

Dear Mayor and members of Bellaire City Council,

Regarding some upcoming decisions for Council, I have a request and a suggestion. First up, please, remove all multi-family zoning from our City ordinances. We don't need any multi-family, apartments or condominiums. There's a reason small upscale cities don't allow multi-family units - it preserves property values. We already have a problem with the areas to the west of the City limits, but I can recall when a number of our friends moved to the fresh new apartments in that area, including the Gulfton neighborhood.

A lot has changed since then, including the quality of those apartments. Same thing for condos built with great fanfare in the Sharpstown area. Once built, they never seem to go away, they just slowly decline or turn into apartments. Only a third of the condo units in the The Bellaire on Mapleridge are homesteaded now.

Under the current UV-D zoning, from my front yard on Locust I might see 40, 50, even 60 foot tall buildings with some multi-family component 15 feet from my neighbors' homes across the street. And there goes the neighborhood, right? Why not promote fee simple one or two-story townhouses with alley access, then change the front setback to 10 feet? Sounds pedestrian friendly to me.

On to the Holly Street Trail, no pun intended. I saw another \$150K on the CIP list for that spot. Why? Over a quarter of a million dollars has been spent on it since 2015, and what has that accomplished?

I worked at Rice University for over 20 years and saw that beautiful walking path lined with oaks every time I entered the campus. Nice and wide with simple borders to hold the crushed granite. A little messy, no benches or landscaping. Just a comfortable place to walk or jog. The residents along that stretch of Holly are already fortunate to have a walking path and an esplanade, plus benches. We ordinary residents would prefer to see more traffic cameras and patrols on the street. Spend the money on those needs.

Our debt service is still about \$9 million a year, yet I hear talk about another bond issue. Put off the extraneous items until that debt service is at a reasonable level for a city our size. I feel that it's time to control wasteful spending and focus on resident safety and infrastructure upgrades for streets, drainage, sewer lines, and water lines. Please, consider the long-term consequences of your decisions.

Thank you, and happy trails,

Jane McNeel

