

NO HIGHWAY TO ANYWHERE?

Most who are interested in the Hwy. 3132 Extension issue already know that it was Shreveport Mayor Cedric Glover and Esplanade subdivision developer Tim Larkin who last year pushed through the official action terminating construction of the highway's final leg. What is yet unknown to most, however, is that eight years of like actions by those men and others were required to set-up that April 2011 blow to the roadway, a blow intended to be final.

The Finish 3132 Coalition has secured and reviewed thousands of pages of official documents, witnessed untold hours of related official meetings, and otherwise worked to find answers to the questions arising from that eight-year build-up. This narrative is written to provide a better understanding of these events, and what might most politely be referred to as a systemic failure among the many responsible and interconnected governmental bodies.

For readers who did not receive this report via an e-mail including prefacing remarks, the Finish3132.com website has served over the past year as a repository of the information on which this history is based. We urge readers to consult it for supporting documents and articles. Owing mainly to the continued (and illegal) withholding of public documents by some officials, the public record in this matter may for some time yet remain incomplete. Our research, therefore, is certainly a work in progress.

The Blow-Up, Pt. 1

It was last Spring before the broad maladministration of governmental processes which led to the attempt to permanently terminate the 3132 Extension moved into the public eye. On April 7, 2011, developer Larkin's attorney, Sam Gregorio, worked with a group including Shreveport Mayor Cedric Glover and the Shreveport city engineer to craft the official language necessary, they believed, to end Shreveport's decades-long "inner loop" construction process at Flournoy-Lucas Road, rather than at the Port on Red River.

The federally designated "roadway manager" for Caddo, Bossier, Webster and DeSoto Parishes, the Northwest Louisiana Council of Governments (NLCOG), was set to meet at 10:00 AM that day, but at 9:30, Glover and others in on the deal were at work in the mayor's City Hall conference room.

The officials present in either the City Hall pre-meeting or the later NLCOG official session knew – or should have known – that what was going on was wrong. A good indicator was that Larkin's attorney, Gregorio, was also a member of the directly involved Board of the Port of Caddo-Bossier, appointed to it by Glover only two months earlier. The Port, after all, was one of the most obvious beneficiaries of the completion of the Extension. The roadway, decades in the planning and building, was headed directly into the Port, greatly increasing every aspect of its operation and future success. Why, then, would the Port Board's newest member, along with his client Larkin, the Shreveport mayor, NLCOG, the Shreveport City Engineer and others be working to kill the final leg of the Hwy. 3132 "Inner Loop"?

And "kill the highway" was exactly what the language hammered out in that pre-meeting was intended to do. Mayor Glover was politically close to both Larkin and Gregorio, and both had contributed and otherwise worked toward his election. So, for them to work successfully as a team in their dubious enterprise was no surprise.

When the 10:00 AM meeting of NLCOG's Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) progressed to the subject agenda item, Executive Director Kent Rogers opened with comments clearly intended to pave the way for what he well knew and understood was about to be done. He then turned the meeting over to Larkin, who stressed his totally self-serving view that the long-planned 3132 Extension to the Port was simply not necessary given that LA Hwy. 523 – the Flournoy-Lucas Road – was then being four-laned. That his plan meant the heavy and speedy 18-wheeler truck traffic to and from the Port would thus permanently endanger many, many hundreds of people living along Flournoy-Lucas was never mentioned.

The MPO's lone highway engineer, John Sanders of the Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development (LA DOTD), defended the Extension as it had long been planned. There was no support of his position from any other member, however. Glover then took over the meeting to offer his and Larkin's four-part Motion which would undo decades of work and planning, and ignore the specifically expressed will of the Shreveport citizenry. For the profiteering few, Item #1 was the meat of the Motion, and the only part that really mattered: "1. The (NLCOG) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) rescind the approved corridor alignment for the southerly extension of the Inner Loop (La 3132) from Flournoy-Lucas Rd. (La 523) to La Hwy 1."

This language was precisely that which had been finalized by Gregorio on behalf of Larkin in that morning's pre-meeting in Glover's office.

Put simply, the termination of the 3132 Extension was what Larkin wanted for his personal financial gain. Armed with ammunition including a totally compliant Glover and our federally designated "roadway manager," NLCOG, he was even allowed to have his personal attorney write out the language of the government action required to end the highway.

The vote on the Motion was 6-1 in favor. LA DOTD's Sanders was the lone dissenter, and to underscore how far the underlying systemic governmental failure extended, included among those voting to kill the Extension were the representatives of the Port of Caddo-Bossier, and the Shreveport Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC).

A Community Working Together ... Until

The first of many formal studies involving what came to be known as Shreveport's "inner loop" was conducted in 1969, with earlier conceptions of basically the same idea found in planning documents as far back as the mid-1950s. The "dreams and visions" stage was clearly over by the time of 1973's "Inner Loop Extension Corridor Study," and the study which ultimately proved most valuable and important was the study conducted 1991-1992. This comprehensive study, entitled the "Inner Loop Corridor Study," was sponsored by the City of Shreveport Department of Public Works, NLCOG, and engineering consultants NTB, Inc.

The 1991-1992 effort, conducted with then-new Shreveport City Councilman Cedric Glover in the mix, included on its Advisory Board officials still holding key positions today: NLCOG's Kent Rogers, now-City Engineer Ron Norwood and MPC Director Charles Kirkland. The study was exhaustive, and yielded a "preferred corridor route" for the final leg of the 3132 Extension from Flournoy-Lucas road on the north down to its terminus at the Port on Red River.

Based on this 1991-1992 work, a bond issue was included on the ballot for Shreveport voter approval in 1996. The proposition was for an initial \$3,500,000 in local funding to commence construction of the final two legs of Hwy. 3132: Bert Kouns Industrial Loop to Flournoy-Lucas, and Flournoy-Lucas to the Port. The vote of Shreveporters in favor of this investment of their tax money was 64% to 36%. Ultimately, most of that money was added to state and federal funds for completion of the first of those two legs, but to stake an unambiguous claim on completion of the final leg to the Port, city officials in 1999 purchased a 16-acre tract on the south of Flournoy-Lucas, precisely as set out in the 1991-1992 study.

Notwithstanding such studious execution of what all then agreed was a clear statement of community will, it would not be long before the wants and demands of developers, supported by a relative smattering of government officials, scuttled everything. In 2003, a process began which rendered useless, it may yet prove, decades of work and planning.

The Unexplained Loss of the "Preferred Corridor Route"

In July 2003, yet another study was ordered-up by NLCOG and LA DOTD, this one entitled the "Caddo-Bossier Transportation Plan Update, 2001-2025." Its consultants included NTB, Inc., Caliper Corporation, and Parsons Brinckerhoff Quade & Douglas, Inc.

Buried deep within the study was a lone map, on Page 48, seemingly inconsequential to even experienced practitioners. In fact, however, this map of the Shreveport-Bossier City area included a new and different route for the 3132 Extension south of Flournoy-Lucas Road. Perhaps more to the point, this very important change is not visible unless one is looking for it, and even then only if the map image is greatly magnified. If, though, someone knew to look for it, and blew the image up for that purpose, the person would see that the 1991-1992 "preferred corridor route" for the final leg of the Extension, south of Flournoy-Lucas Road, had been relocated from the eastern side of Bayou Pierre to its western side.

To add to the mystery of this directional change of the more-than-decade old preferred route, no accompanying mention or discussion of the change is included in the study's 205 pages. Thus, a mere redrawing of a single and short line on a map, and a great deal about the future of the Extension was, as it has turned out, changed or, at the very least, up in the air. To this day, no responsible party has acknowledged or explained this change.

The importance of the move, as it turned out, is easy to see in any map of the surrounding area. Both the original 1991-1992 "preferred corridor route" and this new route would proceed south through the City's 16-acre tract. But, the original preferred corridor route then swept southeasterly, through what was to become – and did become - Twelve Oaks subdivision. The altered route turns in the other direction, to the west, crossing Bayou Pierre before turning again

to head south. Casual study of a map of these route options suggests two most obvious beneficiaries of such a change.

First, it is certainly the case that the owners of the 36.99-acre tract of land surrounding the City's 16-acre tract – Shreveport Development Corporation (SDC), the developer of Twelve Oaks – would benefit, as later developments would confirm. Second, such a change would also directly benefit any who owned certain tracts of land where I-69 would someday, supposedly, traverse south Caddo Parish, and intersect with the thus redirected Extension. With the route change, the Extension would travel directly south from its initial Bayou Pierre crossing, down and into a future I-69 intersection. The original preferred route took the Extension directly to the Port, while the changed route goes first to an I-69 intersection, then on I-69 to the Port.

On October 1, 2003 – three months after the publication date of the Parsons Brinckerhoff study in which the route change appeared – SDC point-man Tony Janca applied to the MPC for the rezoning of land it owned so it could expand Twelve Oaks. The homes the Twelve Oaks rezoning made possible would, however, encroach upon the Extension's original preferred corridor route.

Given their related missions, NLCOG and MPC cooperate in such planning, so it is not surprising that in that October 1, 2003 meeting of MPC, NLCOG boss Kent Rogers publicly responded to Janca's intention to encroach upon the Extension's preferred corridor route. The official Minutes of that meeting report Rogers' comments as follows:

"He (Rogers) feels that some of the proposed rezoning and the layout for the subdivision basically 'kills' that project (the Extension) from ever going forward from that point on."

Rogers' opinion changed, inexplicably and dramatically, by the time Janca's rezoning push with the MPC finally succeeded, just thirteen months later. In the November 3, 2004 MPC meeting official Minutes, Rogers comments are recorded to have been:

"(Rogers) commended Mr. Janca for the work they've (SDC) done. ... He (Rogers) noted that he was delighted 'to receive an email from the applicant (Janca) noting that they (SDC) are willing to donate the property to make sure the (3132 Extension) corridor is preserved.'"

Based mainly on this on-the-record testimony from Rogers, the MPC, at its January 5, 2005 meeting, approved the Twelve Oaks rezoning application. That rezoning – and resulting 3132 route change – is thereafter reflected in the legal description of the property in Ordinance No. 4336 of 2005 of the Caddo Parish Commission.

As with so many such official actions in this history, this importantly stated proviso was never enforced. No such preservation of the preferred corridor route occurred. When, in our research, we asked Janca by email about the fact that the public record suggested no such "preservation" of the route was enforced when Janca later sold the subject 36.99-acre tract to Larkin, his response was:

"Why the NLCOG did not question Larkin about extending the ROW (right-of-way) I do not know, but we (Shreveport Development Corporation) did exactly what was asked of us by the governmental entities."

A final and likely important fact of this matter is an assertion by SDC's Janca in a 2004 letter to MPC. In support of his rezoning request, he cites another printed version of the change of the Extension route, a map within a brochure written and printed in 2000 by the Shreveport Chamber of Commerce / Economic Development office. We have not seen this brochure, but if Janca is correct, and Chamber officials knew of this route change in 2000, the unidentified advocates (landowners?) connected to the Chamber seemingly did not tell our "roadway manager," NLCOG's Kent Rogers, until sometime between his 2003 and 2004 MPC comments.

Bossier City Councilman Tim Larkin Comes to Shreveport

In July 2006, Tim Larkin paid \$2,536,750 for a 100.5-acre tract of land on Railsback Road for his highest-end (for Shreveport) Esplanade development. Caddo Parish courthouse records of the same date show the project's financing for Larkin Development at Railsback, LLC, by Maverick Capital, LLC. That company is shown in records of the Louisiana Secretary of State to be owned by E. R. Campbell, III, also a Railsback Road property owner.

It was not long before Larkin's plans for Railsback Road triggered strong opposition from his "neighbors" in the area. Residents were variously reported to object both to the planned density of the development – this is not an area where houses on half-acre lots were ever contemplated by anyone other than Larkin – and to the expected traffic jam certain to result from Esplanade's entrance and exit. That ingress/egress was via two-lane Railsback Road, then onto likewise two-lane Ellerbe Road and, just across Ellerbe Road, two-lane Norris-Ferry Road.

Bearing in mind that included among the relatively few Railsback Road property owners were the Campbells – Larkin financiers – and other of their relatives, a supposed "solution" to the key traffic congestion problem was identified: Larkin must have a second entrance and exit. Given that his 100.5-acre tract extended down from Railsback Road to Bayou Pierre, and given that just across Bayou Pierre at that point was Janca / SDC's 36.99-acre tract surrounding the city-owned 16 acres, the next – and very serious – hit to any chance of a 3132 Extension to the Port was unleashed.

Larkin "had" to buy, therefore – for Esplanade's main entrance and exit – SDC's key parcel of land dead within the preferred corridor route of 3132. According to Janca, Larkin found out at the same time that SDC had to have a 120-acre tract at the southern end of Twelve Oaks for its final phase of development. So, to make certain SDC was properly motivated to do what Larkin wanted, the Esplanade developer purchased, for \$3,000,000, the 120-acre tract Janca needed. Janca, as he saw it, had no choice: on April 10, 2007, he sold the 36.99-acre tract surrounding the city's 16-acre tract to Larkin for \$1,109,970.

Now the owner of a path for a second entrance and exit on Flournoy-Lucas – including the northern end of the 3132 Extension's preferred corridor route, Larkin moved quickly to quell the uprising among his Railsback Road "neighbors." On November 6, 2007, he wrote a Letter Agreement contract to the Railsback Road homeowners group, leading off with this language:

"Based on our discussions, I am willing to stipulate and agree, subject to the final approval of the Shreveport MPC, as follows:

1. *The boulevard to be constructed from Flournoy-Lucas Road to Railsback Road will be completed prior to the commencement of any construction in or in connection with the proposed development."*

It is important to note that the "boulevard" Larkin's contract with the Railsback Road group refers to would – according to Larkin's plans – stretch from Esplanade's Railsback Road entrance, down and through the 100.5-acre tract of homes, then across a bridge over Bayou Pierre which he later built, then finally through the 36.99-acre tract into Flournoy-Lucas Road. Thus, the final leg of the "boulevard" in Larkin's plan would necessarily be built within or virtually within the preferred corridor route of the final leg of the 3132 Extension to the Port. Its precise location vis-a-vis the possible corridor route for the Extension cannot be known, of course, until studies now underway are completed.

As explained previously, there was no "protection" of the 3132 corridor route when SDC sold its 36.99 acres to Larkin in 2007. So, while Larkin and Janca / SDC each got what they wanted, the people of Shreveport who invested in the completion of the 3132 Extension certainly did not. The public is left to wonder how, especially given the possible change of the Extension route a few years earlier, Larkin proceeded with development when his bridge would be in about the same location as the Extension bridge over Bayou Pierre, and the homes built on the 36.99-acre tract would be snug up against the Extension as it ran through that tract.

In an irony playing out as this is written, Larkin acknowledges in his contract with his Railsback Road "neighbors" that its promises and provisions are dependent on the approval of the MPC. This is ironic in that while Larkin has shown a remarkable ability to "influence" politicians and other government officials of every rank and station, he has, as of this writing, provably failed to do so with a majority of the MPC members.

The Calm Before the Storm

In 2008, 2009 and 2010, Larkin went about the business of preparing the 100.5-acre tract of Esplanade for actual homebuilding – if and when his second entrance and exit on Flournoy-Lucas was a fact – as well as with the building his \$1,127,275 bridge over Bayou Pierre.

While our study of public records cannot show what else might have been challenging to Larkin during this period, we can say with confidence that looming large throughout was the matter of his "boulevard" – to be called Railsback Ridge Drive, it would seem – from his bridge up and into Flournoy-Lucas Road.

Public documents suggest that strange "new corridor route" which appeared in the 2003 Parsons Brinckerhoff study, and then became fact in the Twelve Oaks expansion into the original preferred corridor route, was very problematic for Larkin. It was certainly the case that his contract with the Railsback Road homeowners group prevented him from building houses without the completion of his roadway, just as it was certain that he was piling on more and more debt each day without sales income. Regardless, public records show that in the normal course of their regulatory function, various governmental entities began noting how his development was a real concern in the context of the 3132 Extension.

Likely as a result of these issues, Larkin began conversations in 2009 with The Glen Retirement Center, with which he shared a property line on the west of this 36.99-acre tract.

The Glen was a potential solution to Larkin's lurking problems with building his roadway, much less houses, within or even beside the 3132 Extension corridor route on his land. If Larkin could talk The Glen's Board of Directors into it, and agree to pay The Glen's price, the two could use a small piece of The Glen's land fronting on Flournoy-Lucas for a joint entrance and exit there. Since Larkin's frontage on Flournoy-Lucas has nowhere near the width needed, it was then, and remains, of critical importance to him to have more room for his roadway where it "cuts" into Flournoy-Lucas.

The Glen, in February 2010, made its initial offer to Larkin for the land necessary for a joint entrance and exit on Flournoy-Lucas. As proven by the official Minutes of Board meetings of The Glen – and in one of the most important developments in this history – Larkin never counter-offered or otherwise responded.

The meaning and importance of what happened next cannot be overstated.

Larkin, all available information suggests, decided that he would save the money required by The Glen's offer. He may well have known that necessary approvals for his required roadway were not likely to be granted – by the MPC or LA DOTD, or both – but he was not *required* to do the deal with The Glen. Rather, Larkin's very close association with Glover meant that he had a far more lucrative option available to him, if the mayor (and city engineer) went along, and could get required approval from LA DOTD. That alternative included three key parts:

- (1) Glover would officially, through NLCOG, act to kill the 3132 Extension to the Port,
- (2) the city's 16 acre tract would thus be "available," and he would give permanent use of it to Larkin, and
- (3) Larkin would then build his Esplanade roadway through the city-owned tract and directly into the present terminus of Hwy. 3132 at Flournoy-Lucas, later "donating" his roadway to the City. (That "donation" of the Larkin roadway to the City meant the taxpayers would then be responsible for maintenance and any other costs associated with its public ownership.)

Glover, it now seems, did not know if the ultimate goal – unilaterally giving Larkin permanent use of the city-owned 16 acres, and thus giving him, too, his curb-cut into Flournoy-Lucas Road – was possible. In fact, when such checks on legality were done after the deal was made public, it was quickly determined that only the City Council could make it happen: the Council would first have to vote to declare the property "surplus," then take follow-up action to sell it to the highest bidder.

It is an understatement to say that once various other regulatory officials came to hear and understand the details of Glover / Larkin's plan, the resistance – and the developer's resulting problems – multiplied. When this kicked-in, primarily from the professional engineers working for the LA DOTD, Larkin again miscalculated: he opted to use power politics to fight the highway department professionals.

LA DOTD: Department Engineers and Department Politicians

As explained earlier, veteran engineer John Sanders of LA DOTD stood alone in his publicly expressed disagreement with endangering – much less terminating – the 3132 Extension. We have learned, though, that while Sanders' opposition publicly singled him out, other career engineers at LA DOTD had joined him within the agency in pushing-back against critically important aspects of the Larkin plan.

The developer's main obstacle was gaining LA DOTD's necessary and direct approval to run his roadway – which is to say, secure his "curb-cut" – into Flournoy-Lucas at the point where 3132 now terminates into it. In fact and law, when the highway department invokes "control of access" over a roadway segment, that is precisely what it has: control, regardless of what any public official or governmental agency might want or intend.

To obtain what he wanted, Larkin had to convince LA DOTD engineers and in-house politicians higher up the chain – e.g., Secretary of LA DOTD, Sherri LeBas – to withdraw that "control of access" over the part of Flournoy-Lucas Road where it forms the northern boundary of the city-owned 16-acres. To get this done, Larkin called in his long-time Bossier political friend, State Representative Jane Smith. Smith was very well known in the state capital to be very close to Governor Jindal's Chief of Staff, Timmy Teepell, and an ally of sorts of the governor as well. Either would, theoretically, convince or command LA DOTD, Larkin seemed to believe ... or hope.

Emails secured by the Coalition's use of Public Records Requests tell the story. Smith was a very actively involved on behalf of Larkin, notwithstanding her repeated claim that she merely set up one meeting between LeBas and Larkin which she did not even attend. Various LA DOTD employees on the political side of the department, as well as several of the engineers and other professionals, mentioned in emails that it was Smith who was bird-dogging Larkin's relentless pressure. The developer was thus able to personally meet with Teepell, LeBas, LA DOTD Deputy Secretary Eric Kalivoda and many others, some of them repeatedly.

(Notably, emails requested from Teepell and others on the governor's staff were only produced with redactions which rendered them unreadable. Although the legal claim made to justify such suppression of public information was Jindal's "deliberative process" exclusion, we do not believe that claim will ultimately withstand legal challenge.)

In the period between late 2010 and March 31, 2011, many meetings and teleconferences among the frontline principles in the wheeling and dealing were held, and any number of emails written. When it was all said and done, a great deal of information very valuable to the public had been logged by and among those caught-up, one way or another, in the political battle by Larkin – and the deeply involved Mayor Glover – to get what they wanted.

When the smoke cleared, the engineers had prevailed in their main policy and roadway design objections, but Larkin won big with other political and financial considerations.

On March 31, 2011, Deputy Secretary Kalivoda wrote his final letter on these particular

matters to Larkin. In that letter, the highway department number two refused Larkin's pressure for LA DOTD to lift its "control of access" so he could tie directly into Flournoy-Lucas through the city-owned 16 acres, but gave Larkin a valuable consolation prize: the highway department, through and by its use of NLCOG, would take the lead for Larkin in negotiating a deal with his "next door" neighbor, The Glen Retirement Center, for a joint entrance and exit for the two entities on Flournoy-Lucas Road.

This LA DOTD "consolation" prize to Larkin reveals much, much more than the highway department likely wanted anyone to know about how its in-house politicians do the business of the people of Louisiana. With one estimate of the total cost of this gift at over \$2,000,000, Larkin was assured the taxpayers would pick up the tab, with The Glen also "offered" the infrastructure expense to commercially develop a piece of its own land. A traffic interchange, with signal, was thrown in for entrance and exit, thus tying it all in with undeveloped land across Flournoy-Lucas.

No matter how this would-be gift is spun or spiffed-up, a central fact remains: when, a year or so earlier, it was Larkin's own money (or his lenders') which might have funded a deal with The Glen, he walked away. Thanks to his political sway with the Jindal Administration – for precisely what considerations we do not yet know given those redacted emails – Larkin was now offered a marquis entrance and exit for Esplanade as a gift. We are left to wonder what changed things so dramatically in Larkin's favor.

The Blow-Up, Part II ...

Notwithstanding the valuable deal extended to Larkin by LA DOTD, the developer apparently still wanted more. With Mayor Glover calling the shots, "more" is what the team went for in the April 7, 2011 NLCOG meeting detailed earlier in this report.

Almost immediately after the meeting wrapped, however, there was real trouble brewing for this team. Later on the same day of that meeting, various LA DOTD staffers, as well as personnel at other government agencies, began commenting on what Larkin, Glover and NLCOG had done. Emails were flying for weeks afterward, but in the immediate aftermath, one reaction stood out: LA DOTD professionals seemed dumbstruck. That their colleague John Sanders was able to offer a first-hand account of the goings-on likely made the outcome relatively easy for everyone at LA DOTD to understand: Larkin and Glover apparently won, and the 3132 Extension was likely dead. The gloom among LA DOTD professionals is well demonstrated by one senior engineer's e-mail:

" ... it seems useless to proceed with any planning study of extending the Inner Loop (3132) to future I-69. With what happened yesterday, combined with the fact that the City has already permitted Mr. Larkin's development and he has already built a bridge over a local stream for it – not to mention that I-69 is not funded, AND, that future development south of Flournoy-Lucas all the way to LA 1 appears to be unstoppable ... the future possibility of eventually extending the Inner Loop all the way to future I-69 appears to be all but doomed."

As if to make this view within the department official, on April 14, 2011, one week after the NLCOG shocker, LA DOTD Secretary Sherri LeBas met with Larkin, and afterward wrote a

letter to him in which she seemed to wave the white flag of surrender:

"This will confirm our meeting on Thursday, April 14, 2011 regarding access to your property from Flournoy-Lucas Road in Shreveport. As discussed, the Department of Transportation and Development will allow a permanent connection to LA 523 East Flournoy-Lucas Road. The Department intends to issue a permit to the City of Shreveport for this connection further described conceptually as Option 1 on the traffic impact study prepared by Neel-Schaffer dated March 4, 2011."

Option 1 of the Neel-Schaffer study, which Larkin had paid for, was the design the developer wanted, and it required the city-owned 16 acres through which all required arteries would pass.

The next day, however, more of the story from LA DOTD was revealed in a letter from LeBas to Mayor Glover. That letter and other documents over the following few weeks note that for the Larkin deal to fly, the City of Shreveport would have to take permanent ownership and all related costs of three related arteries: (1) Ellerbe Road from the Bert Kouns Industrial Loop to Flournoy-Lucas, (2) Flournoy-Lucas from Ellerbe Road to Hwy. 1, and (3) LA 3132 (Inner Loop) to Flournoy-Lucas Road. LeBas even included with her letter the Resolution the Shreveport City Council would have to enact and sign making the agreement official.

In days following the April 15, 2011 letter from LeBas to Glover, various memos, emails, etc., explain the full context of this LA DOTD requirement, with this language included:

"In light of the proposed Inner Loop corridor realignment, and rather than compromise Departmental principles and standards, (emphasis added) DOTD Secretary LeBas proposed, and Mayor Glover agreed, to seek Council approval for the City of Shreveport to take ownership of (the three named highway segments)."

Though we have not yet found definitive evidence of such, this more complete context seems to reveal that LA DOTD professionals took the position that if Larkin and Glover were going to get what they wanted, then the department wanted nothing to do with any of the highways impacted by what was, after all, a political deal, not one based on transportation engineering.

Meanwhile, back at the farm of public awareness and reaction, nothing about any of this action was publicly revealed until a column in the Shreveport *Times* by editorialist Craig Durrett, three weeks after the NLCOG meeting, April 29, 2011. Durrett was able to publicly outline the incredible set of events owing to a phone call he received from a still-unidentified source, one who was strongly opposed to the Larkin / Glover confection.

Also strongly opposed was Shreveport healthcare and economic powerhouse, Willis-Knighton Health System (WKHS). As public knowledge and protest began to spread and build, WKHS formed the *Finish 3132 Coalition* – for which I continue to work, pro bono, as I have since May 2011 – to appeal to the public and all responsible government officials.

The WKHS response, it turned out, was purely logical: just down Flournoy-Lucas Road from the 3132 Extension terminus, the healthcare leviathan was (and is) developing its premier \$100,000,000+ residential center for seniors, The Oaks of Louisiana. That investment was made in expectation that the 3132 Extension to the Port would be constructed as long promised, and

thus that the very dangerous 18-wheeler traffic to and from the Port would not endanger its residents and their loved ones, employees of The Oaks, or any others.

In fact, WKHS was also directly targeted by some elected officials supporting Larkin and Glover. Records obtained in our research prove that WKHS was politically targeted by these officials merely as a result of its open opposition to the 3132 Extension termination. As the heat on involved politicians began to grow after the April 2011 NLCOG meeting, this group of officials set out a "new" Extension corridor which would go directly into and through The Oaks of Louisiana. A series of subsequent, repeated requests by WKHS to have this route – "Route A," to which it is now referred – removed from consideration have failed.

In reaction to the solidly negative public response to what the Larkin / Glover plan would mean if allowed to stand, the Shreveport City Council specifically acted to kill Glover's gift to Larkin of the city-owned 16-acre tract. It is important to contemplate what that action means: never did Glover, of his own volition, act to re-establish the 3132 Extension route as it existed before his very direct actions on behalf of Larkin. Throughout the more than one year since the NLCOG meeting, Glover has aggressively continued to work for Larkin's development, never once acknowledging the facts and meaning of his actions against the Shreveporters who long ago put up their own money to see the Extension completed as promised.

Where We Are Now ...

In the wake of the public disapproval of what Larkin / Glover and their supporters had attempted, NLCOG and LA DOTD located \$1,000,000 to yet again study various corridor route alternatives for the 3132 Extension. The four options specifically listed are (1) the route which would effectively "take out" The Oaks of Louisiana, (2) the original preferred corridor route through what is now a significant portion of Twelve Oaks, (3) the changed corridor route across Bayou Pierre and down the Railsback Road side of it, and (4) the "no build" option.

Soon, sometime in August 2012, we believe, the result of the first phase of the \$1,000,000 study will be announced. It may well be that only one route option, possibly two, will then be forwarded to the second and determinative study, the environmental assessment. It is expected that another year, or perhaps year-and-a-half, will be required to complete the work.

In spite of the fact that the studies will not be complete for a year or more, Larkin's full-court press to build his roadway continues. Since the most likely route option passes through the same area as does his roadway, the Coalition and some in the various responsible government agencies take the common sense position that in order to be certain no more mistakes are made, Larkin's roadway should not be approved before completion of the studies. Larkin and his governmental and political supporters want the roadway constructed with no further delay, regardless of any problems with any possible future route option.

Regardless of the constant pressure from Larkin and others to possibility (again) compromise a future 3132 Extension route, real successes by and for the people of Shreveport have been achieved through the work of WKHS, the Coalition, and others. As one notable

example, LA DOTD's plan to build the joint entrance and exit for Larkin – using land owned by The Glen – has been rejected through direct action by the Board of The Glen. Though LA DOTD may yet attempt to expropriate The Glen's land for Larkin's purpose, but in a courtroom, such would likely fail given what we feel certain would be very strong and determinative public disapproval.

... and What it Means

The business of building streets and roads and highways and bridges offers its governing authorities the opportunity to study and stall a thing to death, fully aware that the years invested in such manipulation will yield the desired outcome of killing the project. Those who step into the light and publicly oppose a project do the honorable and accountable thing, of course, but to kill a project from hiding and by maladministration of process is to bear no risk of public accountability. The latter is necessarily, of course, the method of those who fear they will lose if the rules are fair.

We believe the 3132 Extension project has suffered from both this manipulation and, ironically, from a populace doing it's best: trusting government leaders to do that which the people specifically said – and voted – for them to do. We believe the story of the 3132 Extension, at least since 1999, has been nurtured by a political culture absent any demand for either official transparency or basic governmental accountability. The project has been beaten nearly (?) to death by officials with no respect for the very clearly expressed will of the majority, and with no downside risk for their abuse of process and power.

Regardless of anything else, what has mattered most in the progress made on the 3132 Extension's completion are the number of people who cared, and who committed to express both their support for the project, and their disapproval of officials who continue to oppose the public they swore an oath to serve.

For the highway to actually be built, that commitment must broaden and deepen.

Elliott Stonecipher

FINISH 3132 COALITION
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