New Orleans Flood Plan Is Hitting Roof

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By Steve Sabludowsky

Living in the city might be getting even more difficult as city leaders are reportedly reluctant to adopt FEMA flood elevation advisories calling for new buildings and buildings needing major renovations to be floored three feet above ground.

Making matters worse, the city position could result in City vs. State conflicts; Some from the state are concerned that federal aid could be jeopardized unless the advisories approved.

However, so far, the FEMA maps are advisory and the more preliminary maps come out. Meantime, fixing up the city with the disparity of opinions and uncertainty of power with threats of funding stoppage do no good to the average Joe who needs to know with virtually complete certainty as to what to do and the sooner the better.

Ironically, in many ways, the entire process is chaotic which one would expect when many have good intentions and others merely want a piece of the action.
Which makes it so much more critical that government leaders listen to their constituencies and know all of the risks involved, then act.

Building high might be the only option for some. This means that all stakeholders must come to grips with the harsh realities that the federal government has not committed to Category 5 protection as the money gets leaner and the populace gets angrier.

Time is not on the side of uncertainty. Those with options will leave the City which will only cause greater demise, a weaker tax base and more difficulty for the community to find a comprehensive solution to a very hard problem.

As Chairman Powell and others have said Rome was not built in a day, but we do not have centuries to wait for basic decisions such as building heights. We must all get on the same slab as fast as we can.

Likewise, the outside world must realize that all of this is a major experiment born out of a monster of a storm. Reasonable people will differ. So, let the debates begin quietly and inclusively.

Inspectors to check levees east of canal; Area vulnerable until gate done in
late '07