

Thoughts from Barbara Champagne - 159 Anna Street, Ama, LA

Based on the statistics contained on the attached sheet (extracted from the Wikipedia website), Ama would seem to contain the type of population that is beneficial to St. Charles Parish. We are a stable, family-oriented population, containing a nice percentage of young people with the potential to contribute to the parish's economic stability. The majority of children are being raised in a two-parent home. The median income in 2000 was excellent and only a very small percentage of the population was below the poverty line.

Despite not having proper recreation facilities available to our children, we have managed to produce star athletes.

Crime statistics for our area are low because families take care of one another. Most families in Ama have lived there for well over 100 years.

Ama is elevated 10 ~~meters~~^{FEET} above sea level, which means we are not prone to flooding and, therefore, were able to assist others during a disaster of the proportions of Hurricane Katrina.

Listed as a "no flood zone" makes Ama very attractive for residential development. We need to assure that the character of our community does not change. While not against progress, we need to make sure that it is the "right kind" of progress that will benefit our community and the parish as a whole. We certainly do not want to see the same type of "big city" congestion that has occurred in Covington. If real estate developers are allowed to develop properties with too little green space, we may find ourselves with a very unstable population that does not contribute as much economically to St. Charles Parish as the type of residents who are interested in green space in a "no flood zone".

Since Hurricane Katrina, many residents of Orleans and Jefferson Parish are seeking land not prone to flooding and which offers an attractive lifestyle for their families. People making deliveries down our street have often commented that they envied our open green space and quiet and wished that they lived in our area. Keeping future housing lots large enough for children to play in their own yards would attract persons with a higher standard of living to our area, which would, in turn, result in more tax revenue for the parish.

We have a history of being farmers and hunters in our area – lovers of the outdoors. I would love to see the bike path completed on the levee. It would certainly seem to make sense to extend the bike path from the parish line and continue it on into our area. Does this not have the potential to deter crime if more people are out and about on the levee where they would be able to observe any possible unlawful activity?

Hopefully, some progress can be made towards having the ADM grain elevator maintain their facility in a more environmentally responsible manner. The noise and dust pollution is an ongoing problem. It is often difficult to breathe due to the amount of dust in the air.

Ama, Louisiana
(Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

Ama is a census-designated place in St. Charles Parish, Louisiana, United States. Ama is on the West Bank of the Mississippi River, just west of the Jefferson Parish, Louisiana line. The population was 1,285 at the 2000 census.

Geography

According to the United States Census Bureau, the CDP has total area of 4.4 square miles, of which 3.6 square miles of it is land and 0.9 square miles of it is water. It is 10 feet above sea level.

Demographics

As of the census of 2000, there were 1,285 people, 446 households, and 347 families residing in the CDP. The population density was 360.0 people per square mile. There were 488 housing units at an average density of 136.7/sq. mi. The racial makeup of the CDP was 64.90% White, 34.50% African American, 0.16% Native American, 0.16% Asian, 0.16% from other races and 0.23% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 1.01% of the population.

There were 446 households, out of which 40.1% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 59.4% were married couples living together, 13.9% had a female householder with no husband present, and 22.0% were non-families. 18.8% of all households were made up of individuals and 5.6% had someone living alone who was 65 years or older. The average size was 2.88 and the average family size was 3.28.

In the CDP, the population was spread out with 29.1% under the age of 18, 9.2% from 18 to 24, 29.9% from 25 to 44, 22.7% from 45 to 64, and 9.1% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 35 years. For every 100 females there were 103.6 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 95.1 males.

The median income for a household in the CDP was \$41,691, and the median income for a family as \$50,156. Males had a median income of \$35,875 versus \$31,667 for females. The per capita income for the CDP was \$19,399. About 7.5% of families and 8.5% of the population were below the poverty line, including none of those under age 18 and 13.8% of those age 65 or over.

Notable Residents

Dawan Landry, football player, Baltimore Ravens

LaRon Landry, football player, Washington Redskins

Dana "Pokey" Chatman, former LSU Head Women's Basketball Coach

Comments for Community Meeting on Future Growth in Ama
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Rural Aspect

I believe that Ama should be zoned to retain its rural aspect. Consideration should be given to increasing public green space and finding ways for landowners to use their property for plans other than for subdivisions. For example, SCP could investigate and provide to the community ways in which to establish wetlands mitigation land on property which is wetlands. Small landowners would be happy to receive this information and could use it to provide revenue. In addition, consideration should be given to zoning such as R1B or suburban, such as Waggaman has in place.

Recreation

The people of Ama tend to find use of their leisure time in rural pursuits: biking, walking, fishing, and hunting.

SCP should revisit the Davis Diversion project with the Corps with the intent of finding recreational possibilities – including walk/bike path atop the diversion levees, connection with Willowdale Drive, and bird watching, fishing and crabbing opportunities.

It's long past time to see our bike path atop the levee completed and linked with the Waggaman bike path which was established quite a few years ago.

I would also like to see the SCP playground and ball fields at the end of St. Mark's Lane improved and lighting provided at the basketball goals at the ADM facility.

Density & Design Appropriate to a Rural Community

Ama is a stable community, with as a few more people establishing homes every year, but no large influx of population. Homes tend to be on larger lots or in subdivisions with large and small lots mixed together. People with acreage which is zoned open land should retain their rights to place trailers for family members, as long as no rent is charged and no more than 4 trailers are placed upon the land (current zoning ordinance). Personally, I think the number of trailers should be reduced to 2 instead of 4. Currently there is probably no enforcement on the family member/no rent rule.

Current codes should be enforced on trailers sited on small lots. Some are using services from the family members' homes and are unsafe. Derelict trailers should be required to be removed and derelict property codes should be enforced. It may be that SCP codes need strengthening in this area. Many streets have grown past the "trailer" lot stage and want to limit new trailers and remove that zoning when old trailers are removed. This process needs to be made easy for the streets on which a majority of people would like to see a no-trailer policy.

I personally am opposed to dense subdivisions with many houses on small lots. One developer currently hoping to re-start his subdivision in Ama on lots of 5000 square feet has already described his development as affordable housing inspired by subdivisions in New Orleans. To me, what this one developer has suggested is more appropriate to an urban environment. If this development were approved, the 92 to 150 houses planned would increase the Ama population by 25% to 41% (using a factor of 3.5 for population per housing unit). Developers who propose dense subdivisions need to prepare designs with additional community green space to make adjustment for the loss of personal space in these small lots. In addition, sidewalks and underground drainage and lighting needs to be provided by the developer and no waivers should be given on setbacks in order to squeeze housing into unsuitable space.

Safety and Community Consideration

Home Occupation rules need to be enforced and review of these codes is probably necessary.

Thought should be given to how the development will age and what strains it will cause in the community. Access to River Road from one way in/out developments with large populations will be a problem.

Air quality monitoring needs to be reviewed for the grain elevator and the community needs to be advised as to what monitoring is required and who in SCP government receives this information and how Ama residents can access the information.

Planning & Zoning needs to review the ways in which the community is notified of development. Our Ama group sent recommendations last year with many reasonable suggestions for improving the notification process. These suggestions should be reviewed.

In Summary

I understand that people have a need to sell/develop their assets, but it should be done in such a way that the development is compatible with the rest of the community. Ama has already had one development which is focused on a transient population and is incompatible with the community life in Ama which is based around permanent family populations.

Comments for Community Meeting on Future of Ama

I want Ama to remain a rural community, which means ample green space so people are not living on top of each other. Future subdivisions should be designed with yard space for children to play (instead of in the street) and with driveways to accommodate vehicles so they are not parked in the street or front yard. Future subdivisions in Ama should be zoned R1B.

With high density, low income, ~~trailer~~^{TRAILER} housing the crime rate will increase similar to what has occurred with the Red Church and Fairfield subdivisions on the East Bank. Good people crammed in close quarters are going to have disagreements.

I am against trailer parks and trailers in established subdivisions, but would support trailers for family members on family plots.

Other improvements needed for Ama:

- Hurricane protection
- Monitor for compliance of emissions at ADM grain elevator
- Paving top of levee
- Better maintenance of levee grass (possible spray for weed control)

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