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New Braunfels Outer Loop Study
C/O Rivera Associates, Inc.
7410 Blanco Rd. Ste.250
San Antonio, Tx 78216

June 16, 2007

Dear Sirs,

I would like to comment on the proposed outer loop outside New Braunfels. From the map in the flyer it looks like our house is within the loop. I want to tell you why we do not want to lose our house, and that if the loop were adjusted only a block east we would be safe and the TDOT would save several millions of dollars.

My wife and I both were raised in San Antonio and regularly came to New Braunfels to swim at Landa Park when we were children. My wife's grandparents had their honeymoon at Landa Park back in about 1908 and lived here in New Braunfels until they died, her grandmother at 99 years old. Debbie and I wanted to live here too and in 1985 we bought a lot on River Road with a burned out house on it. My wife and her parents (her dad was a retired union carpenter) cleaned off the debris and built the house we always wanted, while I worked in Austin to supply the money. We happily raised our two sons there on the river until October 17, 1998 when a flood picked up the house and moved it 35' down stream, leaving us homeless.

Fortunately we had some flood insurance (way too little, it turned out), just enough to buy 7 1/2 acres about 10 miles from the river. It was very difficult to find anything we could afford because of the rule about needing at least 5 acres to have both a septic system and a well on the same property. The property we finally found on Countryside Dr. has 7 1/2 acres, and had been untouched for many years because of a pioneer cemetery located on it. It seems nobody wanted to live next to a cemetery! This cemetery has 5 graves, the oldest dating back to the middle 1800's. The oldest graves contained the original pioneers who came from Germany, cleared the land, fought Indians, and raised their family here. Their son and daughter-in law are buried here, and very sadly, their 8 year old grandson who was killed in 1916 by a rattlesnake. We know this because the cemetery itself did not convey with the property, but is owned by the 87 yr old great grandson of the original couple, James Dietz. He told us the story while cleaning the cemetery, as he has done his whole life. He said that his aunt, the sister of the dead boy, wants to come see the cemetery one more time before she dies, but is in too poor health to do it. I promised Mr. Dietz that we would watch over the cemetery and keep it clean after he is no longer able to do it.

Anyway, for the last 9 years we have constantly been working on the land, first by clearing literally hundreds of cedar trees. When we bought the property the trees and

cactus were so thick you could not walk across it! We had to send our 6 year old son crawling under the branches to mark the corners of our first "dwelling", a 35'x40' metal garage building. As I said, we did not have enough insurance money to buy a house, and barely had enough to buy this property, put in a septic and a well, and build the 35'x40' metal building with an "apartment" inside. All this time we were staying with Debbie's parents in San Antonio. We only had one car as our other car was destroyed in the flood, so I would drive the boys from San Antonio to two different schools in New Braunfels, drive to work in Austin, then leave at 2:15 pm to drive back to New Braunfels to pick them back up and drive to Debbie's parents in San Antonio. Debbie and I would get up early every Saturday, fill our van with tools and drive to New Braunfels to build the garage apartment. This went on for 10 months until we could move in, in August 1999.

After we moved into the garage on Countryside we started working on the severely damaged River Road house. FEMA had declared it a total loss, but we decided we could rebuild it. After all, we built it in the first place! We really didn't have any choice because we didn't have enough money to build a proper house on Countryside, and we thought we could rebuild the river house and sell it for enough to at least get a start on a real house. We first had to have it moved back onto our property. We then worked on it every Saturday from September of 1999 until July of 2002. By July 4 it was almost ready to sell, only needing the exterior painted. Then on July 6, 2002 Canyon Lake overflowed its spillway and we had to run AGAIN! By the time we could get back on River Rd four days later, there was only a pile of rubble where our house had been! For the next several weekends local church volunteers helped us remove all the debris from the lot, leaving only the foundation. We sold the now vacant lot (proving that there IS a sucker born every minute!) and used most of the money to pay in advance our two sons college tuition through the Texas Tomorrow fund. We used the flood insurance money to start building a new house on Countryside in March of 2003, and are still not finished building it. We are again doing most of the work ourselves for lack of sufficient funds. We could have borrowed enough money, but the first flood happened when I was 50 years old and I didn't want to go into debt at that age. Imagine paying on a mortgage until I was 80!

Now yesterday we received your flyer notifying us that you might want to tear down our house to build an outer loop! Only one block east there is nothing but ranch land (see Google Earth) running for miles both north and south! Won't you please spare us? We don't ever want to move again! We love it here! This little neighborhood (Countryside, Country, Shadow, High Chaparral, etc) sits on the far edge of your proposed loop, and will cost millions to buy. The Diamante II ranch, right across the street from our place will cost at least 2 Million dollars! Why not move the loop a quarter mile to the east where there are no houses? You will still be able to access Schoenthal Rd, if that is what you are trying to do. We appreciate your taking a look at this. It is very important to us!

Sincerely,

Wayne & Debbie
Debbie Brown