Lisa Pilet
[redacted]
Slidell, LA 70461
[redacted]
[redacted]

September 5, 2023

Army Corp of Engineers-New Orleans District
C/O Amy Dixon
CEMVN-PMR-C
7400 Leake Ave
New Orleans, LA 70118
Sttammanyfs@usace.army.mil

Subject: Concerns and Recommendations Regarding the St. Tammany Parish Levee Project

Dear Ms. Amy Dixon,

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to express my deep concerns and provide recommendations regarding the St. Tammany Parish Levee Project, specifically concerning the exclusion of my property [redacted] **SLIDELL, LA 70461,** and many other fellow citizens from its protection. As a concerned resident, I believe it is vital to address various issues that will impact those of us who are outside of the levee to ensure the safety, well-being, and fairness of all members of our community.

1. The existing drainage issues on Jacob Rd and along I-10
    a. Please see the attached email thread between our previous parish councilman and the DOTD regarding this issue.

From: Mary K. Bellisario [mailto:bayouduo97@charter.net]
Sent: Wednesday, June 08, 2016 9:45 AM
To: Charles E. Williams <eddie@stpgov.org<mailto:eddie@stpgov.org>>
Cc: Michael J. Noto <mjnoto@stpgov.org<mailto:mjnoto@stpgov.org>>; Shannon Davis <shannondavis@stpgov.org< mailto:shannondavis@stpgov.org>>; Pruett; Bill <bill5424@att.net<mailto:bill5424@att.net>>; Pruett; Vicki <bjpruett@earthlink.net< mailto:bjpruett@earthlink.net>>; Macaluso; Peter <petermac504@yahoo.com<mailto:petermac504@yahoo.com>>
Subject: Jacob Road Issue
Importance: High

Eddie:

At least a year ago there was a meeting on Jacob Road to correct a long term drainage problem. It was decided that Engineering was to write a letter to the LA DOTD that would allow us the construct a drainage ditch to take the Jacob Road flow to the LA DOTD ROW and that they would approve this project.

Has the letter been sent to the LA DOTD? The reason I'm asking is that there is another resident, Peter Macaluso is concerned about this issue.

I need a response for this man and for Bill and Vickie Pruett who brought the complaint to the Parish.

Please advise,

E. L. "Gene" Bellisario
Parish Council - District 9
985-788-8186

From: "Donna S. O'Dell" <dsodell@stpgov.org>
Date: June 9, 2016 at 12:15:43 PM CDT
To: "Gene Bellasario (External Email)" <bayouduo97@charter.net>
Cc: "Michael J. Noto" <mjnoto@stpgov.org>, Shannon Davis <shannondavis@stpgov.org>, "Charles E. Williams" <eddie@stpgov.org>, "Pruett; Bill " <bill5424@att.net>, "Pruett; Vicki " <bjpruett@earthlink.net>, "Macaluso; Peter" <petermac504@yahoo.com>
Subject: RE: Jacob Road Issue

Gene,

Extensive regrading of the ditch along the exit ramp and interstate is needed for stormwater to flow that way. DOTD will allow us to do a project through a permit, but we do not want to take on the liability of working along the interstate nor do we have funding for the work. Since this will not be a benefit to DOTD, they will not do the regrading for us.

Donna O'Dell, P.E.
Picture (Device Independent Bitmap) 1.jpg
Assistant Director, Engineering Dept. **St.**
Tammany Parish Government 620 N. Tyler St., Covington, LA 70434 p: 985-898-2552 e: dsodell@stpgov.org
www.stpgov.org

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2. The USACE plan causes harm to both residents and the natural ecosystem with the introduction of this levee system.

3. Change Funding Allocation for Residential Protection Strategies.

4. Collaboration with DOTD and CPRA for Surge Mitigation
   I urge you to collaborate with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) and the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) to explore surge mitigation strategies using Hwy 90 and 190 East. A similar study for surge mitigation using Hwy 11 and Lakeshore Drive (Rat's Nest Road) is already underway. The Hwy 190 restoration and bridge replacement project should be activated soon, presenting an opportunity to maximize further reductions in storm surge through structural changes to highway and bridge design.

5. CSX Railroad Surge Barrier Considered:
   I strongly recommend joining the Lake Coalition to explore the feasibility of using the CSX railroad as a surge barrier.

6. Full Upfront Coverage of Home Elevation Costs:
   All costs associated with the elevation of homes due to the levee placement and changes in water flow should be covered upfront, as it is unreasonable to expect residents to bear these costs before qualifying for grants. The FEMA rules on elevation should be removed.

7. Options for Affected Residents:
   Total Buyout: Offer a total buyout of property by the federal government, including relocation costs. These buyouts should be fair market value as of 2021 when the project was started. Many will be unable to find new housing, move themselves, elevate their property, or secure insurance/funding for new homes if homeowners are not adequately compensated.

8. Oversight Entity for Funding Allocation:
   The creation of an independent entity, separate from St. Tammany Parish and Louisiana, to ensure fair and transparent allocation of project funds, free from potential biases or political influence and diversion of funds to other programs, interests, etc.… Funds would be managed for Education, Vocation, Elevation, Relocation, Mitigation, levee maintenance, etc…

9. Moratorium on Building:
   Implement a moratorium on all new buildings in the area and within 50 minutes of the levee to protect existing residents. This would ensure that all monies earmarked for elevation and based on numbers from 2021 should be applied only to homes owned at the time of project completion by private homeowners who owned homes a the time of project inception and completion.

10. Tax Refunds:
    Provide tax refunds to homeowners in single-family dwellings outside the levee as compensation for project costs that they will not benefit from.

11. Compensation to homeowners for additional costs of flood insurance

<u>Additional Information and Questions for Clarification</u>

To better understand the project and its implications, I kindly request the following information and answers to the following questions:

1. 6,500 homes to be elevated:
   a. Is my home one of the 6,500 that are to be raised
   b. Is there a list or a map identifying the homes that qualify for elevation
   c. Is there a list or a map identifying the homes that DO NOT qualify for elevation
   d. What is the plan for houses that are not up to code to be raised, or are unable to be raised
   e. What is the timeline for homes being elevated outside of the levee protection
2. How can residents access updates or changes to the project plans to ensure transparency and public input?

3. How/When will St. Tammany residents vote on a levee tax? Who will pay for the levee?

I believe that addressing these concerns and questions will lead to a more equitable and effective levee project that prioritizes the safety and well-being of all residents. I look forward to your response and hope for a constructive dialogue on this matter.

Sincerely,

Lisa Pilet

Lisa Pilet
[redacted]