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Councilmember District D

Cynthia Hedge-Morrell

NAME: Cynthia Hedge-Morrell, Incumbent

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PUBLICATION:

Address: 344 Saint Joseph Street, #525; New Orleans, LA 70130

Phone: (504) 261-0535

FAX: (504) 218-8557

Email: jeanpaulmorrell@hotmail.com

Website: <http://www.cynthiamorrell.com>

PARTY AFFILIATION: Democrat

PROFESSION: Retired School Administrator

PRESENT EMPLOYER/POSITION (if self-employed, what type of business): New Orleans City Council Member, District D

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION (include graduation date): Master of Science, Loyola University of New Orleans, 1985

APPLICABLE TRAINING: Administration and Supervision Certification, Total Quality Management (TQM) and Fulbright Fellowship Program (People's Republic of China)

CIVIC EXPERIENCE: S.T.A.I.R. Program, Trustee for Center for Development and Learning (CDL), French Quarter Festival Committee, Kappa Delta Pi Honor Society

POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Orleans Parish Democratic Executive Committee, District D (1990-2000), French Market Corporation, Louisiana State Racing Commission, Delegate (Alternate) for the National Democratic Convention (2000), Delegate for the National Democratic Convention (2004)

1. Will you expedite the completion and adoption of a Master Plan for the city with the force of law?

The Bring Back New Orleans Commission is working simultaneously/concurrently with the Louisiana Recovery Authority. If presented with a concise plan by either group, that reflects the best interests of the residents of my district, and the people of New Orleans, I would support it to the best of my ability (including legislation). That being said I will not support a Master Plan that does not address the needs of my constituents or lets neighborhoods have a voice in the planning process (beyond proving viability).

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2. What is the Council's role in bringing back New Orleans?

The Council's role is to provide a voice for the residents it represents. It's job is make sure that, in this mammoth rebuilding process, the interests of the various neighborhoods is not lost in the jumble of the various groups vying for control of the rebuilding process. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the City Council to facilitate efforts between the citizens and the Administration as to ease the considerable burden placed upon our citizens during the rebuilding process. The strength of the Councilmatic Districts is that we are accessible, and accountable, to our neighborhoods to protect their interests and voice their concerns.

3. Will you pledge to end the practice of deferring to the District Council Member on land use matters?

I am willing to consider deferring land use issues to the current Zoning board, with the Council used solely as a mechanism for appeal. I believe that to place all zoning powers with an unaccountable body of appointed individuals may provide the illusion of a more efficient process but will, inevitably, simply result in residents getting ignored. For example; the Bring Back New Orleans Commission's proposed corporation, which requests zoning authority, has yet to outline a mechanism for selection and/or removal of that Corporation's membership. Until this issue is resolved I cannot make an informed decision as to whether or not I would surrender zoning authority to that body.

4. What are the unique priorities for your district?

The priorities for District D are quite extensive. The first concern is levee protection. I am actively involved in the process of developing a comprehensive plan for levee protection, as I believe this is the largest concern of our residents before rebuilding can begin in earnest. Another concern is the necessity in streamlining the rebuilding process, so that the City can assist, rather than hinder, returning homeowners. A further concern is helping neighborhoods to develop viable rebuilding plans. District D was the first neighborhood to launch into the Neighborhood planning process with the Pontilly Charrette, with additional planning sessions with other neighborhood groups in development. We also need to develop a comprehensive plan for education and the revitalization of our schools, whether under the current School Board or Charter Programs. Finally, there are the various quality of life issues that are a constant source of concern for District D (streets, crime, infrastructure, etc.)

Comments, suggestions, questions? Contact our [webmaster](#). Last revised: May 26, 2006 08:12 PDT.

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