WORKSHOP HELD IN MOBILE, ALABAMA

ON

MOBILE COUNTY, ALABAMA (INCLUDING DAUPHIN ISLAND)

BEACH EROSION CONTROL AND HURRICANE PROTECTION

31 March 1975

LIST OF PERSONS ATTENDING

Members of Congress:

Honorable Jack Edwards, House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

Corps of Engineers:

Col. Drake Wilson, District Engineer, Mobile District
Mr. Larry Green, Chief of Planning Division, Mobile District
Mr. Jerry Lee, Chief of Navigation Branch , Mobile District
Mr. Jack Baker, Audio Technician in the Administrative Services Office, Mobile District
Mr. Earl Howard, Civil Engineer, Planning Division, Mobile District
Mr. Doug Parker, Civil Engineer Technician, Planning Division, Mobile District

Other Local Interests:

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WORKSHOP MEETING

ON

MOBILE COUNTY, ALABAMA (INCLUDING DAUPHIN ISLAND)
BEACH EROSION CONTROL AND HURRICANE PROTECTION

31 March 1975

LIST OF SPEAKERS

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MOBILE COUNTY, ALABAMA (INCLUDING DAUPHIN ISLAND)

BEACH EROSION CONTROL AND HURRICANE PROTECTION

HONORABLE JACK EDWARDS: I want to thank you all very much for being here tonight. This is, in my view, an important step in trying to find the answers to the problems of the bay erosion and Dauphin Island erosion problems. I want to stress that we don't come here with any preconceived ideas at this point as to what the answer is. I think mainly that I can say to you that we are all in agreement that we've got to find an answer, and you at this point are very vital in trying to help us find the right answer. One or two alternatives that will be discussed tonight are inexpensive because they won't cost anything, or substantially nothing, but, you're not going to like those alternatives. The better the alternative, the more expensive it gets, and the more expensive it gets the longer its going to take. And the more expensive it gets the harder its going to be to get it through the Congress and through the appropriations process. So we are not really talking about answers that will be resolved tonight or construction that is going to be started tomorrow - - and I am sure you understand that. We feel that now is the time to try to lay out some of the alternatives that the Corps has been working with and considering, to get your reaction to these alternatives, to listen to what you think. I would urge you in the first instance not to jump to any conclusions when you start to see some of these things. Sit back and think a little as the presentation proceeds so that you don't make snap judgments. I think it is important because what we are embarked upon is an extremely complicated, and I believe the Corps will say extremely expensive, undertaking. And yet as I read your mail, and I have seen some of the problems that you have from my own personal observations, I think it is going to take some radical surgery to bring about a good result and a permanent solution. So sit back and get comfortable and I am going to turn it over to the Corps. I would like to thank the Corps very much, through Colonel Wilson, for setting this meeting at a time that I could be here, because I feel very strongly about your problem and the Corps of Engineers knows that I want to help you find an answer and I want to help the Corps find the money to come up with the answer. So with all of us working together and keeping our fingers crossed perhaps we can pull this off. Again I thank you for coming and, Colonel, I appreciate all that you have done and I look forward to hearing what you have to say. Incidentally, I have not seen this presentation either so I will be here listening and perhaps asking questions just like you will. Thank you.

COLONEL DRAKE WILSON: Thank you very much Congressman Edwards. I must say that it is very comforting as the District Engineer to have an opportunity to work with Mr. Edwards, who understands so well the problems that we have and the ways that we go about seeking the solutions. At this point I would like to introduce some of the people from my office in Mobile who are here with me that have been working with this problems. First, Mr. Larry Green, is the brand new Chief of our new Planning Division, in the District Office in Mobile. Mr. Jerry Lee, up here at the table with me, is the head of the Navigation Section of the Planning Division. Mr. Jack Baker is over recording the proceedings. Mr. Earl Howard is also at the table and works with both Larry and Jerry. Back at the rear we have Mr. Doug Parker at the desk. At this point I would like to remind you all to register, if you have not already done so. We like to keep record of who does come to the meeting and we like to use that for your addresses to send you further information as these plans develop. The study that we are undertaking is under the authority of a resolution adopted in October 1970 by the Senate Public Works Committee at the request of Senator John Sparkman. The resolution requests a survey of the shores of Mobile County and such adjacent shores as necessary including Dauphin Island, in the interest of Beach erosion control.

What we have here this evening is what we call, not a public meeting, but a workshop meeting, and we define it a little differently in that we do not intend it to be as formal as one of our public meetings. We do intend it for an exchange of information. We have some very preliminary ideas that we would like to discuss with you and to get your reactions. What we are trying to do is to find solutions that are attainable. Then the real purpose of this workshop tonight is to try to find out if what is attainable is also desirable. At this point I would like to go into a slide presentation and show you some pictures of some of the things we are talking about.

Now, this chart here simply shows the area that we are talking about and I would just like to make it clear that this particular study authority covers only the western shore of the bay and Dauphin Island; taking first, Dauphin Island. This, of course, is an aerial view of Fort Gaines, and looking on down in towards Mobile. You see what we call groin structures coming out from the Fort there. Those are the structures perpendicular to the shore. Here is a little bit more along Dauphin Island. We think, that perhaps the best solution for the beach erosion problems along the Dauphin Island shores is quite apparent to us. We come off the shore about every year-and-a-half to two years and dredge with our hopper dredge, on what we call the bar, which is mostly a sand material. It is a little out from the entrance to the harbor.

We take this material out to sea about 10 to 15 miles and dump it. We have in inventory some equipment that can take this material out and pump it onto the beach approcimately there near Fort Gaines, and our studies thus far indicate that the littoral drift, that is the drift of the current, would generally carry that material on down along the island. This solution appeals to us because it costs nothing. That is, we have to dredge the harbor anyway - - we pay for that under the maintenance of the harbor expenditures and we can pump it out and put it onto the beach for just about the same price that we could take it out into the Gulf and dump it. Now, there are a couple of drawbacks to this, that is, the material when it first comes on the beach doesn't look like crystal clear sugar sand. It looks a little bit dirty, but, it is basically sand. It is not silt or mud, and, in our experience, in a rather short period of time it bleaches out and will match the existing material. We think this is a pretty good solution for Dauphin Island. We have already set in motion those steps necessary to get the proper type of equipment that would do this. It will probably be a year and a half or two years before we would have all that ready. There are some other solutions that would be available for Dauphin Island,but this one appears to us to be the cheapest and no local cooperation measures are involved.

This picture is of a dredge pipe discharging sand material. I would like to think that what came out of the hopper dredge would look that white, but it probably wouldn't. I would like to point out that this is not quite what it would look like if we adopt this solution, but in a fairly short period of time it would look like the basic sand material you see in the background.

Now, when we go to the western shore of the bay, we have a different situation. I have here a series of slides, some of them you may recognize. I am actually starting near Brookley and then working on south, showing the condition according to some pictures, most of which were taken fairly recently. We are still up about Dog River here, and then right in the vicinity of Dog River - - this is an older slide here - - down below Dog River; also below Dog River. Coming on down towards Fowl River and on down below Fowl River and then on down toward Alabama Point. Now, I think we all agree that there is erosion going on along this shore; in fact, while we have not completed our studies, we have measured a considerable amount of erosion over the years and note that there are also some debris problems along the shore. Most of this was explained to us in some detail at our first public meeting held at the Municipal Auditorium here a little over a year ago.

Here are some conceptual engineering solutions to the erosion problems. This is what we would call an interlocking concrete block revetment of shore protection. Another one would be a timber retaining wall. Obviously, it's a little cheaper than concrete block. Here we show rip-rap, which is stone of size large enough to stand the environment, and then, a concrete sea wall of another type, and showing also here a road.

Now to explain how these plans can be constructed, lets look into the beach erosion law. This is the somewhat more difficult part that Congressman Edwards was referring to. Federal law establishes a cost sharing provision for beach erosion projects and it says that for Federally-owned shores the cost will be borne 100% by the Federal government. For publicly-owned non-Federal parks and conservation areas its 70%. For publicly-owned non-Federal shores other than parks and conservation areas, 50%. For privatley-owned shores for protection that will result in public benefit, 50%, reduced by the ratio of private benefits to total benefits. And for privately-owned without public benefits, zero. That is, 100% private financing. Thus, there are five courses of action defined on the law. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, we must always list one other, that's, "no action". Of course you can always do nothing, and that is one course of action.

A second course of action is do it yourself. That is, anyone who owns property along the shore can erect any of these types of protection structures at their own expense. I must remind you that you have to get a permit from the Corps of Engineers and from others first. But, given that you can do it. Now there are some disadvantages to doing it yourself. We have observed that when individual owners put up a section of retaining wall in front of their property it tends to be eroded on either side. This tends to damage the property of the adjacent neighbor and he may see you later with a law suit. It generally doesn't work out well. It is therefore suggested that we do it as a unified effort.

We have also identified three other solutions. One is what we call uncontained fill. We have authorized a study to consider deepening the Port of Mobile from 40 feet to 50 feet. This is a concurrent study that we are working on. Such a channel deepening could provide the fill. It is not a requirement that we do this, its simply one of those things that we are looking at. It would be possible to take the material that we excavate from the channel and put it along the shore. Although the pumping distance is rather significant. This is what we call uncontained fill. It is simply dredged material from the channel that we could put along on the shore. This material, in accordance with the Gill Decision, would become the property of our reparian owner. That is, it would increaae your property seaward. That would restore some of the erosion that has already taken place. I don't mean to paint this as a very pretty solution in all respects because what we take out of the bay is mud. That is, it's clays and silts. It's not sand. We are not talking about building a beach. We are simply talking about restoring land that has eroded away. While we have not gone so far as to determine the construction measures, it's probably going to be pretty sloppy when it's put down initially and would take some time to dry out before it became very appealing from an aesthetic standpoint. It would erode

away, over a period of time, but it would perhaps solve the immediate problem.

The next course of action that we might point out is what we call contained fill. We could come along and put a retaining wall of one of the types illustrated offshore, say, one hundred yards, two hundred yards, or whatever would be optimum and fill that with the dredged material. If we did that entirely as a navigation project, then that land would belong to the riparian owner. But, as a navigation project, the local interest would be required to pay for the retaining wall in its entirely. There would be no Federal cost sharing for the retaining wall. I point this out because these retaining walls are fiendishly expensive. They run from about eight hundred thousand to two million dollars a mile. If you sit down and figure out what that means for your frontage that's a lot of money.

Of course, it's not ours to say how the county or city would apportion that expense. We would simply look to the county below Dog River and to the city above Dog River and say this is your share.

Now, the last course of action is what we call the multipurpose project. This would be one wherein we would be charging the cost of the project against beach erosion, against recreation, against navigation, and perhaps against public use for a road or a highway. Here we would have basically the same thing we were talking about in number four; that is, we'd put a retaining wall off the shore and we would fill in between. The cost of this would be borne from 50% to 70% by the Federal government and from 50% to 30% by local interests. The cost of the local interests is considerably less. But, the property between the existing shoreline as it now exists and the retaining wall that is newly created property would be public property. It would not be private property. This is an interesting point to contemplate.

Let me refer back to the slides.

I left this slide on just to show you what I have been talking about for courses of action four and five wherein we would construct a retaining wall and fill in with dredged fill as you see illustrated to the right. And I brought along a few examples of what four or five might look like. These slides are from Tampa. These are rather nice residential areas. There are a couple of them here with a road along the shore, and some with a park between the residential area and the road. The only point I am trying to make here is that it is possible to do this in an aesthetically pleasing fashion.

At this point we would like to give you an opportunity to participate in the meeting although this is not a formal public meeting as I said earlier.

We would like to hear your views. As the Congressman said, we're not interested in trying to get a decision tonight. In the first place, its not a collection of votes here this evening because our local cooperation partner would be, as I said earlier, the county below Dog River and the city above. We will, after a period of time, go to those two bodies and say which of these, if any, you are interested in. But, we would be interested in your views tonight and we are, of couse recording this and that would, I am sure, influence the city and the county somewhat.

We have collected some cards from individuals desiring to speak. I will start off with Mrs. Slobig. Mrs. Slobig, would you like to come forward please? Make your statement into that microphone, if you would. Oh, yes, you marked that you would like to speak.

MRS. E. E. SLOBIG: I was just interested in receiving the information.

COLONEL WILSON: O.K., fine, we'll send you the information. Mr. Michael Feore.

MR. MICHAEL FEORE: Colonel Wilson, I just want to thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion and I am glad to know that people are interested in shoreline erosion that has been going on for a long time. It looks to me like none of the alternatives are very easy. It seems like we have a way to go before there is a solution. I have a small solution for a certain segment of the bay and I am presenting this, not, I hope in contrast to any of these solutions, but, I hope it will help maybe a few people around the Fowl River area. It relates to the spoil that will be dredged from the Fowl River channel, and it has not been tested yet, but, hopefully some of it will be useful as shoreline material. It will be sandy and it will help some people within a pumping distance of Fowl River. I would just like to submit some correspondence that I have just recently sent to the Corps and hopefully it will be included in this meeting. I hope everybody has a solution to the erosion problem, but, this is the only one I have right now. Thank you very much. (Exhibit # 2)

COLONEL WILSON: Mr. Donald Hammond. Mr. Smith Pickett.

MR. SMITH D. PICKETT, JR.: Thank you Colonel, I'm Smith Pickett, Jr., the President of the Dauphin Island Property Owners Association, an association made up of some twenty-six hundred Dauphin Island lot owners. We, of course, have been extremely concerned about the erosion on Dauphin Island and wanted to make a suggestion that might be of help tonight. You did however, start off your program with our suggestion. And, this we feel would be the best for us. Thank you sir.

COLONEL WILSON: Mr. Dan Harless.

MR. DAN HARLESS: Colonel, I appreciate being able to come down and present to you my feelings about number four and number five. I realize number four would be awfully expensive for us who are property owners, but the main reason why I bought property in the Belle Fontaine area was for the sake of being out in the country and not having a lot of cars and I feel like if number five were put into effect it would completely destroy my reason for living on the bay. Thank you.

COLONEL WILSON: Mr. Vernon Chestang (Indistinct)

Mr. Ray B. Hartwell

MR. RAY B. HARTWELL: Thank you Colonel Wilson. I live on Bay Front Road and I have lived there approximately nine years. During that time I would like to state that when we moved to Bay Front Road my children were small. I thought it was a wonderful place to raise children, and at that time they could go into the bay most any night with their floundering light. I am sure a number of you can remember how this was. You could more or less pick the crabs you wanted to scoop and so forth and with dredging it seems like the silt has settled in our bay and now when you go you really have to look hard to find a crab, much less one that you want to scoop with your net. I know we have our economic reasons but I would like to think that my grandchildren will be able to remember our bay in the way that my children do, other than to be able to look out and say "Hey, that's great, there goes a tanker, or an ore carrier that draws sixty feet of water". Thank you.

COLONEL WILSON: Terry Hartwell. (Indistinct)

Mrs. Myrt Jones

MRS. MYRT JONES: I know that this meeting is mainly for this side of the bay, but as a citizen and a property owner of a piece of property at Mullet Point,I want to say that we have a great deal of erosion problems over there. I know one problem that causes our erosion is from the ships going rather speedily through the channel. I think that this should be controlled more because we do get some tremendous ship waves that come over our way and erode our property. I would like to make one other point. We are concentrating on the Theodore Channel as being a very major shipping input and maybe we should consider it as the principal deep water channel. Keep all the big boats, forty and fifty-foot, going into this area and that would cut down on maintenance dredging above the Theodore ship channel going into the harbor, concentrate on making the upper harbor area for barge traffic. This will eliminate a lot of extensive dredging in the harbor and it will cut down on a lot of areas needed for the spoil dispostion that are taking up wet lands that we are very concerned about. I am very glad to see this thing looked into. I think that the jetties going out from the shore have potential.

I read in one permit where they were doing something on trial basis in Florida, taking p.e. bags and filling them with sand at certain heights and trying to see if maybe the collection of sand over these jetties wouldn't help build back the beaches. So, I think jetties would, in a way, have a great start towards cutting down on some of the erosion problems that they are having on this side. Thank you very much. (Presents Exhibit 3)

COLONEL WILSON: Mr. Albert Tully.

MR. ALBERT TULLY: I encourage your statement of intention to leave the essential material in the system.

COLONEL WILSON: Mr. William T. Rainer? Mr. John E. Broadus.

MR. JOHN E. BROADUS: I don't have anything original to say. I'd just like to express my feelings. I was raised on the bay and since it was last dredged and all the spoil put up on the west side of the channel, it seems you have channeled the river right down through this side of the bay and we are getting all the junk from the rivers. We're getting fresh water fish such as carp and bass along with all the logs and oily substances. I think that it is outrageous that you have sterilized this side of the bay.

COLONEL WILSON: Charles M. Griffin.

CHARLES M. GRIFFIN: Colonel Wilson, I realize that the main purpose of the meeting was for the area at Dauphin Island. Our area is in this particular section here. At this point we have a bulkhead. It's been there for a number of years. But the erosion comes over the top of it and washes the fill back out. We continually put clay in and it is continually being washed out into the bay. So the point is that we are filling the bay up and not helping the road. We see a tremendous amount of oyster shell laying all over the place. If we could put that in and contain it someway behind that bulkhead I believe we could help our problem a lot and in addition to that any broken concrete that would be available. If that were put in prior to the shells, I think we'd have quite a help. Thank you.

COLONEL WILSON: I'd like to just comment. We haven't really looked at that area very much. In a general observation much of the area you are pointing towards, although obviously not your property, is marsh and doesn't seem to need beach erosion protection.

Ladies and gentlemen that's the last of the cards I have. Is there anyone else who would like to come up and make a statement? Yes sir, please.

FROM THE AUDIENCE: Colonel Wilson. I live on Bay Front Road. I would like to know about alternative number five. Did you say that you would take my beach? You know I own a beach section. Did you say when you fill in it becomes public land? Why do you say it becomes public land? It belongs to the people, the state or to whom.

COLONEL WILSON: It would belong to the people of the state.

LADY IN THE AUDIENCE: What would we do when we have riparian rights? Can you come along and suggest they take it away from us?

COLONEL WILSON: Well, I don't think that any of the local governmental units would move forward with plan number five unless it had pretty strong support from the majority of the people involved. And, of course, that's all we're asking. All we're doing is saying this is possible. What are you interested in? I'm gathering from what I've heard here this evening there is not much interest in number five so it becomes quickly sort of a dead issue.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: When they come around for an expansion of course they do have the power of eminent domain. And, they do have the power to take property for authorized and appropriate public purposes, but I can't speak of their plans at this point.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: How about when you say for recreational purposes. Do you mean they can come in and take what we have now and turn it over to the public? Is this the way it is going to work at all?

COLONEL WILSON: What we are talking about, of course, on number five is a very conceptual plan that would involve as many purposes as we could think of at one time. Recreation would be one, navigation and beach erosion would be two more. But, I don't know where the State Docks has any power to take property for recreation, I would doubt it.

Yes sir, would you like to come up and speak?

MAN FROM AUDIENCE: Thank you Colonel. I concur fully with the statement that was made earlier by Dan Harless. That is if the beaches are taken over publicly, I don't want to live there. I'm here for the enjoyment and the privacy of the beach. I would like to know how many here have waterfront property?

COLONEL WILSON: I might tell you, that we wrote to all the property owners and invited them - -

MAN IN AUDIENCE: I understand that there are others here.

COLONEL WILSON: Well, we wrote to all of those whose records we could find.

MAN FROM AUDIENCE: I have talked to some here that do not have property on the water.

COLONEL WILSON: Yes, I am aure there are others that could be here as well.

MAN FROM AUDIENCE: How many of those are there? What I would like to say is that I believe that no one here that has property on the water would want it turned over to the Federal government or state government.

Applause.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: Ask the question again. Would you please state the question again.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: I don't believe that anyone here who has property on the water wants to turn it over to the public in any way, shape, or form.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: Definitely not.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Let's expound on that because, I don't understand what you are talking about. I'm quite sure that I don't want all of my property turned over but, as I see it, we can't afford anything else.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Let me ask one question. Is there any length of property or any distance that has anything other than number five? Anywhere in the United States any shoreline that is using any other system other than number five?

MAN FROM AUDIENCE: Do you have property on the water?

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Yes, I do.

MAN FROM AUDIENCE: Where?

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Belle Fontaine

MAN FROM AUDIENCE: Belle Fontaine - on the water?

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Yes

MAN FROM AUDIENCE: And you would give your property up ?

MAN IN AUDIENCE: I would go for number five, because I couldn't afford anything else.

COLONEL WILSON: Well, Gentlemen, you know while I appreciate this exchange of views we don't really look for a decision tonight.

MAN FROM AUDIENCE: Well, I'm just trying to express my view.

COLONEL WILSON: I understand. We can take this in four increments. That is, we can take an increment from the city limits down to Dog River. We can take an increment from Dog River to Deer River. Take an increment from Deer to Fowl. From Fowl to Alabama Point. We can do it whatever way the county and the city tells us that they are interested in for those four increments. So, I think your point's made, but go ahead is you'd like.

MAN FROM AUDIENCE: Well, I live three miles south of Fowl River on Dauphin Island Parkway. If they turn it over to public use, or recreation or whatever it may mean that the Dauphin Island traffic is going to split and maybe more go down the bay side and on to Dauphin Island. You couldn't get out to the water. Your children wouldn't be safe. I have grandchildren that I want to enjoy it. This is all I have to say.

COLONEL WILSON: Yes sir. Would you come forward please.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: And the cost of that bulkhead is $800,000. $2,000,000 per mile?

COLONEL WILSON: That's right.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: I wonder if everyone understands what the cost of that would be per 100 front feet. $15,000.

COLONEL WILSON: That's about right.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: At $800,000 it could be $7,500.

COLONEL WILSON: These are only very rough estimates.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: I just wanted the people to realize what we are talking about.

COLONEL WILSON: Yes ma'am. Would you like to speak.

MRS. RUTH SAWYER: Colonel Wilson, my husband and I own two pieces of property

on Bay Front Road within the city limits of the City of Mobile. One has 161 feet of beach frontage and the other has 104 feet of beach frontage and I can assure you that we work ourselves to death on that property, and I mean litterally, and I am sure that some of my neighbors who are here this evening will go along with that. We burn logs against county regulations seven days a week or approximately 45 weeks a year. The other weeks we don't burn because the weather is too bad to burn. We spent hundreds and hundreds of dollars annually on bulldozing of the logs and debris that my husband is unable to handle by himself. Our property, or where we live, is bulkheaded and it was built at our own expense. I don't want a street or highway in front of my property. It's bad enough living on Bay Front Road as it is because it is a speedway, even worse than Dauphin Island Parkway, considering the amount of traffic, and the narrowness of the road, and the ditches on both sides which the city won't do anything about. I'd rather spend every penny I have and continue working ourselves to death taking care of what we own without the city, county, the state or the Federal government entering into the picture. We don't want anybody coming in and telling us what we can do and what we cannot do with out property. When you live on the Bay you cannot be afraid of hard work. You cannot be afraid of all the other things that go along with it.

You know a couple of years ago when they had a gasoline spill in the bay, the Coast Guard said they didn't want to alarm the people on the Bay Front Road by letting them know that there was a gasoline spill out in the bay. When you live on the bay, you're not afraid of some small thing like the gasoline spill, you just want to know about it so you can find out what you can do to protect yourself against it. I guess when you come right down to it, I'm against progress. I am just flat against it. All in the world progress means is that you've got more people. When you get more people you have to have more policemen, you have to have more firemen, you have to have more sheriif's deputies, you have to have more locks on your doors, you have to pave more streets, build more sewers, put in more powerlines, build more houses to have more people. And what are you going to get out of it? Ultimately there has got to be an end. We cannot go on another two or three hundred years dredging that channel out in the bay. Eventually you're going - I mean we've already run out of - places to put it. And that's our problem right now.

Well, what is it going to be like fifty or seventy-five years from now? At this point we're filling in all the remaining available space and over a period of years we're going to continue to dredge - ships are getting bigger they're drawing more water - they want to widen the channel. You know they're not content with just deepening the channel, now they want to widen it. They want to expand the State Docks to take in Brookley Field. They can't afford to operate the State Docks they have but, they want to come down and build one at Brookley Field that they can't even afford. I work for a large industry and you know I guess it boils down to this, you know after I get here, don't anybody else come. But, I'm afraid that's how I feel. With the economic situation the way it is I know it would be awfully bad, the prospect

or people losing their jobs, but, you just have to call a halt somewhere and I think we have just about reached the point where we've got to do something else because we cannot continue dredging that channel. You've got the mud coming out of the river system. You've got the logs coming out the river system. A constant siltation of the channel, the dredge sits out in front of our house day after day after day pumping out that guey muck. The bay is not doing anybody any good on our side. It's still slightly usable on the Eastern shore but on our side for all practical purposes it's ruined. The only thing you can do is just sit and look out over the bay and enjoy the sights. But, as fas as using the bay, you really can't use it anymore. And, I just don't want to see it ruined anymore than it's already ruined. Thank you.

COLONEL WILSON: Ma'am, would you state your name please, we didn't get your name.

LADY: Mrs. Ruth Sawyer, 4067 Bay Front Road.

COLONEL WILSON: Any other statements or questions? Yes.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Did you ever mention where you would put this material if you don't put it up next to shore.

COLONEL WILSON: Well, we haven't reached any good solution for that, although that is not the purpose of this meeting, its simply a related subject. There are about nine different proposals that we're considering right now, in varying degrees. Of course, what we do with the material now is simply put it right beside the channel in the bay. We have investigated taking it all out to sea and investigated subterranean pipes that would take it out to sea. We've investigated different types of equipment; that is, ladder dredges, and scows, a series of little boats, sort of like the garbage scows that use to go in and out of New York harbor. None of these look awfully attractive, because there is an awful lot of material. Another thing that we're looking at is the creation of islands, somewhat like we're planning to do at Theodore. There is no final solution now. The deepening of the channel is not authorized yet, its simply an authorized study.

The gentleman in the back with the red shirt, would you like to speak.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Well, I have property above Dog River.

COLONEL WILSON: Could you come up so we could get it on the tape please.

MR. JOE GODARD: I'm Joe Gadard, I have property above Dog River, I also belong to the Yacht Club. We're having trouble with the depth of water that we sail in, crossing from the west side to the east side there are only two places you can get through, because of your spoil banks. If we had those out of there, where the water could flow it would help this side of the bay. Thank you.

COLONEL WILSON: As a matter of fact, the Alabama Water Improvement Commission has contracted to use the model in Vicksburg of Mobile Bay to determine current patterns and look at various ways of improving the water quality. We've used the model some in the design of the Theodore project, and we plan to use it some more in other studies and the Water Improvement Commission is using it as well. In regard to some of those things that you mentioned and other speakers have mentioned, I am not really in a posiition to say that they are fact or that they are supposition until we have had more scientific information, but most of these answers can be determined on the model. The model will reproduce pretty thoroughly what the bay does and tell us what the effect of man-made alterations on the bay would be. Maam? Could you come up to the front to speak.

LADY FROM AUDIENCE: I live on Mon Louis Island and there are a number of us here tonight. We have no company, we're just personal, private property owners. I have listened to what you are going to do for Dauphin Island, Fowl River, Dog River and I am wondering did you consider the property owners along the bank of the Bay Shore Road, or along Mon Louis Island? I have 156 feet right along the bay.

COLONEL WILSON: Yes, that would be included by one of these five alternatives. Now, when I talked about the way that we could break up the shore, it simply means that we couldn't go a little ways and then stop we have to take it in increments. We were talking about an increment from Fowl River on down to Cedar Point. We could react to the majority, I would say the vast majority of the property owners in that reach.

LADY FROM AUDIENCE: Thank you.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: I would like to ask a question concerning that. I have some property along the same place. Now, if there is anything done, to take in this property to improve it would it become public? We are very near one of the public beaches now and if we have any more flow of people than we have, I don't know what we will do. During the summer we have enough of the public, people just all over the bay. Of course they can go into the bay if they want to. But when it comes to your public property, you can hardly keep it clean. If it becomes anymore public, I guess the best thing to do is move out.

COLONEL WILSON: Yes, sir.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Colonel, would you be kind enough to explain number three again.

COLONEL WILSON: Yes, indeed. Number three is what we call uncontained fill and what we're talking about here is simply restoring the property that has

been eroded away, and I don't want to give you a false impression that it would be the same as material that was there before. Of course it would depend upon whether you take it from a new cut or whether you take it from maintenance material. If you took it from a new cut, from deepening or widening the harbor it would be similar material, mixed clays, sands and silts. This material could be used to fill in the area between earth dikes and shore and it would take probably the better part of a year to firm up and dry out to where it was usable property.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: Well, it's true that we have to find someplace to put the material, and it's true that this property would belong to the riparian property owners. There would be some local cooperation involved due to a slight land enhancement, because, of course it would improve your property. But, the degree of charge on that is quite light really. I don't think that would be very significant.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: That would also eliminate these questions of private property becoming public property.

COLONEL WILSON: Yes. That would remain private property as it was. There would be no protection on the far side of it, you understand, so it would erode away eventually.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: Yes, but that would satisfy this problem as of now.

COLONEL WILSON: Yes.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: How would it help the erosion problem?

COLONEL WILSON: It would replace that which has eroded away, and then perhaps a little bit. Yes?

MR. JOHN STEBER: My name is John Steber, I am from the Dog River area and in this area we have a problem that's, in my opinion, worse than the erosion, thats the marshy grass areas, which I would like you to take into consideration. Whichever alternative we take maybe we can do both at the same time.

COLONEL WILSON: I don't understand what you want us to do with the marshy grass.

MR. JOHN STEBER: Well there isn't any way to get rid of it, I don't think other than either digging it up or covering over it. And number four, I believe, would take care of this. If you could go ahead and cover it up and get it on dry land it would kill it. That's what I propose.

COLONEL WILSON: I'm sorry to be chuckling here, because, we deal with this problem with the fish and wildlife service and the environmental protection agencies so frequently and they would faint, I think, if they heard you say that. That's not a very popular notion these days, but I appreciate your views none the less.

Yes, Myrt, would you like to respond to that?

MRS. MYRT JONES: About the marshy areas. They are very important so we don't want to get rid of them.

COLONEL WILSON: I think I saw a hand over in the left rear. Yes.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: I am not an engineer but, I have often heard about the spoil on the west side of the channel. Could you explain the reason for that?

COLONEL WILSON: It goes on both sides, although I think it piles up a little bit more on the side that you are referring to. I'd have to go back a little bit, you know we first started doing this in 1826, I think, when we first started improving the harbor. Yes.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: What happened to the proposal they had several years ago to build the three islands out there and make campgrounds and things of that nature?

COLONEL WILSON: That one is still alive and kicking. We sent it out on Friday. Its part of the Theodore project. It now involves two islands. They've grown a little bit and changed their shape somewhat and they are the proposed solution for handling the dredged material from the Theodore project. We have not determined what's to be done with those islands. Basically they would be used for handling of the dredged material, not only for the new work but for the life of the project. So that while some birds would find them handy, at the same time we're pumping dredged material into one, they might want to go over to the other.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: Oh. Well, no. I think if we built them in connection with the Theodore Project, their first purpose would have to be for the receipt of the dredged material. Of course we have to go back and maintain it once it is built. There might be some other uses. Yes?

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Of the last three and four examples you have there, which one is used most in the United States?

COLONEL WILSON: Well, we've got examples of all of them. I've got a book up here that will show you them.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: I think it depends upon the development, the status of development of the area that you are talking about. It varies, they are all three used. I can't answer that question precisely.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: Yes. But, rules here require that they be in accordance with the desires of the riparian owner. In accordance as far as we're concerned with the local sponsor, which would have to be the county, or above Dog River, the city.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: I can't speak for the county or the city commission but I would think they'd have to give your views, the property owners views, in something like this, major consideration.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: I am interested in the series of islands which you mentioned earlier. This apparently would not interfere with the riparian rights of the property owners, on the bay.

COLONEL WILSON: No. That's right.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Has there been a feasibility study with the model in Vicksburg as to the effect on tide, etc. with a series of islands along there?

COLONEL WILSON: With the island proposed for the Theodore channel. Yes. That's why we built the model.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Would this help the erosion problem on our bay?

COLONEL WILSON: No. It wouldn't have any effect on the erosion problem. As a matter of fact, the design parameter is to leave the conditions in the bay, more or less as they were.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: It's got to make a change in the tide.

COLONEL WILSON: Well, we designed the shapes of the islands so that the changes would be as minimal as possible, because we didn't want to be charged with all the oysters that might change their habits down the bay. And so, we felt the safest course was to design them so that nothing would be changed.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Well, I mean, say, in the area from Fowl River south, that's not particularly considered oyster area in my opinion.

COLONEL WILSON: No. That's true. We've got all of the test material down at the office, if you would like to look at it. It gives the current patterns under all of these various solutions considered, but basically what we are looking for is an minimal change as possible.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Could you explore the possibility of maximum change for currents and erosion.

COLONEL WILSON: We considered that, and we rejected it. I guess you could call it a cop-out. If you start doing things like that, like placing the islands in order to, for example, increase the current to sweep away the logs, you have increased the current to sweep away the soil too. And, so, if you make one person happy you make someone else unhappy.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: I was thinking more of decreasing the currents along the beach.

COLONEL WILSON: If you decrease the current you're going to have more silting in, and the bay will become shallower, quicker.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: So its not feasible then?

COLONEL WILSON: Well, you can do lots of things but you're going to make somebody mad just about whatever you do, so, maybe its not the most courageous approach but we thought the best way was to try to change as little as possible.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Colonel, I was wondering, maybe, there's some other way - of all of the millions and millions of dollars that our Federal government spends certainly $30,000,000 to save part of the structure of the United States don't seem absurd to do.

COLONEL WILSON: What we have now is simply the law that is on the books. There has been introduced a change in the percentages of funding by the Congressman near this area but, I don't think it has been acted on yet, has it Mr. Edwards?

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Colonel, speaking about this number three, your uncontained fill, you mentioned a containing wall, how much of a wall would that be? How far out from the present shoreline would it be, and who would share the cost in the particular wall?

COLONEL WILSON: Well, if we did something like that, the cost of putting up the dike would be under the provisions of the navigation project on the local interests. How the county would plan to sort it out I don't know. The distances off shore remain to be determined. We could do it anywhere from 1,000 feet on down. I suppose we would go a little bit further than that, but not very much. We haven't determined that yet. We could balance that out.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Do you know the minimum amount of space that would be required?

COLONEL WILSON: I think that if it were less than 100 yards we probably wouldn't be interested. I mean, I would say more or less from 300 to 1,000 feet.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: You would check this through your Vicksburg experimental then?

COLONEL WILSON: Yes, I better not say unqualifiedly "yes" because, I'm not sure we'd find it necessary to do that. I think we could predict pretty accurately what would happen if we did that.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: This would be subject to a further public meeting. If, in fact, we get further interest in that one. This is just a workshop meeting now, we're just trying to narrow down the alternatives. Yes?

LADY IN AUDIENCE: The area filled in under this method would still be the property owners private area then?

COLONEL WILSON: That's correct.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: It seems to me like from what we hear, that would be what we would like you to do.

COLONEL WILSON: Please let the county commission and the city commission know of your views, and we'll look to them.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: What about the upkeep on it. Would you do it one time and let it erode away or would it be a continued process?

COLONEL WILSON: If we did it first time with the new material that had come from say, deepening or widening the channel, then it would be a better material than what is available later on. If we were to come back and maintain it, that is by adding additional material, the only thing that would be available, conceivably, would be maintenance material which isn't good stuff. Now that can be put out there, but it's probably not very desirable because it's very light and fluffy and takes a long time to dry out and consolidate. So, it's probably pretty much a one time shot.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: Would you plan to plant trees and shrubbery that would help to hold the material?

COLONEL WILSON: Well, we would not plan to. But, the private owners could.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: About the same as the existing height above the water.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: I am afraid the distances get a bit prohibitive from the site of the work for something like that, and we looked at a number, I guess about 12 or 15 other solutions for the Theodore material and we went through quite a few iterations to get on down to those two. We didn't find anything any better, and some of the things that we looked at were putting it on shore, putting it in the marsh, putting it in a series of different island configurations, and this was the best solution that we came up with.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: No. The meeting is for the purpose of looking at the beach erosion. But, these are some solutions that occur to us and as I stated earlier we're just looking to see what is desirable among those that are attainable. Yes. The gentleman right behind you there.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Number three. Approximately how long would that last? How many years?

COLONEL WILSON: It's hard to say for sure. It would wash away at about the rate, and probably a little bit faster than the rate of erosion that you've had in the last ten or fifteen years. Yes.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: I really wouldn't think there would be any effect on the seafood, to speak of. Yes.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: What impact do you anticipate with trying to open the Tennessee-Tom waterways - -

COLONEL WILSON: You're going to have a lot more traffic.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: No. The silt problem will remain about the same, basically, the amount of silt that comes on down into the bay is what comes out of natural erosion in the river systems and the connection of the Tennessee-Tombigbee or the Tombigbee to the Tennessee River basically has only a very minor change on that. There is not very much transfer water. As a matter of fact, the Tennessee Valley Authority is very jealous of any water we take from them because they use it all to make electricity. And so, they will give us only the amount that we need to lock boats through and there is no additional flow from the river so actually I think the siltation problem would improve slightly because you would have a number of pools rather than a river system.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Colonel, from what I've seen of the silt that you've pumped out of the channel it wasn't as bad as the picture that I think you've painted and, I think that number three is the most feasible thing, for now and I'm really interested in that because I don't think that you're going to get the property owners together to pay for any seawall or property of the Federal government. So I think if we concentrate on number three and if they are already pumping the silt to put it there. Let's examine it while we're putting it there and make sure that its not a bad grade of material. But, I don't think that it's quite as bad as some people think. It's soil that came down the river from farms and different places and it's not all mud.

COLONEL WILSON: Yes. I have a picture of several similiar fill areas that you might like to see, after the meeting Mr. Elliott.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Approximately how many years would it take before it would be usable?

COLONEL WILSON: Oh, I would think within a year.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Colonel, I'd like to ask one question. The Chinese, and this is borrowing a thing from them, when they clean their rivers and they clean their ditches and everything they put that soil and that silt right where it came from. I know it would be rather expensive for us but, what are the possibilities of taking all of this vast spoil that you are speaking of and going about, say starting with Mobile County and working north, all of these gravel pits have left jagged holes in the ground. Take Springhill Avenue where they have this erosion up next to the college and the people wouldn't let'um fill in with the garbage and fill in places like that and then cover it with top soil so that people would plant it, to protect it from the environment and erosion. That would solve a good bit of your problem because money doesn't seem to be any object, we just spent several hundred billions of dollars in Vietnam and all of that's going down the drain, so let's spend some of that money here on projects like that, help the enviroment and help to make it back like it use to be. I think it can

be worked out together where we can have a bay and have environmental quality for the seafood industry like it use to have and still have the progress. The people would like to see industrial growth here.

COLONEL WILSON: Well, that's an interesting solution but, we haven't been able to find any holes close enough to be within economic pumping distance, What we are required to do is compare the available solutions on the basis of cost particularly for the maintenance of the harbor. Now, that's not absolutely so if we had one fairly close and we could still do it with a good project, we would. But, I think the one on Springhill would be a little bit far. We are looking over towards Three Mile Creek for the upper harbor to fill in some low areas there. We haven't finished our study on that yet, and certainly, if we had any area close in where we could get to it within an economical distance we'd be happy to do so. Any other questions?

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Colonel.

COLONEL WILSON: Yes. One more.

MR. CHARLES BROWN: Charles Brown, Colonel, from Mon Louis Island. I was very concerned about item three. My neighbor has spent thousands of dollars trying to stop the erosion. If anything can be done like the Federal government helping us to put a retaining wall, we might be successful.

COLONEL WILSON: Well, what we're looking at here is within the law that Congress has passed and that's not an option that they've opened up to us. Yes? Back in the rear.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: I just want to ask you what I said a while ago about the jetty. I still think that jetties would help tremendously in slowing down the erosion of the beaches. Has any work been done at the experimental model on jetties?

COLONEL WILSON: There's been a lot of work done on jetties and they do fit some circumstances relatively well, but not very many circumstances, and they're also rather complicated thing to study. We haven't tested this on the model yet. It's our opinion that it wouldn't be an appropriate solution for the western shore of the bay for a couple of reasons. They're also quite expensive and we get on back to a cost-benefit calculation and I don't think it would stand a cost-benefit test. I don't think we would have property values sufficiently high that would justify the expense of the jetties. We haven't been able to find any cost-benefit way of solving this problem. Because the cost of the work is just too high. That's why we're looking for a somewhat unique solution. Yes?

LADY IN AUDIENCE: Colonel, if you went to the uncontained fill. How deep would you pump it. You said it would be a depth of three hundred to a thousand feet.

COLONEL WILSON: Well, that was width.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: I know that, but, how deep was that?

COLONEL WILSON: This can be determined later but, presumably the height of the adjoining land. We could pile it up a little bit if anyone wanted us to.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: That's what the problem is in our area, north of Dog River, is now, on Bay Front Road, if you have a real high tide, with a south or southeast wind behind it, all of that part of our property goes under water.

COLONEL WILSON: Yes.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: If you're going to put in another thousand or so feet out there that's constantly going under water, it's not going to do any good.

COLONEL WILSON: The height of it makes no difference to us if we undertake it, as high as you want it, will be fine with us. We could sort this out later without much difficulty.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Colonel.

COLONEL WILSON: Yes?

MAN IN AUDIENCE: The problem is getting rid of the spoil. Why can't a second island be created in that area where you are planning the bridge on Dauphin Island back over to the eastern side. Then most of the material that we are talking about that would be suitable in these areas probably could be put in those areas on a minimum basis. But as it is, since we're planning a bridge of that magnitude I don't see why most of the spoil couldn't be placed in those high areas where we would have the same as we have north of the causeway. I haven't however, seen an inkling of what I am suggesting here. But, since that bridge, and I think you already have it, isn't that right Congressman Edwards? Hasn't someone suggested a bridge from Dauphin Island?

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: That's all it is though, is just a suggestion.

COLONEL WILSON: Yes.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: I've got to know these engineers - I've seen them so much I think they're my next door neighbors, and I hear the same thing, everytime. They've never done anything for me. That's why I'll let you do whatever you want to do. Honest to goodness. I'll let you do anything.

There is no need for you to waste my time anymore you can just send me a letter. The only thing you're going to do for me is maybe Congressman Edwards will get up there and get the ball rolling and maybe we'll get something done but other than that I don't see much I can do, it's just not going to happen.

COLONEL WILSON: Congressman Edwards would you like to conclude?

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: I'll just ask a few questions. I don't get up here to make a rebuttal now, there's just a few questions that I've got on my mind. It seems, from sitting here listening, that the Dauphin Island folks are happy with what's been proposed. I gather that's correct. So I have an immediate question that has come to mind because some of these folks have made believers out of me over the last few years. Has EPA looked at the Dauphin Island plan, has the Fish and Wildlife People looked at it? Is there any environmental question as to whether you can do what you've proposed or suggested for Dauphin Island?

COLONEL WILSON: We haven't checked it out yet but, it has been done in several other places and we don't think we'd have any problem with it. This was done in Jacksonville Harbor about a year and a half ago.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: I think of even more importance, how about the Mobile Bay proposal either one through five, what would EPA have to say about one of those kinds of projects? In other words are we sitting here wasting a lot of time? If you do it yourself EPA makes it almost impossible. If you do three, four and five which would be on a county-wide type of basis, then what would EPA's position be, do you have any idea?

COLONEL WILSON: We think that we could arrange that, sir, with the proper diking. That would be the main thing that would concern them that we were not destroying marshes or any grass beds. And well, we'd have to avoid a couple of little areas along there, but other than that I don't think we'd have any problem.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: You think though, that the problem itself is of such magnitude, that EPA recognizing that would allow you to go ahead on a community wide basis.

COLONEL WILSON: Yes, we think so.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: You show some pictures of number five. Along with other things and I gather from listening that number five is not the most popular thing you've said tonight. But, for a picture close to home of number five could you describe the Biloxi - Gulfport area as an example of number five?

COLONEL WILSON: Well, no sir, that's a Federal project that was done as a beach nourishment project to protect the road and it was sand that was pumped up there. It was dredge material. It's similiar to number three in concept, but it's not the same material. So there is a big difference in the type of material you're putting there.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Was the road already there?

COLONEL WILSON: Yes, it was.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: So you weren't actually taking private property in the Biloxi-Gulfport area?

COLONEL WILSON: No. Although that beach is public property and that was, I believe, a contention for a time. That project was carried forward. I see Mr. Adams there shaking his head.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Which way is he shaking it?

COLONEL WILSON: Affirmative.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Sometimes he just does that when he nods and goes to sleep.

MR. ADAMS: I'm wide awake Jack.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Excuse me Jack, but, I was raised over in Gulfport on that coast and that seawall over there was built as a Harrison County project and everybody over there paid a high gasoline tax for years to pay for that seawall. And those folks still have riparian rights on the far side of that seawall.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: They're not exclusive are they? I thought that was now public beach.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: No. I don't know what's happened since the Federal government put the sand in there. That's been done after the storm carried the sand away.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Well, I think that's when the Federal government came in and did that and then it became a public beach.

COLONEL WILSON: That's correct.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: And so, to the extent, while I may not have a perfect comparison to the extent homeowners would have who have a road and a beach

in front of the house - that beach being public is a fair comparison of what a property owner here would have with a road and a public beach.

COLONEL WILSON: Except that he wouldn't have the beach there because there isn't the sand material available within an economic distance along the western shore.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: If you did number five you wouldn't necessarily have a beach?

COLONEL WILSON: No. I think it would be more comparable to simply having the seawall with the water on the far side.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: Would we still have riparian rights?

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: If you had number five? Not to the extent that you had them exclusively. The area would then become public. I gather that nobody here really wants that.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: No.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: I take that back. One gentleman is probably the sage of the whole meeting. Because, he is one who recognizes the inevitability of Government moving forward blindlessly, aimlessly, and without thought to expense.

COLONEL WILSON: Present company excepted.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: I think it's important that I say here, that, and I'm sure you understand it after these questions, the Corps is not going to go blindfully pellmell on one of these courses without a lot more activity on your part and on the county's part and the city's part and I guarantee you that if they come up with something and they're not, I know them, but if they should come up with something that would turn you all off we'll stop it. But, I say that strongly because I don't want you to go away from here with any thought in your mind that somebody is trying to cram something down your throat. Colonel Wilson doesn't intend to do that, and if I know the county and the city they are not about to do it. So, I don't think that ought to be one of your concerns. The main concern I think you should have, is where would you like to go, considering the art of the possible. You see, I come here tonight with a file drawer full of letters from you and your friends and neighbors, people who are concerned about all of this saying, in effect, "do something". This is what they say to me, "I don't care what you do, but do something, but just don't do these things". Well, you know we don't know what the right answer is as far as you're concerned. I gather that from everything considered you would like number three as the least objectionable alternative. Considering the fact that most of your property is washing away, and you have to stop it. Some of you have more, a problem then others. Obviously, some of you are losing more property

therefore, some of you are more concerned then others. And those who are just a little bit concerned don't want drastic action such as some who may be losing five or six feet a year of their property. And, what the Colonel and the Corps and the county and the city and others have got to try to find is someway to solve the problems that concern you generally without doing damage to anyone of you in particular, at least anymore than necessary. So, I'm not standing up here trying to cram anything down your throat, but I'm saying that what I'm hearing as I sit up here is that number three would be the one that you would rather have than anything else, because you wouldn't rather continue to lose your property in the bay. Now, the Colonel makes it very clear and I think you should understand this, that number three is not a permanent answer. Number three is a temporary answer. Number three is an answer that will eventually get you back where you are now, or perhaps your children, and I suppose as number three wilts away you're making the bay shallower out in front of your property. It's pretty shallow down there now as I recall.

Well, as far as changing the law is concerned, because this has come up in several instances, the Corps is bound, and as the Colonel has suggested, by the law that's on the books that sets percentages and sets parameters beyond which the Corps cannot go, the chances really of changing the law that would be considered of a benefit to you, are in my view, slim. The tendency, on the contrary, is for the law to go the other way, to make it a little more expensive, make it a little more difficult to do some of these projects, to raise the interest rate that's considered when you figure benefit-to-cost ratio and this sort of thing. It's sort of a technical side of this thing.

Some laws that might be benefical to you could conceivably get through in the time of an emergency, say for example, a big hurricane hits us or something, then we might come up with some emergency type law that would give you some relief that you wouldn't normally get without the emergency. But, I don't think you ought to consider the fact that changing the law is a high probability, that is changing it in a way that would help you. We should plan this thing based on the law that exists now, and we should, I think, urge the Corps to go forward with what it's trying to do now; to at some point in the near future have something that can be presented to the public officials in the county and the city, at which time I'm quite sure that they'll be glad to hear from you and should hear from you. The main thing that I want to do is to keep this thing moving in a direction that will bring some progress to our area.

Mrs. Sawyer raised an interesting question as to what is progress? And where should we be going? And should we really stop where we are? I can only say this that I have been trying for years to get somebody to get some dialogue going as to where this county and this city and this area really want to go. I think that sometimes we all tend to drift in the direction of going out and getting all the new industry that we can get and doing all of the things that we do, when we really don't know where the

people want to go. I think, this is not the meeting for this and I'm suggesting it, but, there is a real need in this county, in this bay area for the people themselves to give some thought to where we want to go in the future in our area, and, sort of come up with some sort of a clear picture. Because, it's a muddled picture as far as I'm concerned as I sit in Washington and try to do some of the things that I feel this area wants and yet I'm not sure sometimes that we're going in the right direction. So Mrs. Sawyer, if you want to organize a meeting we'll get something going. I guess that's all the questions that I have.

The problem with the Theodore Channel bridge, this will sound like buck passing, but it's the truth, and so I'll tell you the truth, the problem is that the state is the public agency, or public body that has to take the initiative on the bridge. You see that's George Wallace, that's not Colonel Wilson and Jack Edwards. You see the problem is, and has been for a good while, the state in all fairness to them, have not known whether they were going to have to build a barge level bridge or a bridge that could take ships. It appears now that it'll have to be one that'll take ships. That means then a bridge that's probably 125 feet high and I can tell you right now that the State's not going to build that bridge. And they're going to build whatever they need down at Rangeline Road which will be a barge level bridge. Now, that's just it. The State doesn't have the money to build that kind of bridge according to what they tell me, and I don't know where they'd get it.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: The Federal Government would contribute to the bridge on Dauphin Island Parkway at 125 feet if the state proposed it, but the state is not going to propose it. You see that's the problem. The state doesn't have that kind of money, they tell me, to do anything about it.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Well, you see, you're asking the wrong guy. That's the problem. I'd like to be able to give you a good answer but, I can't answer all those questions.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Well, I don't blame you, but, you need to talk to Mr. Ray Bass, the State Highway Director.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: I'm not going to argue with any of that except to say that the Colonel and I are not in that business.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: The reason I'm telling you what I'm telling you is because I've spent many a hour with Ray Bass and George Wallace and the people who are supposed to be doing something until I'm blue in the face. I'm passing on every message you give me. Now, I don't mind getting up here and talking about things that have no bearing on this, but, I really would like to keep the meeting on what we came here for. Yes, sir.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: It would dry out to be a fairly firm material. I suggest you come up after the meeting and I'll show you some pictures of similiar work.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: You would have to look at it this way, you can't walk out there now unless you're Bear Bryant.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: That's not quite true. The Colonel here and the Corps held hearings on that the other day and six people as I recall showed up in protesting that dredging out there. I'm not going to speak for him. I try to keep up with all these things and I hear from those same people too.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Have you ruled on that yet?

COLONEL WILSON: I wrote her Friday. Did you get my letter?

LADY IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Well, it's tough to try to fight City Hall, I agree with you.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: That's why I'm telling you it's tough.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: Yes, it would take about that. That's a pretty good guess.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Well, I guess the answer to your question as I understand it then, is the Corps would not do anything with the pier. If you wanted a new pier you'd have to put it out there. That's what you're really saying.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Jack, the way I see it on Mon Louis Island we need a breaker more than we need a fill down here something to break the seas. Now, we lose property from surface water. We also lost it from hurricane and high water. With a breaker a thousand foot out it would do us more good along that particular area of the bay than putting the silt in or contained fill which would hold it. Then you'd be giving up your rights and nobody wants to give anything away that belongs to them. When you start sticking your hand in my back pocket I'm going to start hollering.

COLONEL WILSON: Yes.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: On this number five, the thing that bothers me on this would be that they would come in and put buildings and things along there that you couldn't see the water.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: You know, I think this needs saying. There's nobody trying to do anything to you. The purpose for this meeting and the purpose of what the Corps is trying to do is trying to help you. It seems like almost in some way this becomes an adversary proceeding which, of course, it's not. We're trying to find a way, the Corps is, with my encouragement, to help and you know if you're going to end up with peanut vendors in your front yard then I'm going to be the last one to want to do that. I think that what we're trying to do tonight is to get your ideas, to crank your ideas into the overall picture. I'm quite sure the Corps is going away from here tonight with some pretty clear ideas of what you're thinking. That's the way it should be. That's why we had this little town hall meeting to hear what you've got to say so that they can crank that into their equation.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Well, it's something you didn't have before.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: Some of it's sand, some of it's pretty good material, but

the majority of it's clays and silts.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: Restate your proposition a little bit, number four is more expensive to the local riparian owners.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Number four is more expensive than number five.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: There would be some cost, but not much. Now I say the county would pass it on, but there would be the land enhancement cost.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

CONGRESSMEN EDWARDS: Alright, I'll do that informally. The Corps is probably not here to take headcounts but I don't mind doing it. O.K. Let's hear it for number one. O.K.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Number two.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: I just don't believe you're going to get any of those groups to go along with filling because that's where the marshland is.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: That's the reason I raised the question about the EPA. It just didn't seem like it was going to happen that EPA was going to let you all get away with this.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

MAN IN AUDIENCE: This number three type fill, would be similar to the islands that are out adjacent to the channel north of the bay now?

COLONEL WILSON: I think I would liken it a little more to the runway extension at Brookley which is on dredge fill.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: That's right, but it s maintenance material primarily.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: Yes, that's the maintenance material that we referred to as not very good stuff.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: I know of no other source and so I'm not saying that it would be very practical to come in a second time with maintenance material because it is as you describe, not very desirable material.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: O.K. Mrs. Jones, you want to have a rebuttal there?

MRS. JONES: (Indistinct)

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: O.K., you ready to vote now? Alright, number one. We had one to raise his hand. O.K. Number two. Do you want to talk before we vote? O.K.

LADY IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: Yes. Although it would take some time and some of the areas would erode before they were repopulated with the marsh. Well, as I said earlier, we can break it into segments. We can take different segments in easily definable parcels, for example, from Brookley to Dog River is one segment. We note that there is some marsh there. When I said Brookley to Dog River I was speaking in general terms. I think if you stop at about the Mobile Yacht Club you've stopped north of the marsh. Then you could go from Dog River south to Deer River and from Deer River south to Fowl River. I think there's one more little increment of marsh there. We could take it in usable increments according to what the county or the city told us in each increment.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Do you have something you want to say?

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Colonel Wilson, Congressman Edwards, I don't have property along the bay front but I do work on Dauphin Island on the east end. It's where I make my livelihood and as I look around me each day I see my livelihood gradually going away. Now since Camille on the east end there were rock jetties alright, the beach is now behind those rock jetties, I can attest that we have lost between two hundred and three hundred foot of beach.

Now you talk about putting in fill and containing this. There have been some experiments run of letting Mother Nature take care of it by using artificial help. I don't know whether this has ever been brought forward before, but our erosion is caused from the wave action, so consequently, there have been studies along the east coast made whereby artificial kelp has been placed to break the wave action and cause it to deposit the sand back in its original position. This is done at a nominal cost. Now, whether any studies have been made as to whether this would work along Mon Louis Island or Hollingers Island, I couldn't attest. But, I do believe that maybe some test could be made on the east end of Dauphin Island to see if this would be a feasible

solution to our problem.

COLONEL WILSON: We have some material on that, but it's not without cost. It is one of the other alternatives that are considered along with the one that we proposed. That is, the one that we proposed of simply nourishing that portion with sand. It seemed to us to be the more desirable and the more economical solution.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Yes.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: I don't know if people remember when you put the ammunition dump in, but at that time, if you went crabbing or floundering down there you would go up to your waist in mud. When you fill this in what will the bottom be out there then?

COLONEL WILSON: Well, there'd be no change.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: No mud?

COLONEL WILSON: The same as it is now.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: (Indistinct)

COLONEL WILSON: We're talking here about containing it. We said first putting up a dike and then putting it in between the dike and the shore and the material would dry out in between the two and then stabilize.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Anything else before we vote? I use the term vote loosely, by the way, we're not really. O.K., we got one guy on number one already. Number two. Nobody wants to do it themselves. Number three.O.K. Number four. Number five. A lot of you didn't vote, right? Who didn't vote? O.K. That's the way it is in a general election about half of you don't show up. O.K. Albert.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Jack, there is one thing that hasn't been said that I want to say. We ask for Congressional authority for a study and you saw that we got it. We've asked for a study and we've asked for help with what has been an on-going thing. It's an increasing problem and the Corps is here to discuss with us ways in which they might be able to help and I for one appreciate it.

COLONEL WILSON: You know, for one I would like to end it on that note.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Before we do does anybody else want to make a statement. Thank you. O.K. Thank you. One more.

MAN IN AUDIENCE: Could I ask another question of Colonel Wilson on number three?

COLONEL WILSON: O.K. Why don't you come on up after the meeting.

CONGRESSMAN EDWARDS: Thank you all for coming and we'll do our best to keep this thing moving in the right direction and stay in touch with you as we make progress.