

-----Original Message-----

From:

Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2007 2:15 PM

To: 106Comments

Subject: CJ Peete, BW Cooper, St. Bernard and Lafitte
public housing
sites

Please don't tear down viable historic buildings. Instead, re-open these buildings to help relieve the city's housing crisis. Change the basic contract by which public housing is made available in order to avoid the problems of the past.

Thank you,

From:**Sent:** Thursday, February 22, 2007 2:24 PM**To:** 106Comments**Subject:** CJ Peete, BW Cooper, St. Bernard and Lafitte

Re: comments on the potential effects of the redevelopment of the CJ Peete, BW Cooper, St. Bernard and Lafitte public housing sites on historic properties in the project area.

As a lifelong New Orleanian, I cannot express how strongly I feel that all high density housing projects should be demolished. Demolition of the projects and the rebuilding of mixed-income housing can only have a positive effect on the surrounding neighborhoods, which have experienced a steady decline as a result of their proximity to the housing projects, which are breeding grounds for crime, poverty, drug addiction and despair.

Although I realize that the former residents of the housing projects feel that they are somehow entitled to live in housing that is affordable to them because it is subsidized by others, in post Katrina New Orleans, we no longer have the luxury of supporting thousands of un-employed and under-employed citizens. Nor should the former public housing residents be given any preference, when former market-rate renters cannot afford a place to live and property owners cannot return to live in the properties that they own.

Any historical significance these projects may have is FAR outweighed by the negative impact they have on our City.

In addition, the funds needed to renovate the housing projects could be put to better use by renovating existing single and multi-family houses in the same neighborhoods. There are so many houses that were abandoned before Katrina, whose owners do not have the funds or the will to maintain the property and there are many more now. Why not buy these historic properties and renovate them to provide low income housing, in addition to building new housing?

From:

Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2007 2:57 PM

To: 106Comments

Subject: Proposed demolition of the four public housing projects

Dear HANO Board:

I oppose the proposed demolitions of the four public housing projects. Your board has stated that it would cost more to bring them up to code, than to demolish and rebuild them, but your own inspectors have found that these buildings actually survived the flooding in very good shape. With a minimal amount of cleaning and repair, these apartments can be readied for their tenants, who have been literally locked out of their homes for the last year and a half. These tenants are willing to clean these apartments, repair the damage, and take care of them. Your management staff has never taken good care of these apartments, and has let them deteriorate, through demolition by neglect. Three years ago, some of us from C3/Hands Off Iberville went onto the Iberville Housing Project grounds, and found burned out lights, high wire fences, and other obstacles, which impeded tenants' use of the grounds. Many of these problems could have been easily repaired, making that project more livable for its tenants. The four housing projects slated for demolition probably have many of the same neglected facilities. The tenants aren't to blame for this four-decades worth of neglect. This neglect is your agency's responsibility, and your staff should find the money, and make the needed repairs, so that these displaced families can return home.

Your agency and HUD have talked of public housing tenants exercising "personal responsibility". Tenants who volunteer their time and effort to clean up their apartments and insist on cleaning up their public housing complexes are exercising "personal responsibility." What could be more indicative of showing "personal responsibility" than stepping forth, and taking responsibility for a public housing complex, especially when those supposedly in charge have refused to do so, and have offered up all kinds of excuses, such as how much more it would cost to clean and repair minimally damaged apartments, than to blow about \$500 million more on tearing down these very well-built apartments, and replacing them with less-distinguished "townhomes" along the lines of the River Garden apartment complex?

Your agency has never offered up any verifiable proof of a link between these public housing projects and drug use and violent crime, except for proximity between these three elements, or some vague concepts of "concentrations of poverty" or "density". Your agency hasn't shown reporters, public policy groups, public interest lawyers or public housing advocates any studies that would justify your decision to tear down these four public housing complexes. Most of these public housing tenants would like their homes and apartment complexes to be safe, well-lit, well-kept (as in the apartments and hallways painted, the rodents killed, the plumbing working, toilets and sinks that don't back up, and water stains removed.), and have the grounds and gardens restored. Many of them remember

being promised on-site community centers, and places for their children to play. Those have either never been built, or they were set up, and have never been properly maintained.

Instead of spending close to \$700 million to tear down these very sturdy, well-designed public housing complexes, and replace them with inferior housing, you should use that money to fund the cleanup of these four housing projects, have them reopened, and ensure that their residents can return. Many of these tenants work in low-wage tourism and hospitality industry jobs, and must have a place to live, before they can return to their jobs, and help rebuild our economy. Their children, who spent the last 18 months either in school in other cities, or adrift in our city, upon returning home, need "roots", a place to call home, where they can return.

Sincerely,

From:

Sent: Thursday, February 22, 2007 4:22 PM

To: 106Comments

Subject: projects

My comments on bringing back the projects:

I think it would be a terrible mistake to resurrect the CJ Peete, BW Cooper, St. Bernard and Lafitte public housing sites. Those places were areas of concentrated poverty and criminal activity that rotted whole communities where the projects were built. The projects were supposed to give its inhabitants a chance to improve themselves. It backfired. The projects caused perfectly good neighborhoods to turn to blighted neighborhoods once the housing project inhabitants turned the projects, and then the surrounding neighborhoods, into turfs for drug sales and a do nothing attitude that did not lead to self improvement. Those projects were dens for generations of people who were not contributing to the tax base of the city and worst of all, had no incentive to work to improve their environment. I'm sure there were a few hard working people living in the projects but I'll bet they were working as hard as they could to get out of the project environment which does not encourage education, hard work, a sense of community pride and legitimate business activity. Those projects are what people in other parts of the country look at and say, "why can't those dumb people in New Orleans help themselves?" It doesn't make any sense to resurrect an already ridiculously broken system of concentrated poverty and criminal activity. I realize we need housing but reopening the projects will quiet a few people complaining about a housing shortage but the bigger problems will remain--the crime and poverty will return and more and more hard working people will find it easy to make the choice to flee a city that can't learn from it's own mistakes. I'll take a housing shortage over housing projects full of the same people doing the same thing they were doing pre-Katrina any day. Anyone who wants this city to come back better than it was before should feel the same way.

-----Original Message-----

From:

Sent: Friday, February 23, 2007 11:05 AM

To: 106Comments

Subject: Re-Open Public Housing!

I have been a resident of NOLA since 1992. I have worked on Jackson Square since 1993. I have been living in my apartment at 623 St. Peter St in the FQ for over 10 years.

I very strongly feel that the plan to tear down public housing MUST be abandoned! It is far less expensive to repair the damage and open them up. There is a a real housing crisis here in NOLA. There is also a crisis for businesses looking for help in low paying jobs. Re-opening public housing will help on both counts.

From:

Sent: Friday, February 23, 2007 11:07 AM

To: 106Comments

Subject: HUD 106 Review of Public Housing in New Orleans

Greetings:

I wish to convey my input on the matter of public housing in the City of New Orleans and the efforts to re-develop the public housing complexes we currently have.

We have seen different plans to re-develop some of these areas and have been impressed with most.

Many are accusing the proponents of re-development of trying to remove public housing and render many homeless. This is a despicable accusation and should have no place in this process. We understand and agree that there is to be public housing. However we cannot in good conscience advocate the return of our many families who rely on public housing to the horribly failed system that has been public housing for so long and we not only can do better for our public housing citizens, we have a duty to do so. I completely agree with Ms. Emelda Paul who stated so brilliantly at your hearing yesterday "I want to see residents coming back to something decent". Why do we continue to tell our fellow citizens who live in public housing that what is there now is the best they can hope for. This ought to be not only unacceptable to you and I, but to mankind. These facilities were in terrible dis-repair prior to the flood and now have worsened greatly as a result.

Those who advocate returning our citizens to such conditions are doing a grave disservice to our residents who reside in public housing.

The people in these housing developments are good people and are more often the victims of crime rather than the perpetrators of it.

I would like to draw attention to the East Lake development in Atlanta GA. From my reading this took a very depressed area of high crime and low literacy and completely turned it around. And it WAS inclusive of residents in public housing.

With this successful example of how to re-develop an area of public housing without rendering good people homeless, why not allow re-development to begin so that our citizens in public housing can have homes that give them a sense of dignity and which they can be proud of.

Thank you

From:

Sent: Friday, February 23, 2007 12:25 PM

To: 106Comments

Subject: Project Development

Since over a year of community input/planning has occurred through neighborhood meetings, the Lambert and UNOP processes, we should follow those recommendations. Also, studies show that mixed income housing is the best model for a low to no income population. It's best for the residents and the community as a whole. Throughout the world, cities and the experts have come to realize housing that concentrates poverty does it's population a disservice. Mixed income housing provides economic and social opportunities unavailable in concentrated Federal housing developments. Please do not use the old model, but disperse low income housing throughout our City, including Iberville. It was reported this week that there are 1,500 low income units available right now with no candidates. PLEASE DO NOT CONCENTRATE OUR POVERTY.

APPENDIX F

COPIES OF TRANSCRIPTS FROM PUBLIC MEETINGS

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HOUSING AUTHORITY OF NEW ORLEANS

STATE OF LOUISIANA

PUBLIC MEETING

RE: LAFITTE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

SECTION 106 CONSULTATION MEETING HELD AT FISCHER
COMMUNITY CENTER, 1400 SEMMES, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA
70114, ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2007.

REPORTED BY:

Darcee Michele Cacibauda
Certified Court Reporter

1 MR. BABERS:

2 We're going to go ahead and get started. Good
3 evening and welcome to the Section 106 consultation meeting on
4 Lafitte.

5 Under the requirements of National
6 Environmental Protection Agency, we are required to consider any
7 adverse affects on property listed or eligible to be listed on the
8 National Register of Historic Places that may be the result from a
9 federal undertaking. The this meeting is being held in conjunction with
10 the State of Louisiana and the City of New Orleans. The purpose of
11 this meeting is to do just that. We are asking for your comments, not
12 only because it is a requirement, but more importantly, because we
13 value your input and desire community input in all of our endeavors.

14 We ask that you limit your comments to this issue
15 and want to point out that responses will be published on the HANO
16 web site within 15 day of the meeting.

17 I would like to introduce at this time, Mr. Jeffrey
18 Riddel, who is our HANO executive director. Jeff, good to see you.
19 And also, we have Mike Lorando, who may be able to make it, from
20 the State Historic Preservation Office. Also, we have Tracy Dodd with
21 U.S. Risk Management. And we also have Attorney Rosalind Jones
22 Larkins who will be moderating.

23 Again, thank you for coming, and we do value
24 and appreciate your input, and we are wanting to hear what you have
25 to say. So at this time, I'm going to ask Attorney Larkins to come
forward.

1 MS. LARKINS:

2 Good evening. Before we get started, just to set
3 the preliminaries, each speaker who has signed up for comments will
4 be called. You have a three-minute period of time to deliver your
5 comment. However, we are offering an opportunity to acknowledge
6 those persons who would like to yield your time to another
7 representative. We would like that to be acknowledged at this time.
8 There is one person that would like to yield their time to a
9 representative. Due to the time-limit of the meeting, we're going to
10 keep the comments roster available for another thirty minutes to 6:15
11 to allow those persons with delays, for whatever reason, an
12 opportunity to come in and sign up. Now, we'll proceed with the
13 meeting. If there's no questions, we'll proceed with the meeting.
14 We'll start with a fifteen minute presentation --

15 Yes, sir?

16 MR. LOGAN:

17 Since it seem you only have a few people here,
18 can folks make their comments, and then if there's a lag time and the
19 end, will other people who were initial speakers be able to get up and
20 say a few more comments, have a second three-minute period?

21 MS. LARKINS:

22 Well, we actually are using a roster. And we're
23 going to continue according to that. However, I will yield the meeting
24 to Mr. Babers once all the person who have signed the roster, and Mr.
25 Babers will go from there.

MR. LOGAN:

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So Mr. Babers will be the one to answer that?

MS. LARKINS:

Correct, because we actually have another meeting that's scheduled after this meeting, so we can move in a timely order, okay? Thank you.

Yes?

MS. PAUL:

Yes. Will you ask people to identify themselves so we will know who is speaking?

MS. LARKINS:

Yes. We're going to call the names off.

MS. PAUL:

What was his name?

MS. LARKINS:

You're name, sir?

MR. LOGAN:

My name is Jim Logan.

MS. LARKINS:

Jim Logan. I'm here pretty much here by myself right now.

MS. LARKINS:

Okay. I was just asking you because she wanted you identified.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER:

Do you know what the meeting is about?

MS. LARKINS:

1 compliance related issues to the Lafitte Housing Development project
2 itself.

3 What we are talking about here tonight is the 106
4 documentation developmental review process, which basically
5 concerns the compliance with state historic preservation office
6 requirements. And essentially what we are doing is working within
7 HANO'S vision to transform existing, aging, deteriorated, and obsolete
8 housing into new mixed-income community. Basically, the hope of
9 HANO is that this will create viable neighborhoods that integrate
10 HANO families and housing into the community and serve as a
11 catalyst for recovery post-Katrina in the city as well as reducing
12 density and concentration in the developments and also helping to
13 maintain the integrity and the visual connectivity of the developments
14 itself so that they mirror the type of neighborhood and communities
15 that are in and around the current developments.

16 Let me tell you a little bit about the 106 overview.

17 Essentially, it is delineated and described by the National Historic
18 Preservation Act of 1966, and it is required for any federal
19 undertaking, any undertaking that uses federal money that may have
20 an adverse effect on a property listed or eligible to be listed on the
21 National Historic Register of Places. Although Lafitte is not listed on
22 the National Historic Register, it is eligible to be listed on the National
23 Historic Register. So, for that reason, we are here discussing the 106
24 process.

25 And essentially, what it does is, it looks at
adverse effects that may include direct and indirect impacts, both

1 temporary and permanent to the surrounding community. And what
2 we do is we focus on something called the area of potential effect, or
3 I'll shorten it APE for the purposes of this. Essentially, what it is, is the
4 area of particular effect -- And right behind me, you will see a drawing
5 that have here of an area photograph with the Lafitte Housing
6 Development and what we call the area of potential effect and the
7 National Historic Register listed property, which is the laundry facility
8 for the Lafitte. And then neighboring, you've got the Esplanade
9 Bridge Historic District, and then you can see the boundary of the
10 streets.

11 Essentially, this is what we have, to date,
12 determined to be the area of potential effect. This is in draft form.
13 You can see this document and download it on the Housing Authority
14 of New Orleans' web site as well as with the documentation that
15 supports how we came up with the area of potential effect. But
16 essentially what it is, it's a geographical area. And what does is look
17 at the direct or indirect effects in and around the community that may
18 result in alterations of the character or use of historic properties.

19 And again, as I said earlier, it deals with direct
20 impacts. Here, we're looking at demolition, re-development,
21 economic impact, land-use changes, but it also deals with indirect
22 impacts associated with completing the project or the undertaking,
23 such as visual impacts, air quality, vibration concerns, noise traffic.
24 And these can be both on a temporary as well as a permanent basis.
25 And they're all part of how we evaluate the area of potential effect.

Essentially, as I said earlier, you've got the

1 general laundry building right here, which was National Historic
2 Register listed in 1994. You've got the Esplanade Bridge Historic
3 District, which was listed in 1980 that is partially included in the area
4 of potential effect. Lafitte Housing Development is, again, eligible but
5 not listed. In here, you've got structures in the adjacent
6 neighborhoods that are over 50 years old, and they're also not
7 included in the Esplanade Historic Bridge District.

8
9 In addition to that, you've got archaeological
10 resource issues associate with the project. What HANO is doing is
11 they are undertaking what is called a Phase I archaeological survey,
12 which basically will allow, rather, document the type of things that are
13 seen as a result of the progress of the construction and demolition
14 activity. And it's all being done under the guidance of the State
15 Historic Preservation Office. And in order to address other potential
16 historic properties, the State Historic Preservation Office has provided
17 a list of five Native American tribes that may have interest in being
18 consulting parties and may be interested in archaeological
19 consultations as part of the process.

20 Essentially, here, again, is the drawing, APE
21 behind me. Please keep in mind that this is a draft. And the reason
22 that this is a draft is that this is the beginning of a very long process as
23 far as public involvement and public participation and state review and
24 state evaluation. And the reason it's draft is because we area
25 awaiting consulting party comments. We are awaiting consulting
party to review the documentation and tell us their thoughts.
Comments will be received tonight. We'll tell you how you can also

1 put written comments into place. And then, those comments will be
2 addressed and this will undergo state review. So again, that's why
3 you see "draft" on everything. And you'll see the same on the
4 documents that can be downloaded from the HANO web site.

5 Essentially, going back to the criteria for the area
6 of potential effect, talking about direct impacts. Here, the demolition,
7 what we're hoping to do is extensive documentation with regard to
8 Historic American Buildings Survey. And there will be photographs
9 that will be collected and documented prior to demolition.

10 With regard to re-development, we're talking
11 about a mixed community, mixed-income community with rental units
12 and with home ownership and essentially trying to re-establish the
13 neighborhood network within the Development itself by reconnecting
14 the roads that outline the Development and bringing them back in to
15 get more of a sense of community and neighborhood.

16 And all of this is being done with guidance from
17 the Louisiana Speaks Planning Initiative Book. Let me tell you a little
18 bit about that. Essentially, it's the guidance document, the Louisiana
19 Speaks Pattern Book. And what does is, it drives this process or it
20 serves to guide this process. And we're hoping for, based upon the
21 pattern book, is to create a redevelopment that will occur at a lower
22 density than is currently there now. The Louisiana Speaks Pattern
23 Book will service, again, as I said, the planning guide for the entire
24 process. And within it, you will see, and we'll revert to the type of
25 architectural styles that are more common to the neighborhood. And
those will be taken forward into the design and construction,

1 architectural construction process.

2 Essentially, again, we're looking and reestablishing the public
3 street grids, bringing the community back into the neighborhood. And
4 we're talking about all the proposed construction designed being done
5 in accordance with approval from the State Historic Preservation
6 Office and from ACPH. And, basically, that will ensure that
7 redevelopment in this area conforms to those things that you see in
8 the Louisiana Speaks Patterns Book and maintains the visual integrity
9 of the neighborhoods and positive visual impact to the surrounding
10 community.

11 To give you an idea of past projects and the type
12 of things that we've been seeing, this is the new Fischer. This is what
13 you see currently surrounding this community building. This is what
14 old Fischer, Fischer high-rise looked like. You see a stark difference.
15 This is new Desire, and this is new River Garden, which was the old
16 St. Thomas Housing Development. And these are the types of
17 designs that we are talking about for architectural designs. Now, with
18 regard to other direct impacts, we are looking at economics and were
19 also looking at land-use issues.

20 With regard to economics, immediate repairs to
21 Laffite, we're looking at \$24 million. That's not bringing everything up
22 to code and making this housing livable for the general public.
23 Modernization, current codes cost approximately \$154, \$155 million,
24 but that doesn't address substrate or structural soils issues or the
25 structural issues themselves that, obviously, have some significant
deterioration as a result of Katrina. Demolition and new construction

1 is slated to cost about \$124 million. And if you looks, there's almost a
2 25 percent difference between rehabilitating these structures and
3 redeveloping.

4 Land-use. One of the other direct impacts that
5 we are looking at is, basically, HANO maintaining a long-term lease
6 on this site so that they have continual involvement in the property in
7 the future.

8 Now, with regard to what we were asking of
9 groups and the general public is to function as consulting parties in
10 this 106 process. And, essentially, what we are doing is we're asking
11 for organizations and individuals who are concerned with potential
12 affects on the historic properties to get involved in the process and to
13 request to be a consulting party. HANO and HUD consider all written
14 requests to participate as consulting parties, and invitations to
15 consulting parties have already been extended to local and state
16 agencies, Native American tribes, neighborhood organizations,
17 historical groups and activists, other prominent individuals that have
18 already requested to be in involved under the guidance of SHPO.
19 And these are groups that we have received by list in name and
20 address form from the State Historic Preservation Office. So this is
21 where HANO has started.

22 And, essentially, the role of the consulting party is
23 that we're going to be seeking your comments and getting you
24 involved in the process of seeking further discussions and also
25 receiving your views on the 106 process itself. Essentially, part of that
involves commenting during the public comment period. If some of

1 you saw the initial first advertising in the Times-Picayune
2 approximately two weeks ago, that was the start of the public
3 comment period. Public comment period extends for another two
4 weeks. And, essentially, what we are hoping is the consulting parties
5 will comment, they'll review the documents and the findings that are
6 posted on the web site, on HANO's web site, and they'll also get
7 involved in comment on the memorandum of agreement. Let me
8 explain what the MOA exactly is.

9 Comments that you can hear and comments that
10 you put on the web site, are going to part of the permanent record. All
11 comments that are I received, will be posted and will be addressed on
12 the HANO web site. There is also newly a HANO mailbox specifically
13 to receive comments for the 106 documentation process for
14 requesting to be a consulting party. You will also find this on the web
15 site. You can submit comments and number ways in addition to that
16 mailbox. Submitting them in a written form. You can submit them
17 during this public meeting. Stand up and they'll be read into the
18 record, record it, or you submit them, as I said earlier, in writing to
19 HANO, either through the web site or directly to Judith Moran as
20 stated in the public notice with the address printed on it. But,
21 essentially, all comments must be submitted by 16.

22 Now, as I talked to you about earlier, we're
23 looking at entering into a memorandum of agreement, which we
24 commonly call it MOA. And basically, what it is, it's a binding
25 agreement that records the terms and conditions between the state
and the Housing Authority of New Orleans to resolve any of the

1 impacts and the effects of the undertaking of those impacts on historic
2 properties as part of this project. Essentially, what
3 happens is when an MOA is filed, it included certain types of
4 documentation. And, basically, that includes the evaluation on how
5 we determined was an adverse effect and how those effects are going
6 to be minimized or avoided. And it also contains the summary of use
7 and the comments that were received during the public comment
8 period. And essentially, what it's used for is the agency, State Historic
9 Preservation Office, uses it as a means to monitor and record the
10 activities associated with the project and to check on it during
11 implementation. And it also has provisions of termination of the
12 proposed activity. And that is the final role of the consulting party. So
13 essentially, as I said, and to summarize, what we're hoping for is that
14 people in groups here will be part of the consulting party process, will
15 come up to the microphone, they'll give verbal comments, they'll go to
16 HANO's web site, pull down the documents, request to be consulting
17 parties, or submit written comments directly to Judith Moran at the
18 Housing Authority of New Orleans. Thank you.

19 MS. LARKINS:

20 For those persons who were not in the meeting
21 before we started, the comment sheet will remain open for signatures
22 to make comments until 6:15. It's now six o'clock.

23 Also if someone has entered since the meeting,
24 the floor has been open to receive acknowledgments of persons who
25 may want to yield their three minutes to a representative speaker. If
we have someone that's present that would like to yield their three

1 minutes for comments to a representative, we can acknowledge that
2 person now.

3 (No response)

4 MS. LARKINS:

5 So we'll proceed with the comments. Mr. James
6 Dugan.

7 MR. DUGAN:

8 Good evening. I'm James Dugan from the
9 Louisiana Landmark Society. I feel just like a jazz musician buzzing
10 my theme. But I want to state again, for the record, for each
11 individual, that Louisiana Landmark Society has significant
12 reservations and objections to the plan as proposed as I said last
13 time, the evening before last.

14 Your fundamental concepts that these buildings
15 are obsolete, etcetera and so on, the buildings seem to be worn out
16 by neglect. I don't believe that most people would consider that, the
17 way they're putting it, the housing is aging, obsolete and beyond
18 repair.

19 More on point, these new buildings are inferior
20 construction. They arise out of a new tradition in the public housing
21 relative to what was done in an experiment based with the rest of the
22 country. These are not, as you showed in you example, the old
23 Fischer project. These are not, with the exception of the old Fischer,
24 which is now gone, those sorts of projects. They are low-density,
25 garden style apartments. These are not the miles and miles of public
housing you have in Manhattan, New York. These are garden-style

1 apartments. These are the models that all of these mixed income,
2 scared to say, developments that you are proposing in Peete under
3 106, were modeled after. This is the experiment that succeeded. And
4 to say because of years of denying and the neglect, that somehow
5 attributing all this to FEMA, particular the housing project, most of
6 which did not flood, seems disingenuous and it seems to anyone
7 who's in Louisiana Landmark Society that the vital architectural model
8 that is harmonious to the surroundings does not try to mimic them in a
9 historical sort of way. They are, not to be overly critical, but what is
10 across the street is not New Orleans. It is not. It's a simulation. It's
11 the Disneyland version. And to lose a valuable vital 100-year
12 construction and put an imitation that is really, really a 20-year
13 construction, and ignore the lessons learned by the experiment that
14 New Orleans succeeded in many, many ways, where many of the
15 public housing authorities failed across the country is disingenuous
16 and would be very tragic. Thank you.

17 MS. LARKINS:

18 Jaime Loughner, Mayday NOLA.

19 MS. LOUGHNER:

20 I'm Jamie Bork Loughner, and I'm a member of
21 Mayday NOLA, and I come here to register my strongest objections to
22 what you're planning. Pretty much, the gentleman in front of me
23 registered many of the same objections I have, which is the buildings
24 and very solid, very strong. They withstood Katrina beautifully. I just
25 was in one for 17 days, and I can say that it was in great condition.

It's appalling that you would utilize a storm to take

1 people out of their communities, to keep people out of their
2 communities because the plan is to reduce public housing by 90
3 percent. It's outrageous that the public is standing for it, and I
4 encourage everyone to object as strongly as I have. I will continue to
5 do everything in my power to oppose this. And I stand before you
6 appalled and mortified that my government is in cahoots with
7 developers to pretty much spread the misery of the displaced people
8 who are suffering, to continue to allow these people to be in places in
9 Atlanta that they don't want to be, in places in Texas that they don't
10 want to be. These people deserve to come home. They have a right
11 to come home, and your plans are going to stop them from coming
12 home. And so I hope, I pray that we are going to be able to stop your
13 plans.

14 MS. LARKINS:

15 Jake Arena.

16 MR. ARENA:

17 Good evening. My name is Jay Arena with
18 United Front for Affordable Housing. First, I want to clarify the
19 comments by Ms. Dodd with the U.S. Risk Management. I am not a
20 consulting party to this crime. I am a dissenter to the crime that
21 Housing Authority of New Orleans, the Housing and Urban
22 Development, Bush administration, and the opportunistic consultants
23 that are collaborating in the destruction of the Lafitte community.

24 I was at Lafitte Development in September of
25 2005, just after people were allowed to return to the city. I was with a
number of people for United Front for Affordable Housing and the

1 MS. COOK:

2 I'm with the C-3/Hands off Iberville. And again, to
3 be redundant, I'm discussing the illegitimacy of this process. This
4 hearing should not be happening because the only legitimate process
5 is to reopen the communities and let the people come home, since
6 that wasn't done in advanced to this stage where, yet, another
7 illegitimate hearing has taken place.

8 And, again, your PowerPoint presentation, there's
9 a fancy show of facades, but in hiding the facades, I was talking to a
10 resident who lives in Hendee Homes. There's a number of repairs
11 that are already needed in her home. She just moved in there a few
12 months ago. We know that the housing that is going to replace the
13 developments is going to be inferior to the quality of the buildings that
14 are already there.

15 Regarding Lafitte, I worked closely with a resident
16 who recently got in a car accident, Patricia Thomas. She moved
17 seven times since Katrina. So HANO's claim that they are helping
18 residents to get resettled is false. People are suffering. They're
19 having to move time and time again. Patricia Thomas was literally a
20 part of the St. Peter Claver Church, a part of the church to form the
21 congregation about the plans of the Providence Community Housing
22 has to redevelop Lafitte. Patricia Thomas knew that many residents
23 of Lafitte attended St. Peter Claver. Father Jacques, the pastor of St.
24 Peter Claver is on the board of director's of Providence. Patricia
25 Thompson knew that this was extremely unfair that so many people
lived in Lafitte contributed time, money to the congregation of St.

1 Peter Claver and in return, Father Jacques was on the Board of
2 Directors of an organization that plans to demolish, to take part in the
3 demolition of the development and redevelopment. Patricia Thomas
4 knew the truth of what is going on.

5 Again, the only legitimate process is not this
6 hearing. It is to reopen public housing and let the people come home.

7
8 MS. LARKINS:

9 Mr. Greg Christie.

10 Lafitte resident, Mr. Greg Christie.

11 (No response)

12 MS. LARKINS:

13 Mr. Mike Howells.

14 As Mr. Howells comes, I'd just like to note that it's
15 6:15. For those of you who have not signed up for comments, you
16 have a few seconds to go sign the comment book.

17 MR. HOWELLS:

18 Okay. I just want to mention that Mr. Christie
19 would speak today, but he is feeling very ill about the stress of not
20 being able to return home has added to his physical problems. But
21 he's made it very clear time and again that he, like, most of other
22 residents in Lafitte, wants to come back. He's a friend of mine, so I
23 wanted to at least make sure his word get out that D. J. Christie wants
24 to return home.

25 And as for my own words, one thing that might
have come out a little different from other people, and I mean United

1 Front for Affordable Housing, is that I stayed here. I never left the
2 whole while. And I live on the corner of Barracks and Rampart. And
3 as the thousands of people started going down Rampart Street,
4 marching off to the Superdome, they had to march right by my house.
5 And I saw many of those people go there. I assumed that there were
6 some people who were from the Lafitte Housing complex who were on
7 their way to the Superdome after the flooding. It's just etched in my
8 mind how terrifying it was for those people that have to live, leave
9 their homes. And I know how terrifying it is not to be able to come
10 back because we were threatened with arrest for staying in homes on
11 the east bank after the storm.

12 But one thing I'd also like to mention here is
13 you're dealing with the ambiance, also a contribution of Lafitte. I know
14 that some other folks are going to be dealing with that, the
15 preservationists, That the buildings in Lafitte, which held up, as we all
16 know, very well in the storm; just scrub them down a little bit and
17 they'll be fine, were modeled after the Pontalba apartments. Okay?
18 We have people who come from around the world and go to the
19 Pontalba, go to Jackson Square, and admire the Pontalba
20 apartments. I know that because I work there. I'm a reader. And
21 that is one of the great attractions of the French Quarter, the Pontalba
22 Apartments. Now, here we have buildings modeled after the same
23 style of historical architecture that is literally at the heart and soul of
24 New Orleans, that are in good shape. The first floor may need be
25 worked up a little bit, but we know they're in good shape. The first
floor may need worked out a little bit. But we know they're in good

1 shape, and you're talking about tearing them down.

2 There's a crime against humanity enforced for not
3 letting people return. And I favor reopening all 896 units now, repair
4 and reopen because it's my understanding, my support. But also, it's,
5 well, this is a blow against the history, culture of New Orleans. And
6 we know that Lafitte is eligible for the National Historic Register. The
7 preservationists have made this over and over again. And it is a
8 violation of the law to knock down these buildings. On top of it,
9 there's the incredible human need for the housing in the first place.

10 So how can in any way, shape or form, this action
11 be justified as enhancing New Orleans? It isn't enhancing New
12 Orleans visually. It isn't adding to the ambience. It's ruining it. You
13 want to put these cookie-cutter houses up instead, but they'll blown
14 down in the next hurricane. And instead of people being able to go to
15 the second and third fourth and save themselves in Lafitte, they'll
16 drown in their homes, the little cookie-cutter homes in the Treme area.
17 And that's, what we're talking about is murder before it even
18 happens. And so this is another responsibility.

19 So obviously, I'm arguing my strategy is to repair
20 and reopen. You say that if we repair and reopen it's substandard.
21 Every house in this city is substandard. I'm sure that Lafitte will at
22 least be in better shape if it's scrubbed up a little bit than 95 percent of
23 the other homes in the city, and it certainly would be safer. And I think
24 everyone, of course, who was living there, has a right to come back.
25 And for the people who if there's some extra units open up, we've got
a waiting list of 6,000 families that need to get into public housing,

1 they can fill those units. But I think it's a crime that's being planned
2 here. And I think, if you have any conscience, you will
3 vote against knocking these developments down, and you vote for
4 repair and reopening. We'll worry about the finer points two or three
5 years from now when it comes to matching this or that standard. But
6 right now, we need to get these places open. They're as safe as any
7 place in the city. Thank you.

8 MS. LARKINS:

9 Mr. Robert Tannen.

10 MR. TANNEN:

11 Good evening. I'm here representing the
12 Downtown Neighborhood Improvement Association otherwise
13 commonly known as DNIA. And within that organization, we have a
14 housing committee that is been meeting on a regular basis for some
15 period of time before Katrina.

16 I wish to be named as a consulting party through
17 this committee, and also to be named in opposition to the proposed
18 action of demolition. We believe that the proposed actions and the
19 process being used currently, as well as previously by HUD and
20 HANO to determine the proposed action, is in violation of the National
21 Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and the National Environmental
22 Policy Act of 1969.

23 We will be providing more detailed information
24 about the basis of this opposition, but I would like to say tonight that
25 HUD and HANO is treating these properties in language and studies,
including the study that's been presented here tonight, as unsuitable

1 for habitation, but is not treating these properties as historic, which is
2 the intent of 1966 Act. That is we're hearing about the unsuitability
3 and the poor condition and dilapidation, but not the issue of the
4 historic merit to these properties, which have been recommended for
5 inclusion on the National Register of Historical Places.

6 Then the Environmental Policy Act which would
7 kick in after this process, which ends, I believe, on the 17th, or
8 thereabouts, will require equal consideration of alternatives to
9 demolition. We have heard nothing about the alternatives to
10 demolition from HUD and HANO and from the consultants. And, yet,
11 we've been told that that information will be available at some web
12 site. But all the effort thus far has been to justify the demolition
13 program as oppose to presenting publicly the alternatives, which
14 should be given equal consideration. Thank you.

15 MS. LARKINS:

16 Jim Logan.

17 MR. LOGAN:

18 Good evening. My comments, I think, in many
19 ways, will echo what Ms. Cook just said that the meeting shouldn't be
20 taking place tonight. But I think I've got what their reasons. And just
21 since we're making a record of this, I think it's important that
22 everybody understand that there was no proper, timely notice to
23 anybody about meetings that are being held tonight, and the one's
24 that I understand were held on Tuesday night. There have been
25 many requests made to, I believe, HUD and HANO to be a consulting
party, and yet, those folks were never contacted, and specifically,

1 Freedom of Information Act requests made to of all the agencies,
2 specifically including HUD and HANO for information about what
3 might be going on with the NEPO reviews of the 106 process. Again,
4 to my knowledge, there has been no response made in a timely
5 manner by HUD and HANO that were offering any documents in
6 response to those requests.

7
8 This whole issue of what's going to take place
9 with the housing projects in New Orleans has been a matter of
10 incredible intense scrutiny, certainly locally. The Times-Picayune
11 almost daily has an article that touches on this in one way or the
12 other. And I know it's also been picked up by the New York Times,
13 the Washington Post, and probably a lot of other publications that I'm
14 just not aware. And again, despite all of that interest out there in the
15 community, I haven't seen that there's been any public notice getting
16 in any of the local media talking about, "We're going to have a
17 meeting on the 106, on NEPO. We want everybody to come and
18 share and contribute their views with us."

19 Now, we do know that there, apparently, was
20 some kind of a notice put in the Times-Picayune several weeks ago.
21 But again, I don't think this qualifies as any kind of meaningful
22 advertising of public notice concerning these meetings. HANO has
23 advertised or put notice out for public meetings or others will typically
24 take out, I think it's an eighth of a page sized ad in the Picayune that
25 says, "Dear residents, we're having a meeting. We're going to talk
about the new development. Please come." Clearly, you know, it's a
nice ad. It's easy to see. When I'm sitting there reading the paper as

1 I have my morning coffee, I run across -- FEMA is also going through
2 consideration of a lot of demolitions in town. And they run the same
3 kind of, you know, easy to see, quarter to eighth of a size newspaper
4 ads. We didn't have anything like that. I understand that's, there was
5 this small print type ad in the back page of the classified section. I
6 don't think that cuts it in this particular instance.

7 I have concerns about the location you've picked
8 for the meeting, as the previous speaker said. It's not in connection or
9 even close to any of the projects that would be impacted. I think
10 there's been some difficulties with the time frame being scheduled.
11 It's tough for folks to crossover, literally, in the middle of rush-hour
12 traffic. I know I had a problem getting over for this evening's meeting,
13 and I understand even some of you, some of the panelists had a
14 tough time getting over.

15 The issue of documents that you made available
16 to people to review, I think that you're putting things online. And I don't
17 know if the residents, many of the people who have an interest in this
18 process, have access to get things online. So again, I want some
19 documents being made locally available at the community centers, at
20 libraries, which is a common way to put information out there when
21 you really want people to have access to it.

22 I've also noticed that the documents that have
23 been posted on the HANO site have apparently been changing.
24 When I first got word of these meetings, I think it was late Wednesday
25 evening last week, I did look at the HANO web site. And then, Friday
afternoon I was back online and what I had seen the night before was

1 different than what was posted on the web site late Friday afternoon.
2 So, you know, which documents are the public supposed to look at?
3 When is the complete set going to be made available? And there is --
4 I don't know if it's a typographical error or not, but on your web site, it
5 said these documents that are currently being shown were posted on
6 January 17. That's absolutely false. They didn't go up until last Friday
7 late in the afternoon. That's needs to be clarified.

8 I have further comments. I would ask for
9 additional time. I think, overall, there's a been a shockingly gross
10 failure to comply with the advising council regulations on historic
11 preservation matters and your obligation, HANO's obligation to
12 affirmatively seek out and engage in a timely preservation community
13 in this effort.

14 I do have some additional comments. And if you
15 have more time, I'd like the opportunity to present them to you. Thank
16 you.

17 MS. LARKINS:

18 Mr. Michael Lane.

19 MR. LANE:

20 My name is Michael Lane, and I'm a concerned
21 citizen, and I have some comments and then I have five or six
22 questions that I would like to be answered by HANO with the posting
23 on the web site or however you intend to do that.

24 As stated in the presentation, the National
25 Historic Preservation Act requires the federal agency to take into
consideration the adverse effects upon properties that are eligible or

1 listed on the National Registry for Historic Places. The purpose of the
2 National Historic Preservation Act is to require the federal agencies to
3 take into consideration alternatives prior to expending any federal
4 funds or making any firm decisions on what it's going to do. Because
5 the Historic Preservation Act requires the federal agency to really take
6 into account the effects that the proposed action will have on historic
7 properties.

8
9 Everything that I have seen so far, whether from
10 reviewing documents to the meetings here tonight and on Tuesday
11 night and talking with everybody else, that HANO had already made
12 the decision to demolish. And only now are going through the Section
13 106 process seeking public input and participation and comments and
14 reviews after the decision. Now, the Section 106 process, it appears
15 to me, has been done backwards. The purpose of the National
16 Preservation Act and Section 106 is to force the federal agencies to
17 take into consideration alternatives prior to making a final decision
18 because, what's the purpose of having public input and public
19 participation in it's comment period as you have now, if you've already
20 made your decision when you know what you're going to do?

21 In connection with that, the first question I have
22 is: Have HANO/HUD made a firm decision to demolish or are they still
23 open to listen to viable alternatives to demolition to preserve these
24 historic properties? Now, in connection with these alternatives, we
25 have had some numbers thrown around, and I heard some rumors
that maybe alternative plans have been on the web site. And I can't
confirm whether that's true or not. But the second question I have is:

1 Have HANO/HUD put together any proposals, applications, or plans
2 for alternatives other than demolition, and have you located funding
3 sources for the other alternatives? And if so, where can we see that
4 documentation, and where can the public take a look at that and have
5 a review on that instead of just the demolition plans?

6 As for the public comment period, in the previous
7 meetings, it was said that the comment period would end on February
8 16th. And I think it's scurried around in here tonight because you
9 changed up the presentation. Last week, you said the comment
10 period was going to be from the hearing time not until the 16th, which
11 is two weeks. Now, you're saying that public comment period started
12 back when the ads for the newspaper were run. And I think that the
13 variation that you were trying to extent the period when we first heard
14 public hearings on that. For example, I was informed of a meeting
15 with HANO representatives with the Office of Community
16 Development to talk about the presentation this week. I was invited
17 and asked me to attend and HANO attorneys objected to my
18 presence at that meeting, although I was invited by the person who
19 was holding that meeting. So the public participation process has not
20 occurred anytime before Tuesday of this week. And I want to ask: Do
21 you really believe a two-week consultation period is sufficient enough
22 time to elicit public participation comment and review? And I would
23 also like to state that the fact that you're not posting answer to the
24 questions until February 16 when the period is closed doesn't allow a
25 period of time of comment from the public and it's disingenuous.

I have two more brief questions. I'll just put them

1 very briefly. What other area of intended means to elicit
2 public participation, besides this hearings and besides the
3 advertisement in the papers, and what efforts have been made to get
4 public participation from those who were displaced by Hurricane
5 Katrina, the former residences of these developments who will have a
6 lot to say, and will probably be people you need to talk to to have a
7 cultural resources survey done right away. And now that some of
8 them are not here, I'd like to know what efforts you've made to contact
9 those people to do those things?

10 And finally, we've heard a lot about consulting
11 parties, and there's been a lot of things said, I've heard a lot about
12 people not getting responses to their requests to be a consulting
13 party, and things of that nature. I'd like to know, at this point, who has
14 been invited to be a consulting party and have you invited all those
15 persons listed on SHPO's list potential consulting parties to be
16 consulting parties? Thank you.

17 MS. LARKINS:

18 Mr. Eugene Ben.

19 I recognize Mr. Eugene Ben has --

20 MR. BEN:

21 Yeah, I'll hand my interview to Mr. Fraise.

22 MS. LARKINS:

23 Okay. Just wanted to acknowledge it.

24 Russell Fraise, Mr. Russell Fraise.

25 MR. FRAISE:

My name is Russell Fraise, and my family has

1 lived in the Lafitte Development since the 40's. I've been to numerous
2 meetings with Mr. Babers, Mr. Jackson, everyone concerning the
3 Lafitte. I have no knowledge of the other three demolition projects,
4 but when my family came back in middle or late 2006, there was no
5 damage. We understand the 106 review. When I first got back in
6 January of this year, I wrote to Baton Rouge to the person who's in
7 charge of historic preservation. And I got a letter back to me saying
8 that it had to be Housing Authority and HUD to request that 106
9 review. I went online today to try to get that review, and there a hhpp
10 www -- I went online and nothing came up. At the bottom of the
11 screen, it says 60 pages, but nothing came up on the computer. I've
12 seen some of the proposals for the Lafitte, and I think some of them
13 are really good. And some of the consultants -- The process itself,
14 from the united plan, goes to the city council, to city planning
15 commission, then to the full council, then to the mayor, then to the
16 governor. They are people seriously in need of housing that have to
17 come home. And Housing Authority and HUD are single-handedly
18 denying these people the right to come home. My family, Mr. Babers,
19 you should know, are strayed out throughout the United States. I'm
20 the only one here. They keep calling me about when they can come
21 home, and I can't say anything. I can't say a thing. I know that some
22 things have to be redone. I understand that. But Claiborne and
23 Orleans, where I grew up, is a few blocks from the French Quarter.
24 The French Quarter was not flooded. The front part of Lafitte was not
25 flooded. I've turned in pictures. I've turned in video of the height of
the steps and the actual water line below the steps. For Housing to

1 come along and say everything in Lafitte is not livable, it's a flat out lie,
2 flat out lie.

3 MS. LOUGHNER:

4 Liar. Absolutely, you're lying.

5 MR. FRAISE:

6 Anyway, what I was asking was, with the 106
7 review that's mandated, how long will it be before a decision that's
8 public will be made about redeveloping the housing development, if
9 that can be answered. Thank you.

10 MS. LARKINS:

11 Mr. Walter Gallas.

12 MR. GALLAS:

13 My name is Walter Gallas. I represent the
14 National Trust for Historic Preservation here in New Orleans. We've
15 been in presence here on the ground since sometime of October
16 2005, and we opened a field office here as part of our commitment,
17 this national organization's commitment to assist in the recovery of
18 New Orleans.

19 The National Trust is an organization that dates
20 back to 1949. Our headquarters are in Washington, D.C. And The
21 Trust is intimately involved with the creation of the National Historic
22 Preservation Act in 1966, which grew out of national concerns across
23 the country with, in response to the National Highway Program, the
24 redevelopment programs, federal programs that were destroying the
25 cultural resources of our communities.

Dick Moe, the President of National Trust has

1 called Katrina to be one of the, probably the greatest cultural disaster,
2 threatens the richest cultural, among the richest cultural resources in
3 our country, and that's why we are here. And we look at these
4 proposals for these developments and see threatened loss, further
5 resources and historic resources and especially at a time when
6 there's such a critical shortage, as other people have already
7 recognized, of housing in New Orleans.

8 As others have said before, it's very clear here
9 from a national, international level of what we are doing here in New
10 Orleans. We, too, have real concerns about this process. The
11 Section 106 process is supposed to be a give and take, a true
12 consultation where the stakeholders, the people who have a stake
13 and interest in whatever the undertaking is, are invited to the table.
14 They don't just sign sheets outside to state consulting party. We don't
15 just stand up to microphones and wait two weeks for a response to
16 their questions. It's not just taking comments. It's true consultation.
17 That's not what this appears to be.

18 I only learned about this meaning because
19 someone we have really noticed it was put in the paper on January
20 16. That's two weeks before the meeting. I had requested on two
21 occasions in December on behalf of the National Trust to be a
22 consulting party and received no notice about this meeting.

23 One substantive for comment directly on the
24 presentation, and I said this at the other, in regards to the other two
25 proposals that were made on Tuesday, this area of potential effect, it's
a real tricky kind of concept there that you have to pay attention to.

1 You can look at it and say, okay, you've drawn a line around the
2 project, whatever the project is, and say, this is the only impact we're
3 going to look out, thinking it's only about impact of construction. APE,
4 as it said in the PowerPoint itself, as the presenter said, are direct and
5 indirect, permanent and temporary effects. There's much greater
6 effects all around the neighborhood and all around this part of the city
7 at this development, the creation of this type of development,
8 removing one and replacing on it's behalf on the other housing around
9 there on the other types of residences that might go in there other
10 than speculative demolition that might go on, as people state, okay,
11 here's another impact. So the APE is way too narrowly defined.

12 Esplanade Ridge, the people of Esplanade Ridge
13 and neighborhoods, they need to be included as well in this
14 discussion. Everybody around there needs to be invited.

15 I, too, have a question about who has sent the
16 letters making an invitation to become a consulting party? It's very
17 important -- The National Trust wants to go on Record as saying it's
18 very interested in ensuring that this process is a full and inclusive
19 process that allows all those affected by these plans to be at the table.

20 Thank you.

21 MS. LARKINS:

22 Ms. Patricia Gay.

23 BY MS. GAY:

24 I'm Patricia Gay, Director of the Preservation
25 Resource Center, a city-wide nonprofit organization that works for the
preservation of the historic neighborhood architecture of the city.