rest is history. My husband's whole family lived here and lives here. We don't leave for hurricanes. This is our way of living. This makes me sick to see that our lives, property will be devalued. Our homes and way of life cannot be replaced. These homes are where families were born, grew up and built community. What has been done to research the impacts on commerce and industry when people that are committed to this way of life can no longer have community? This isn't a transient population. Many of these people have been here for generations.

There is said to be a 20% hit on property value however, loss of the natural barriers has caused this problem. French Branch did not cause this problem. The continued building has caused these problems. The development has taken away not only the protections of the area but also much of the beauty and now will take away our culture, traditions and livelihoods.

There has been limited communication from our HOA. Supposedly the Army Corp, St Tammany and MRA have been in contact with organizations. As a resident here I would say between COVID and the shutdowns there was more of a need for better communications. We didn't hear about this in 2020, 2021, 2022. We heard about a meeting happening at a local home and as soon as we heard we started educating ourselves and our neighbors. We would therefore ask that the education and open comment period be reopened, and meetings be held with ample and plentiful notification that are led by Army Corp of Engineers. This is not only reasonable but also the responsible way to act.

We would ask that you implement a moratorium on all new building in the area. The continued building that has happened since the beginning of the studies change the numbers, impact and topography of the neighborhoods impacted and "non-impacted". Subdivisions have been built, homes have sold, businesses have gone in. The numbers that the Army Corp is using are not valid anymore. We need to make sure that community members and taxpayers who are here and have been here are taken care of first. I am not against building but the building that is being done knowing that this levee was being planned is irresponsible and unreasonable.

Historical and traditional communities and families need to know that we can continue our livelihoods. How does the Army Corp of Engineers plan accomplish this? Is there any reference or consideration for generations of families and traditions etc. Is there money earmarked to help protect families and traditions? Churches? Communities? Schools? What types of programs will be enacted?

Priority elevation funding for homes currently in existence. Not grant funding, not reimbursement. We cannot afford the money nor can many of our neighbors afford to to elevate their homes and update to code. Retireded, disabled persons will be disapporitaely impacted. We implore upon youto have money set aside for people who currently own homes. This would insure that all monies earmarked for elevation and based on numbers from 2021 should be applied only to homes owned at time of project completion by private homeowners who owned homes a the time of project inception and completion.

There will be loss of life according to your own report. According to the life safety risk assessment 8.0 (Your proposal) the current alternative would be medium/high for life loss, LLR-Life Loss Risk. What kind of money will be set aside for life insurance, extended care and families who are relocated due to this plan? What a horrific way to have to be impacted at the end of your life. To have to leave your home, your family, your church and your community. Some folks have lived in this neighborhood 40 or more years.

Creation of an unbiased oversight and monitoring committee over the distribution of any money that comes to St Tammany/Louisiana. This may seem pessimistic but what I have seen since moving here is it is about 'who you know' not 'what you know'. People need to be treated fairly. This money needs to be specifically for this purpose and MAY NOT be diverted or changed.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

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