

March 21, 2021

The introduction sounds like a utopia, (high quality of life, dynamic economy, welcoming to all, leader in flood management), but facing reality is the exact duplicate of why I left New Orleans East in 1984 to move here in Moonraker Island. New Orleans East, NOLA East, had all the amenities anyone could desire, a cohesive, respectful, law-abiding community filled with potential until parish government built 235's, many apartment complexes, and federal housing. Crime came and with that, our precious way of life failed.

When I moved to Moonraker Island, I felt I lived in a unique, God-given area that deserved preservation and protection by people who appreciated the quality of life and the privilege to live in it. St. Tammany Parish government is fast tracked to turn our beloved area into New Orleans East, a crime-ridden community. Most of NOLA East's tax-paying citizens have moved away to places much like Moonraker Island years ago. Those who were and are left don't contribute to the tax base; instead, there is a majority on programs that take from the tax base. Now that crime is out of control in NOLA East, Slidell has opened its doors to a situation that will bring devastation.

Being a leader in flood management is quite an exaggeration. Southeast Slidell has faced opposition from parish government until President Mike Cooper was elected. He promised to support the St. Tammany Parish Levee, Drainage, and Conservation District. It would be very wise to keep that promise. Residents have abided by all parish ordinances to build their homes, pay their taxes, all without a handout for down payments. Residents are now witnessing a huge turnover of tax-paying supporters of the parish. Residents are leaving their homes daily.

I know of no one who approves of a transit system being placed in Southeast Slidell. It is not warranted, nor wanted. Those who are in need have access to cabs, uber, etc., even transportation to doctors, hospitals, therapists. Even groceries can be delivered to our doors.

Getting permits isn't as easy as some would like, but providing complete inspections is necessary.

To ensure sustainable growth, providing proper infrastructure is very important to bring business to Southeast Slidell. It seems that most of the effort is placed in Western St. Tammany. Growth there is abundant, but the layout of roads is a significant problem. Someone with vision should be appointed to guarantee against another Jefferson Parish nightmare. The corridor created by Interstate 10, 12, and Hwy. 59 should be developed. It would probably be extremely lucrative to the parish because of its being unique and having easy access.

Going "green" is not an answer to development. Providing efficient means of sustainable energy is the answer although having SOME other sources added would not be detrimental.

Drainage is a problem that needs to be addressed. The lower lying, unincorporated areas south of Slidell City never had a problem until the Schneider Canal was increased and the increased size of pumps there collects all of Slidell's runoff and is drained under Hwy. 11 and into Lake Pontchartrain. That run off contains oil and road dirt which has practically killed the estuary of its grounds to breed fish and crabs. So much for natural habitats and stability.

A variety of housing that provides for those who cannot provide for themselves already exists. There is Habitat for Humanity, many, many apartments that provide mixed-income provisions, even tract housing that inevitably becomes an eyesore and deprives the parish of yet another tax base. We don't need to increase this situation.

Moonraker Island already has diversification: Caucasian, Hispanic, Indian, Black, and Asian. We get along and learn customs from one and other. As long as there is respect, as long as residents care for their properties, there is no objection. When people move into a neighborhood without any skin in the game, those are the people who don't care. The people of Moonraker do not want mobile-home

parks created in our area. There are facilities that provide that. The people of Moonraker do not want bed & breakfasts or short-term rentals. The ordinance provided by the parish is this neighborhood is designated as single-family dwellings. Our residents are determined to keep it as such. As such, our parish council needs to step up to protect our investment.

If the levees that were built after Hurricane Katrina had not been built, our Southeast Slidell community would not be in the predicament of being the most vulnerable area in all of St. Tammany for flooding. Adding to the ring levee that surrounds Slidell City adds to the predicament.

There was a time when education in St. Tammany Parish was the best in the state, but it has waned because of a lack of discipline and the influx of families who do not value education, NOT MONEY.

Our residents once felt very safe, but the influx of crime coming from New Orleans East has that changed. Now we are frequently told to lock everything up, get cameras, and install "ring." Neighborhood watch is invaluable.

Sensible conclusions need to be addressed and then put into play.

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