

PRIVILEGE SPEECH

15th Regular City Council
 March 24, 2009
 Sangguniang Panlungsod
 Davao City

OPEN LETTER OF BARANGAY MA-A HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

By Councilor Pilar C. Braga, PhD

Madam President, allow me to read this open letter which I just received. For whatever its worth, this open letter address to this august body is worth our attention. Allow me to read their letter en toto...

Barangay Ma-a Homeowners Associations, Inc.
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Bugac, Ma-a, Davao City
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March 24, 2009

An Open Letter
To the Members of the 15th Sangguniang Panglungsod of Davao City
 Thru: Atty. Sarah Duterte, Vice-Mayor and Pilar Braga, Councilor First District

Maayong Adlaw sa tanan, mga Halangdong Tigpamalaod sa Davao City,

We, the Barangay Ma-a Federation of Homeowners Associations, are here again to reiterate our critical stand to the approved PALC of Palm Grove West Phase I and Positano Subdivisions in Ma-a Shrine Hills. This letter will enumerate again our demands and concerns regarding the two subdivision projects above us.

Today, Positano's application for Development Permit (D.P.) is tabled for first reading in spite of the fact that CHLURU has yet to analyze their submitted documents, in spite of the fact that our many pre-PALC concerns remain unresolved, in spite of the fact that our legitimate and reasonable demands have not been addressed formally in your November 25, 2008 resolution approving the PALC of the two subdivision projects. To wit:

- an independent and comprehensive study of the geo-hazards and slope stability of the whole Shrine Hills area
- a peer review of the existing geo-hazard studies commissioned by the hill developers
- a review towards a reclassification of the zoning of the Ma-a Shrine area based on the above studies
- unresolved drainage outfall of the subdivisions direct to Davao River

"Approval of the PALC doesn't mean automatic approval of the Development Permit," many of you said. Yet we fear mechanical approval and uncritical scrutiny.

We would now like to see and understand the proposed development plans of the developers. We would also like to propose in this D.P. phase that the SP as soon as possible convenes a Multi-partite Monitoring Team (MMT) – with us important community stakeholders as members, too – to regularly monitor the developments on the Ma-a Shrine Hills.

We would like to propose that no hill subdivision would be allowed to do earth moving and construction activities (1) until a comprehensive hydrological study has been completed, (2) until a comprehensive drainage system in Barangay Ma-a has been properly installed to catch the water run-off from all subdivisions, and (3) until a comprehensive and independent geo-hazard and slope stability assessment of the whole Shrine Hills area has been conducted. All these would prevent the making of a potential Cherry Hill-like catastrophe and the occurrence of flash floods.

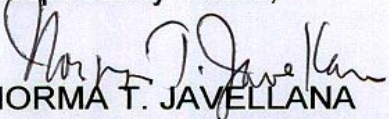
We would like to be involved in CHLURU's inspection of the project sites of both Palm Grove West and Positano.

Lastly, we would like to reiterate that we are for RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT that is

- open and transparent in all its processes, and solicits participation of concerned citizens,
- beneficial to all – to the present and future generations,
- environment friendly and considers climate change realities,
- in accordance with existing laws, rules and regulations.

May the many springs oozing through the belly of the beautiful Maa-Shrine Hills sprinkle us all with the good blessings of Mother Earth.

Respectfully Yours,


NORMA T. JAVELLANA
President of the Federation

Thank you madam President.

PILAR C. BRAGA, PhD
City Councilor, Davao City

March 24, 2009