



4.2.7 Cameron Parish Police Jury Sponsored Public Meeting Notes

The public meeting held in the Court Room of the Courthouse at Cameron, Louisiana was scheduled to begin at 5 PM and commence at 6:15 PM. Approximately, 100 people attended. Andrew Beall presented the Master Plan. He stressed the fact that the public had until April 2nd to submit their comments on the plan. He stressed that the state was very interested in having their comments, and that the public could submit their comments directly over the Internet or deliver them by mail. For the Police Jury, he brought copies of the Master Plan and told the audience that additional copies were available at the Parish Library.

The audience was very vocal about the Master Plan and many spoke. By 6:15pm, the discussion had not yet ended. Further discussion, however, was cutoff by the moderator who explained that the court room was reserved for another meeting at 6:30. The moderator let the people know that the Police Jury had heard their concerns and would take action on their behalf.

The following list is a summary, and not a transcript of the speaker's comments. Notes on speaker's comments are included within parentheses.

A. We think Coastal Restoration should begin at the coast line. Protect the entire coastline with rock breakwaters. Second, place sand behind the rock. That combination - rock breakwaters and sand, saved Highway 82 during Rita. Thirdly, create marsh. No long term studies are needed to do this. We already have these kinds of structures at places along the coastline. We just need more of them. (This was voiced by several speakers.)

B. Do not raise Highway 82 or 27. Raised highways will just make bowls and trap water once the roadway was overtopped. The water cannot get out, and we could not live in it. It would kill Cameron. (This was voiced by several speakers.)

C. There is no need to raise the roads if evacuation and return are the issues. The existing roads provided good access for leaving and returning during Rita. The only problems were power lines that had to be removed from the roadway. (This was voiced by several speakers.)

D. There are only three cheniers in the world. This is the only chenier in the United States. No one seems concerned that we are about to lose ours.

E. There is not enough space on the chenier to raise the highway 10 feet. Raising the highway is a plan to allow the state to take people's property. (A big cheer arose for the speaker who alleged "he did not plan to go anywhere." –several speakers expressed, "Moving is not an option.")



F. Several speakers were concerned over whether or not the state would be allowed to take their property to make a protection plan. Even if paid, they knew of no place else where they could go and acquire more property like that they have now.

G. No levee is needed. A levee would create a bowl same as a raised road bed, and that would keep water from running off the land. Not even rainwater could run off. "I returned to Grand Chenier three days after Rita."

H. A couple of attendees spoke of erosion of their beach due to the day-in and day-out forces of the currents from tides and vessels. They pointed out that 50 years had passed since the last hurricane, and their shoreline was eroding all during those years.

I. An attendee familiar with the Parish Library told the audience that the library was up and running with computer access to the Internet, and they would assist anyone wanting to make comments over the Internet. (Andrew gave her a copy of the Master Plan for the library.)

J. What is the priority for this work? (Some had conflated the priority in the Louisiana Speaks planning initiative with the state's Master Plan.)

K. What is being done for Hackberry? It was damaged by Betsy, Audrey and Rita. There is no space to raise Hwy 27 through Hackberry.

L. The representative from Rockefeller Refuge spoke. They have been working to protect their shore from erosion since 1992. There is no foundation on which to place rock over much of their coastline. The depth to a suitable foundation is 90 feet. A rock structure would simply sink out of sight. They have just developed four alternatives designs to rock structures for shore line protection and are ready to test them. Also, they have levees that were damaged by Rita and need to be repaired.

M. Continue to dredge the Ship Channel and the GIWW to create marsh.

N. I live on the coast near the ship channel. They are predicting 400 LNG ships per year. These are very large vessels and their waves tear up the banks. Rock is needed.

O. Coastal property is prime property everywhere except in Louisiana. Why is it not given prime consideration in our state?

P. I did not know there was a Master Plan until last night. I learned about this meeting by accident. How did the state announce public meetings?