



**Plan Ascension
Technical Review Committee Meeting
July 20, 2009**

MEETING SUMMARY

Sewer Infrastructure

- Package treatment plants are maintained privately. Permitting and discharge regulations are managed by Dept. of Health & Hospitals. The Dept. of Environmental Quality oversees waterway quality. There is no regular oversight or enforcement of maintenance from the state agencies. Residents must submit written complaints before someone is sent out to inspect.
- Septic tanks are no longer allowed. However, existing septic tanks do not have adequate leach fields. Due to the makeup of the soil, effluent does not leach through the field and ends up as surface drainage into local drainage ditches. The cumulative impact of excess drainage into the ditches is mosquito abatement issues.
- Cedric Grant, the CAO, is the contact for the Corps of Engineers Environmental Infrastructure Program. Existing funding for the program is from a revolving loan fund through DEQ. The 1st Basin is in design (Grand Goudine). The 2nd Basin (Bayou Narcisse) is in conceptual design.

Drainage/Floodplain Management

- Darryl Primeaux is managing the floodplain program.
- The parish recently hired LSU to model the bayous. They should have some initial information in the next couple of months. The study should identify drainage and floodplain management issues.
- Bill Roux mentioned that the coastal zone is being studied and will determine if Ascension Parish becomes part of the coastal zone. If it does, it will add additional regulations to follow for dredge/fill permitting.
- There is a need to identify the floodplains in the parish and keep them intact utilizing regulations.
- The Comite River Diversion Project will divert water to the Mississippi River. This project is still being designed.
- The Bayou Manchac/Spanish Lake project was mentioned.
- Darryl Primeaux is working on an Ascension Parish Unified Floodplain Management document that will include policy recommendations.
- Ascension needs to require different building regulations within watersheds. As an example, if a watershed basin is designated as a critical basin – no fill operations shall be permitted. An existing threat to the floodplain is unregulated fill on individual property owners land.
- The parish wants to limit fill for elevating structures and instead utilize piers.
- While permits are not required for dredge/fill operations, the existing drainage ordinance regulates dredge and fill requirements. The drainage ordinance also includes a letter of credit for excess fill that can be utilized for mitigation banking of dredge/fill. This has not been utilized yet.
- There is a need for a structure of impact fees.
- The three incorporated cities are exempt from the Parish Drainage Ordinance. Gonzales does have a requirement though for zero net impact.

Hazardous Sites

- According to Richard Webber of the EOC, There are several pipelines located in the parish, 29 chemical plants and salt domes.
- There is an existing siren warning system and reverse 911 phone system when there is a chemical release.
- There is not an existing buffer requirement for development around the chemical plants or hazardous sites (Superfund sites).

Other

- There are designated industrial megasites that should be identified in the mapping.
- There are Community Development Districts that have been created. A developer created the CDD to get a PUD approved which allows the developer to sell bonds against the development. The parish does not collect any revenues from the CDDs. Orange Grove is a CDD that was recently annexed by Sorrento.
- An additional crossing over the Mississippi River in Ascension Parish is limited due to navigation issues and agency/barge operators political will.
- The school board has three new schools opening in August which will add 3 new school districts. The school board is currently looking for a new school site to acquire.