

Concerns and Questions from the Neighborhood

Overview

This developer, who is fully aware of the legal and proper processes, has marked and cut roads, removed significant amounts of soil and trees with no regard to the laws, our city, or our neighborhood. The work began with no feasibility study, no environmental impact study, no applications for permits and we do not know when he actually hired the engineering firms. He showed no indication of performing these preliminary actions until after the city was notified of the situation. We are very concerned that the area over N. Edgemont Rd. has been disrupted without professional insight resulting in a hazardous situation. The residents of N. Edgemont already live with a closed, crumbling road in front of their homes and now they must worry about the steep embankment giving way above them.

History

Why was this property not developed by previous owners?

Are there previous studies or reports in the city archive that would give us insight into the stability of this hill or the property in question?

Considering the declining stability of the hill in general, any such previous reports should be compared to the new reports for discrepancies.

Current Issues

Giger St. has been closed and a house purchased due to excessive street/slip repair costs. The city is attempting to repair an active slip that is affecting the sewer lines between Westview Ave. and Belmont Drive. The two runoff streams around the hill are experiencing flooding issues with heavy or extended rainfall. N. Edgemont has had previous slips that have been repaired. The two current slips have been left untouched for approximately two years. Memorial Park Dr. is only half open beneath one of these slips.

Why has the city not repaired N. Edgemont and cleared Memorial Park Dr.? Is it irreparable? Is there no budget? Why would we allow more development on this unstable part of the hill that will only make matters worse?

Emergency vehicles have had to be rerouted around these closures. With our neighborhood's elderly population, we worry for their safety and the potential for unnecessary legal issues.

Looking Ahead

Since this developer began this project in such a dishonest manner, how can we trust him to complete any aspect of this precarious project with the care it deserves?

If the developer's engineers, and the city approve this project, who is ultimately responsible when the hill suffers more failures? We do not feel that the city's budget can absorb these very costly repairs and/or the buying of more homes due to irreparable roads and hillsides. Our taxpayers should not face the burden of paying for any developer's mistakes.

What about the B&O and any other such taxes that were to be paid as he was completing the work already done?

Will there be any sanctions or fines for the work done with no permits?

If this project is approved, can we petition for the developer to post a ten or twenty year bond to financially back his verbal guarantees, or can/will a bond be induced by the city?

Observations

The developer hosted a meeting in which only residents whose property abuts the development area were invited. Many of these residents state they did not receive any flyer, but learned about it from neighbors. Essentially, this developer has already failed to recognize how many areas in our community can be/have been affected by the groundwater and runoff issues from this hill which reach even to the creek along Johnstown Road. Any property that is downhill of this development has and will have issues.

The developer claims his future drainage system will improve the drainage for all the hill and downslope areas. His drainage would connect to an already overburdened and failing city sewer and drainage system. Furthermore, his system would only help alleviate some of the surface runoff while doing little to nothing for the groundwater issues. The numerous natural springs and the reduced number of trees would create more groundwater issues for the downslope areas. He has stated that he plans to timber the area prior to development which would result in no root systems to anchor the soil or trees to help with excessive water uptake. His plan of development would result in more groundwater which would promote more slippage issues in the downslope areas.

The developer claims that he has the right to do what he has been doing. Statements such as this have only generated more distrust from the community.

M E M O R A N D U M

JUL 18 1989

CITY OF HUNTINGTON
MANOR'S OFFICE

TO: Mayor Robert R. Nelson
FROM: George R. Burgess, Director of Public Works *gRB*
DATE: July 18, 1989
SUBJECT: Storm Basin in Whittaker Square area

There is evidence of slippage along Edgemont Drive behind both buildings constructed in Whittaker Square. There is also slippage, that is very evident, that is on private property between the Whittaker Square buildings and Edgemont Drive.

The drainage ditch, which Mr. Turnbull is making reference to, was in place prior to the construction of the Whittaker Square complex. It appears that the contractor diverted the water from the ditch line and piped it across the private property into Four Pole Creek. As you may know, the streets and storm drains in the Whittaker Square development are not a responsibility of the City of Huntington. Our maps indicate that the streets were not accepted by the city after they were originally constructed.

The ditch line between Edgemont Road and the private catch basin behind the condominium is primarily rock and shale with very little soil in the flow line itself. The water from this ditch line, in my opinion, will not permeate sufficiently to the adjacent soil to cause the hill to slip. Part of the ditch line and all of the exiting corrugated metal pipe is on private property.

A pipe laid in the ditch line and connected to the corrugated metal pipe behind the condominium cannot be laid with any reasonable expectation that the line will stay in position without providing considerable anchorage of the pipe into the rock. The pipe would require several bends to fit the contour of the hill. Also, a manhole would have to be constructed in the vicinity of the catch basin behind the condominium to aid in cleaning of the pipe should it ever become clogged.

The catch basin behind the condominium is rather poorly constructed with a wall to change flow direction and a grate placed over a hole cut into the corrugated metal pipe. At the time I inspected this drainage ditch, the grate needed to be cleaned. There is evidence that the property owner has cleaned this catch basin in the past which consist primarily of shale which washed down the drainage ditch.

"HUNTINGTON - THE BEST IS YET TO COME!"

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y 18, 1989
Attaker Square Storm Basin

There would be very little relief of the potential slippage of the hill provided by installing a pipe between Edgemont Drive and the catch basin behind the condominium. Conversely, if the pipe were installed as suggested, and became clogged, the water would then flow across Edgemont Drive creating a potential for further slippage of Edgemont Drive.

The few cars that can park along the north side of Edgemont Drive is not a material factor in contributing to the potential slippage that may occur at some point in the future. The weight of these vehicles is so small compared to the total weight of overburden on this hillside leads me to suggest that we do not restrict parking for the three vehicles that I have seen parked there on occasion.

Current notes from this Memorandum

- The instability and slips on N. Edgemont is a longstanding problem.
- The issue is not the result of faulty drainage lines.
- The improvement of drains on N. Edgemont is difficult, cost prohibitive and prone to failure. This leads us to the logical conclusion that drains from the hilltop above N. Edgemont would be just as difficult, cost prohibitive and prone to failure given the similar and even steeper terrain involved.
- The increased water runoff from above N. Edgemont is likely to exit through current homeowners drainage lines and "flow across Edgemont Drive creating a potential for further slippage of Edgemont Drive."
- The last paragraph mentions "the total weight of overburden on this hillside". More construction, ground disturbances, fewer trees to anchor the soil and provide water uptake would only exacerbate this overburden leading to more issues for the current and future residents, the city and the developer.