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FLOODPLAIN FOLLY

In response to "Cool Pragmatist" [Public Officials of the Year, November], it has been said that Houston Mayor Bill White is a great humanitarian. It is therefore difficult to understand the harsh treatment he has imposed on his own citizens.

The mayor signed into law major revisions to the city floodplain and floodway ordinance. These revisions effectively condemn approximately 10,000 homes and properties in the floodways of Houston, through oppressive regulations. Appraised property values have dropped by as much as 93 percent. White refuses to provide compensation for the devaluation of property.

These restrictions have strangled the economic lifeblood out of these neighborhoods, some of which are over 100 years old. These regulations severely limit or even prohibit the property owners' ability to build, improve or even repair their homes and businesses.

During the creation of the revisions, there were no true public forums, discussion or debate. White's fellow citizens feel that their constitutional rights were stripped, without the expected democratic process.

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