

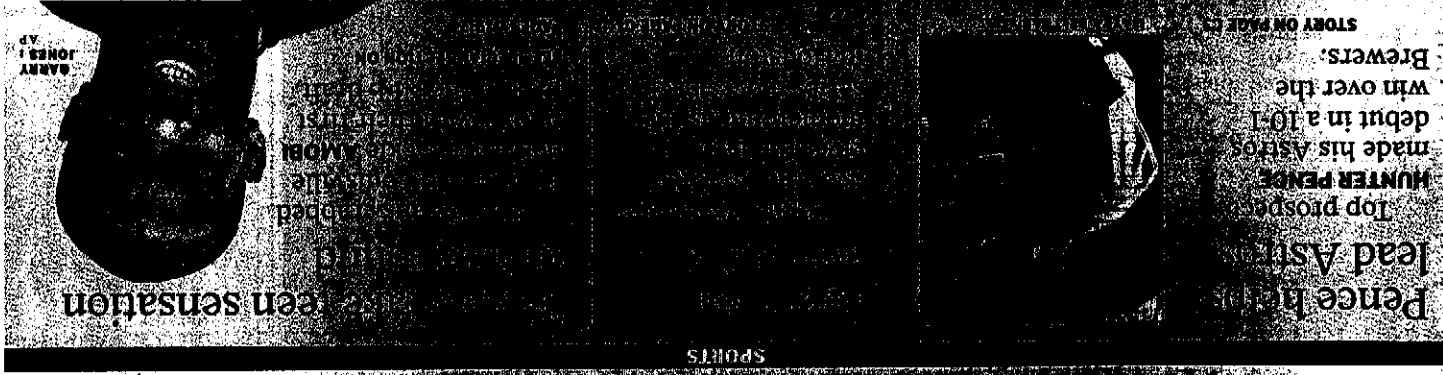
Are you ready for today? WARM, HIGH 85, LOW 65 / PAGE B12 DIAZ DEFENDS LIGHTWEIGHT CROWN / PAGE C3

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

WWW.CHRON.COM

SUNDAY, APRIL 29, 2007

VOL. 106 • NO. 198 • \$1.75



STORY ON PAGE C3

Pence had
lead Astoria
Top prospect
HUNTER PENCE
made his Astros
debut in a 10-1
win over the
Brewers.

SPORTS

een sensation

GARY JONES
AP

A BRIDGE TO EDUCATION



■ 82 complaints were made in the 16 days state leaders planned scandal response

ABUSE CLAIMS POURED IN AMID DEBATE

TVC INVESTIGATION

By R.G. BARTCLIFFE
AUSTIN BUREAU

AUSTIN — After the Texas Youth Commission sex and physical abuse scandal broke, Gov. Rick Perry and legislative leaders debated for 16 days the best way to halt the violence in the juvenile corrections system before dispatching the Texas Rangers.
During those days, 82 complaints were lodged claiming that TVC youth were victims of excessive force or sexual impropriety by staff and other youths in the system, according to records obtained by the Houston Chronicle under the Public Information Act.

CONSUMER

REAL ESTATE LAW

Residential development includes important due diligence issues

Whether their intention is to buy land for the construction of homes, condominiums, apartment complexes, duplexes or townhouses, many people are entering the residential land development market.



BRETT SLOBIN

Developing land can be risky, and, therefore, prudence and due diligence should be a prerequisite to buying land for development. While the following examples constitute only a few of the numerous due diligence activities that an experienced land developer should initiate and complete, such activities are crucial in determining whether to buy and develop the land.

In conjunction with the review of title, the developer should obtain a detailed survey of the land. The surveyor should have a copy of the title commitment and exception document, and the surveyor should ascertain the character and capacity of the currently available utilities, as well as the potential for expansion of the utilities.

■ **Environmental**
The developer should conduct environmental due diligence on the land. Conducting a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment on there is sufficient land to con-

■ **Utilities**
A supply of adequate utilities to the land is a crucial element in the developer's design for the land. The developer must have a copy of the title commitment and exception document, and the surveyor should ascertain the character and capacity of the currently available utilities, as well as the potential for expansion of the utilities.

■ **Environmental**
The developer should conduct environmental due diligence on the land. Conducting a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment on there is sufficient land to con-

■ **Utilities**
A supply of adequate utilities to the land is a crucial element in the developer's design for the land. The developer must have a copy of the title commitment and exception document, and the surveyor should ascertain the character and capacity of the currently available utilities, as well as the potential for expansion of the utilities.

■ **Environmental**
The developer should conduct environmental due diligence on the land. Conducting a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment on there is sufficient land to con-

Whether their intention is to buy land for the construction of homes, condominiums, apartment complexes, duplexes or townhouses, many people are entering the residential land development market. Developing land can be risky, and, therefore, prudence and due diligence should be a prerequisite to buying land for development. While the following examples constitute only a few of the numerous due diligence activities that an experienced land developer should initiate and complete, such activities are crucial in determining whether to buy and develop the land.

In conjunction with the review of title, the developer should obtain a detailed survey of the land. The surveyor should have a copy of the title commitment and exception document, and the surveyor should ascertain the character and capacity of the currently available utilities, as well as the potential for expansion of the utilities.

■ **Environmental**
The developer should conduct environmental due diligence on the land. Conducting a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment on there is sufficient land to con-

■ **Utilities**
A supply of adequate utilities to the land is a crucial element in the developer's design for the land. The developer must have a copy of the title commitment and exception document, and the surveyor should ascertain the character and capacity of the currently available utilities, as well as the potential for expansion of the utilities.

■ **Environmental**
The developer should conduct environmental due diligence on the land. Conducting a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment on there is sufficient land to con-

■ **Utilities**
A supply of adequate utilities to the land is a crucial element in the developer's design for the land. The developer must have a copy of the title commitment and exception document, and the surveyor should ascertain the character and capacity of the currently available utilities, as well as the potential for expansion of the utilities.

■ **Environmental**
The developer should conduct environmental due diligence on the land. Conducting a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment on there is sufficient land to con-

busy real estate markets, it may not be possible to reschedule professional movers late in the game. As a last resort, you could ask the seller for permission to occupy the property before closing and, if the seller is agreeable, an addendum should be drawn up indicating the terms and conditions under which you can move until the last-minute. If possible, postpone the move in early You and the seller also problem has been sorted out. In

Resolve problem before moving

REAL ESTATE TIP

WHERE TO FIND US

REAL ESTATE GRAPHICS MANAGER, PRODUCTION

structure the planned improvements. Additionally, easements for high voltage lines must be taken into consideration because of the danger such liens can cause.

■ **Zoning issues**
One of the developer's goals is to make certain the land complies with any existing zoning ordinances. Although generally not an issue in Houston, other municipalities may have zoning ordinances that extend to extrajurisdictional jurisdictions.

■ **Utilities**
A supply of adequate utilities to the land is a crucial element in the developer's design for the land. The developer must have a copy of the title commitment and exception document, and the surveyor should ascertain the character and capacity of the currently available utilities, as well as the potential for expansion of the utilities.

■ **Environmental**
The developer should conduct environmental due diligence on the land. Conducting a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment on there is sufficient land to con-

■ **Utilities**
A supply of adequate utilities to the land is a crucial element in the developer's design for the land. The developer must have a copy of the title commitment and exception document, and the surveyor should ascertain the character and capacity of the currently available utilities, as well as the potential for expansion of the utilities.

■ **Environmental**
The developer should conduct environmental due diligence on the land. Conducting a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment on there is sufficient land to con-

■ **Utilities**
A supply of adequate utilities to the land is a crucial element in the developer's design for the land. The developer must have a copy of the title commitment and exception document, and the surveyor should ascertain the character and capacity of the currently available utilities, as well as the potential for expansion of the utilities.

■ **Environmental**
The developer should conduct environmental due diligence on the land. Conducting a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment on there is sufficient land to con-

the land will help to satisfy the "innocent landowner defense" available under federal law and studies, etc. — that should be accomplished before purchasing the land.

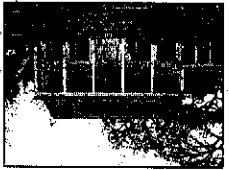
At the very least, the developer should conduct the previously mentioned activities to make certain it is proceeding in a sensible manner prior to acquiring the land.

Careful planning can lessen mistakes and may lead to an increase in land development opportunities. Careful planning can lessen mistakes and may lead to an increase in land development opportunities. Careful planning can lessen mistakes and may lead to an increase in land development opportunities.

JANIE MILLER 713-871-8552
janiemiller@mindspring.com • GEORGE L. MURRAY & CO., INC.

RIVER OAKS CUSTOM BUILT NEW LISTING! OPEN 2:00-5:00 2514 BRENTWOOD

Widely known as Houston's finest builder in the first half of the twentieth century, Russell Brown created this captivating Colonial house as a wedding gift for his daughter in 1931, so you can imagine the superb quality of construction! The splendid entrance hall, with its circular stair and Palladian window, has the kind of millwork only the most skilled designers and artisans could fashion together, and the entire house is obviously a labor of love! Wide-paneled arched openings with fluted columns to the spacious living and dining rooms, with their elaborate wainscoting and triple-timing windows. Three very large bedrooms, two and one-half baths, elevator off paneled breakfast room and bar. Sunny quarters with bath over the detached two car garage are accessed from either the side kitchen entrance or the second floor and can be used as a fourth bedroom. A paneled family room was added in 1946 with a peaked, beamed ceiling, a fireplace with a surround of Lefth tiles and flanked by windows seats/wood storage, bookshelves and high windows overlooking a huge brick terrace and garden. The country kitchen with beamed ceiling and brick fireplace has double windows opening to the delightful screened porch for easy seating for outdoor dining, original pine door, and two Jenn-Aire stoves. Part of the basement could be converted to a white cellar. Five fireplaces - woodburning in the living room, family room, and kitchen and mack in the dining room and master bedroom. Exceptionally lovely molding, uniquely beautiful six-paneled doors, glowing random width floors (recently refinished), just restored original hardware (many doors have brass key covers), and high ceilings throughout. Four-year-old roof, new landscaping planned so that there is something blooming in the yard year around.



family insurance should be in effect on the date of occupancy. — *Inman News Service*

As a last resort, you could ask the seller for permission to occupy the property before closing and, if the seller is agreeable, an addendum should be drawn up indicating the terms and conditions under which you can move until the last-minute. If possible, postpone the move in early You and the seller also problem has been sorted out. In

KATHY WETMORE
Ranked the Top Selling Realtor in Houston for 2004/2006 by the Houston Business Journal.
Cell # 713-826-9057.....kathyw@johnnadaugherty.com
THE JOHN DAUGHERTY TOP PRODUCER FOR 2000/2001/2002/2003/2004/2005/2006