

Greetings neighbors in the Rocky Ripple and Butler area, it's Carla Gaff-Clark, town board member since 1994. I was asked to please put something out to help make the impending flood control projects easier to understand. Certainly flood protection for Rocky Ripple is a very emotionally charged and controversial issue that our town continues to face. But it doesn't need to be that way. Yes, statements by residents of Rocky Ripple at the last board meeting, conversations posted on "Nextdoor Rocky Ripple" along with many flying emails, indicate there is still much misinformation and confusion about options for flood protection for the town. For that reason, I will attempt to clarify what I believe are choices for our town and explain my position as a town board member.

1. Extending the Westfield Alignment levee around Rocky Ripple using federal money is not and never has been an option available to Rocky Ripple. This has been made clear numerous times by both the Army Corp of Engineers (ACE) and the city. To stop the current project, would, according to the AECOM report be a loss of approximately \$18 million and effect several thousand people in nearby neighborhoods. These are the neighborhoods that have paid thousands of dollars each year in flood insurance after going through a levee rehabilitation project themselves years ago. They have waited for the final phase of this project to be finished, and many have joined with Rocky Ripple over those years to insist that the town also receive flood protection. I want to thank them here for that.
2. ACE gave the city several options for completing the project, none of which included a levee around Rocky Ripple. People can disagree with ACE's engineering, math, or judgment, but it will not change the outcome. The city made a decision that it would simply be more feasible to complete the Westfield Alignment phase using 75 percent federal money, while working with Rocky Ripple at the same time on a separate project. Although the redundancy of two walls and the way it may look in relation to our town and money used for this , seems ill-spent from the perspective of many Rocky Ripple residents, using it makes a lot of sense to others. Also, it's important to note that federal money is specific project focused and goes away if the project isn't completed.
3. Recently, the City of Indianapolis, through the Mayor's office, offered to fund a new and separate project for Rocky Ripple that would include what Rocky Ripple residents choose for flood protection along the river. This could include an enhanced levee that provides 100-year protection and removes Rocky Ripple from the flood plain and the need for flood insurance. This would be a local project that allows officials involved to take the time to work with residents, making as many personal allowances as possible, especially for the homeowners who may lose their homes due to their proximity to the river.
4. Paying for a local project will come out of the city's current storm-water district (IC 8-1.5). Upkeep for the flood project in the years to come may also come from that same district fund, or a smaller, separate district created for the area,

through the IC 8-1.5 provision. Although legislation was proposed earlier this year to allow for the creation of township storm-water districts through-out the state, including the Rocky Ripple area, the bill was halted when the city made its intentions for support of a local project for Rocky Ripple known in writing.

5. The City's offer includes start-up funding of \$10 million. Additional funding from Butler is expected as long as they are included in the levee which removes their property from the flood plain. The (currently in draft form) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the city, Rocky Ripple Town Board and Butler University details the plans to continue assisting Rocky Ripple through at least the building of whichever project is selected by the town. The \$10 million, again, is just start up money; it will in no way be expected to cover the entire project.
6. The MOU allows Rocky Ripple to decide what option will be chosen. A meeting is expected to happen in April that will show renderings of what the levee and homes and structures along it will look like in relation to the three viable AECOM alternatives. This is a must attend meeting for residents of Rocky Ripple. It will be advertised through the town's e-news, website, and announcement-boards into town as well as in hard copy. The town board will invite newspaper participation as well.

The AECOM report analyzed three alternative flood control projects for the town. The report is expected to guide a flood project for Rocky Ripple, according to city officials. Cost estimates are \$31-48 million without the inclusion of Butler in the plan. There is no discussion, nor has there ever been to my knowledge, of doing partial earthen levee rehabilitation and a partial wall for Rocky Ripple. Nor has there been discussion of relocating river houses to protect them; but only discussed as a way to save some that may be in the path of a flood wall. A flood wall that would protect all of Rocky Ripple. However, the report noted that riverbank stabilization (at the very least) needed to start in Rocky Ripple immediately. The city acknowledged this need and has been assisting with riverbank stabilization since the fall of 2016. More work will take place to help stabilize the deteriorating riverbank in March of this year.

- a. Alternative 1 – provides 300 year protection with 2.4 feet of freeboard in accordance with the USACE design. This alternative would be in place of the Westfield Blvd. closure plan and would seek to utilize USACE funding, therefore making it very unlikely.
- b. Alternative 2 – provides 100 year protection with 3 feet of freeboard consistent with FEMA requirements. This has been evaluated as a non-Federal option to the USACE plan. It could be implemented as either the closure of the USACE plan, or as standalone project to protect Rocky Ripple.
- c. Alternative 3 – standalone project that provides 100 year protection with no freeboard (not in compliance with FEMA requirements).

- d. Although not specifically detailed in the AECOM report as an alternative, rehabilitating the existing levee and getting it up to a grade that it would be eligible for inclusion in the Rehabilitation Inspection Program (RIP) is discussed. It is estimated that the cost to rehabilitate the levee to provide the current level of protection (which has been stated at 7, 12, 18 and 38 years depending where you are standing) would cost about \$5.4 million. Should the Rocky Ripple levee fail to function, the annual damages would more than double and also create significant life-safety issues, according to the report.
7. This offer by the City is the first time a formal MOU has been created that would assist the town in enhancing the levee to remove Rocky Ripple from the flood plain, although verbal discussion has been going on for several decades.
8. I believe the best option for the greater good of the town is to enhance the levee to achieve the 100-year protection that removes Rocky Ripple from the flood plain. My position is not driven by my self-interest as some would like to assume. I live in a house on Riverview Dr. that was built before the earthen levee. Due to the design and construction of the levee in the 1930's, the house now, in part, sits on the levee. We (my husband and I) know that any construction enhancing flood protection will require that our house be removed, and we have known that all through my pushing the city for a flood project for the town over the years. The fact that we would be giving up our home for this has been noted verbally and in writing to city, ACE and local persons in many flood project meetings, many with hundreds of you in attendance.

We understand and accept that some of the other homes on Riverview Drive, including the homes of some of our neighbors and friends who have worked tirelessly over the years to help make Rocky Ripple a better place, may also have to be removed. Although it is sad for me, it seems clear that the future of Rocky Ripple will best be served by accepting the City's offer to enhance the levee so as to remove the town and Butler from the flood plain.

9. My position doesn't mean I am not willing to listen to my fellow citizens. It simply means I am willing to tell you what I think and why. If I hear a better option for the town, I certainly will consider it, especially if it keeps more homes in Rocky Ripple but offers the 100-year protection (ending flood insurance) for everyone else. During the last two decades it has become more and more clear that the best way to achieve this is through a local-partner project rather than the ACE. The reason I say that is because of what many of you remember happened in the 90's, when you stated that there were not enough options given by ACE, they weren't willing to work with the residents and because, during recent years they have noted that their 300-year flood project for the town would take down more than 60 homes.

A local project gives us more options to work with residents and doesn't have to have a "one-size-fits -all" approach. Residents who do not live on the river, this project is a win-win for you, while some folks who live on the river may not have a way to win at all. Please get behind those who stand to lose so much with compassion and understanding as this project moves forward.

10. My request at this time is that the citizens of Rocky Ripple stop focusing on the wall they don't want, and which they have no control over; and focus on the wall they do have some control over which will affect them greatly. Together, pulling our knowledge and resources together we have the opportunity to create flood control that will enhance our town and keep it safe for generations to come.

Please feel free to contact a board member with questions and concerns about the flood project as it moves forward, and know that the board is committed to finding the best project for the town that affords the greatest safety element while decreasing the number of homes that may need to be removed.

Carla Gaff-Clark

Rocky Ripple Town Board President

For more information on things discussed here, including the AECOM report, please go to the Town of Rocky Ripple website (www.rockyripple.com) and click links that address areas that you are interested in or want more information about.