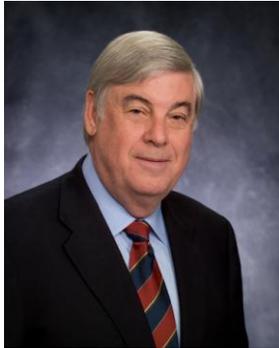


Little Taylor Lake Village needs big protection from coastal surge

By JON KEENEY | Posted: Sunday, July 27, 2014 1:00 am

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Mayor Jon Keeney
City of Taylor Lake Village

Taylor Lake Village is a community with some 3,500 residents on the shores of Clear Lake in the NASA region of the Houston.

Some of our citizens go to work at NASA or at the nearby BayPort industries. Some make the drive downtown, others run small, local businesses. They all enjoy the unequalled quality of life in this bay area community. We are not alone; Clear Lake is surrounded by a number of communities just like ours, filled with citizens that love the Clear Lake/Galveston Bay way of life.

Why are we concerned about storm surge protection?

Hurricane Ike was just a close call, changing course in the final hours before landfall. Ike destroyed 15 homes and left 68 others with significant storm damage in our small city. Nearly every property had wind damage, but flooding was the most dangerous problem.

An on-course Ike II with a 20-plus foot storm surge hitting the Clear Lake/Galveston Bay area directly is our worst nightmare. That surge could flood and destroy more than half of this community.

There are several proposals for storm surge protection and some offer no protection for our local communities — we are sacrificed to the storm. The Coastal Surge Protection

System is the only plan that offers protection to all of the bayside communities, as well as to NASA and the industrial complexes that surround the bay.

One critical function of a protection system is to stop the actual storm surge at the Gulf shore. An equally important function is to keep water from storm-generated high tides out of the bay in the days preceding the landfall. The amount of water in the bay is directly related to the size of the “bay surge.” The bay surge is the result of hurricane winds sweeping the water in the bay onto the downwind shore and causing extreme local flooding — the more water in the bay, the higher the bay surge, the more damage to our community.

A protection system offers economic and environmental advantages. A CSPS will lessen the total probability of flooding and keep flood insurance affordable for our communities. A CSPS can mitigate the environmental harm by diminishing the salt water flooding of the wetlands and estuarial breeding grounds for fish, shrimp and oysters and let them recover more quickly.

We love this community and our natural environment rich with nature preserves, bayous, lakes and open bays. Houstonians and visitors love this area, too. They keep their boats here, they come here to play and relax on the water. They come to Space Center Houston making it one of the most popular tourist venues in Houston ... and they often stay for dinner on the bay.

Taylor Lake Village calls on the five-county Gulf Coast Community Protection and Recovery District to protect the entire Galveston Bay and the cities that are thriving on its shores — including us.