

[Name]
[Street Address]
[City, ST ZIP Code]
March 17, 2007

Mayor Bill White
City of Houston
P.O. Box 1562
Houston, TX 77251

RE: Shady Acres Floodway

Dear Mr. Mayor,

We are new Houstonians. My husband and I live in Shady Acres which is located in the Northwest corner of the Loop 610 adjacent to White Oak Bayou. Our community was recently designated as a regulated floodway. We chose our new residence inside the Loop 610 and Shady Acres because we believed it was a great neighborhood and an upcoming area just waiting to be re-vitalized. Another incentive to this part of town was the closeness to local grocery stores, walking trails, and restaurants. From here we can walk to many of our favorite places and do not have to pollute the air by using the car. Prior to building our home we asked around on our street what it was like during tropical storm "Allison". The majority of the homes did not have water inside the house. There were few houses that had water but they were in very low lying areas or build on slab. So we decided to build the house and move from Seabrook TX to Houston. We were fully aware that the new lot we were building on was in the 100 year floodplain. This presented no problem to us because our house was being built on pier and beam about 5 feet off the ground. Our elevation certificate clearly indicates our ground level being above the BFE (base flood elevation).

Ordinance: Chapter 19 Section 19-43

The new ordinance Chapter 19 Section 19-43 presents a detrimental change (to the negative) to our entire neighborhood. Our home will lose most of its value should the positive development of Shady Acres be undermined by an ordinance that does not allow progressive and sensitive construction in the floodway. Our home is safe from flooding should it ever occur. But what will happen to our neighborhood. I always thought that the City of Houston would encourage the re-vitalization of an old inner-city community.

This ordinance will choke the life out of this great community which is surrounded by good businesses and great restaurants such as Cavatore's, The Rainbow Lodge, Tony's Mexican Restaurant, and Pecos Grill. Why would the City of Houston want to destroy this great neighborhood? It surely is not because of flooding since this place didn't flood as some other neighborhoods did during "Allison".

Mr. Mayor
May 19, 2007
Page 2

What do we want?

We want the City of Houston to take a close look at Chapter 19 Section 19-43 and re-think how it can be done without destroying people's lives. We want the City of Houston to come up with a positive plan to regulate building in the floodway. Other cities have done so. Allow building on piers above flood level, take out old unused parking lots and vacant buildings and create open soil so water can be absorbed.

Re-visit the mapping of the floodway by Harris County Flood Control.

If the City of Houston would like to increase the park and green space areas as I was told in several meetings, then the City of Houston must legitimately purchase this land. You can't degrade a neighborhood so severely, then wait until the property values drop to almost nothing, and then offer a buy out program.

If the City of Houston would like our properties for city use, then the City must purchase these properties at fair market value, assessed prior to the implementation of this ordinance. We have paid good money for our properties. Why should we be punished for actually wanting to be part of a good cause, such as the growth of an inner-city community?

I want the City of Houston to be my government, and I want the City of Houston to work for me, and not against me. I want the City of Houston to advocate for my rights, as a property owner, and not try to make a good deal on people's backs.

I work with individuals with developmental disabilities and other related conditions such as autism, cerebral palsy and many more, and I know what it means to be an advocate for people's rights.

I am pleading to you to advocate for our rights in Shady Acres and other communities along the Houston bayous. Our concern is not just White Oak Bayou. This issue concerns everyone that lives along a bayou in the City of Houston.

Sincerely,

[Name]