December 16, 2024

Dear Mayor and members of City Council,

The Bellaire city management and at least some members of City Council seem determined to abandon all of the City land along the 4300-4400 blocks of Edith, beginning with the demolition of the wastewater treatment plant. No repairs necessary, just hook up to Houston. In fact, let's just turn it into green space and buy something else. What I see in all these schemes is a plan to take the easy way out, with other people's money.

Here are my thoughts.

A new Public Works office building could be built on the north side of Edith St, high enough to accommodate another flood. With parking below. A flood wall can be designed and built around the the WWTP, and necessary repairs can be made to the plant. More flood walls can be installed around the equipment in the equipment lot. Major hospitals in the Medical Center have installed flood barriers.

It may be possible to remodel the interior of City Hall, or to add on to the building, to provide offices for Public Works personnel. For years they were housed in the Fire Department offices after the demolition of the old PW building, then in a portable building on Edith. Then build the flood walls along Edith for the WWTP and equipment.

Whatever the discussion, with $30 million already on the table, please do not go into more debt by selling Certificates of Obligation to buy a building and land in Houston for $7 million, then spend another $7.5 million on remodeling it over a two-year period. This is beginning to feel out of control. Will the Public Works personnel be operating from that building during the remodel? And what is the source of that next $7.5 million, more Certificates of Obligation?

Everything changes, sometimes for the better, sometimes for worse. After all my years living here I never expected this current situation. The highest debt in the City's history, and the probable loss of an important City service

Do you really believe any of this current plan will solve our flooding problem if, despite all the work by Harris County Flood Control, Brays Bayou overflows its banks and backs up our storm sewers? Who will maintain Cypress Ditch? The railroad ditch? How much detention are we talking about? Please, take your time and be cautious about your decisions on these issues.

Thank you,

Jane McNeel