

February 24, 2015

subject: IT'S NOT JUST THE DECIBELS

Hello Assemblymember-

Thank you for reading these comments.

I am writing to speak to you about the proposed "noise study" at 26-mile. I understand that, for some Borough officials, there is a genuine interest in trying to acquire more information on the issue of whether to site a heliport at the property in question, near Chilkat Lake Road. Unfortunately, however, there are a number of reasons why this "noise study" is inappropriate, and I hope you take these reasons to heart, and vote not to approve the current consultant's contract.

It is widely recognized that there are a variety of characteristics of helicopter noise, other than simple volume or decibel level, that make it disturbing or disruptive to some people. These characteristics include low frequency, and air movement from rotor action, which combine to create actual physical vibrations at volumes far lower than would be made by other types of sound. Also, the impulsivity, or rhythmic pulsing of the sound gives it a much more penetrating and attention-grabbing quality. It is very comparable to the effect of cars that play certain types of rhythmic music with powerful, low-frequency "sub-woofers". Many people find this type of noise particularly annoying, even though the actual decibel level might not be very high at the listener's location.

The "noise study", as described in the consultant's description, doesn't include a gauging of the sound characteristics mentioned above. It makes no sense to attempt to establish some sort of "objective" gauge of how disruptive a particular use of helicopters will be without taking these other characteristics into account.

But most importantly, the current "noise study" proposed *doesn't include measurement locations at the closest affected properties!* Every municipality has a responsibility to uphold the property rights of ALL property owners within its boundaries. Failing to record both background noise levels and helicopter sounds at the nearest point on adjacent properties resoundingly undermines the validity of the entire undertaking. Obviously, measuring sound only at locations 1000 feet further than the nearest property will create skewed and invalid results. And comparing road sounds along Chilkat Lake Road from very short distances to helicopter sounds from 1/4 mile distance or more, is clearly illogical and will generate misinformation and confusion on the issue. This is at direct odds with the presumed purpose of undertaking the "noise study" (i.e., a wish to get *better* information, not *worse* information!).

Regardless of whether the concerned parties agreed to a proposed "settlement" to the lawsuit filed over this issue, noise levels MUST be measured at the nearest points on ADJACENT properties. The Borough still holds the same responsibility to ALL property owners. In recorded testimony at the public hearings on their heliport CUP application in 2014, SEABA owners denigrated and attempted to marginalize the Corona family and their property. Do not be led by SEABA and their agenda in this matter. It would be very unwise to allow violations of the Corona family's property rights, or any other property owners' rights.

Using public dollars to subsidize a contentious development (that is opposed by large segments of the population) erodes community harmony and goodwill, and will not create secure economic development. Please stop devoting time and public monies to SEABA's development scheme. It does not have support from the majority of affected residents or property owners. This is plainly clear from recorded public testimony ever since this issue arose. Please refuse to authorize the expenditure of our public tax dollars for this flawed "noise study". It will not help resolve this issue.

Thank you for your consideration, and for your public service-
Nicholas Szatkowski