
Questions to be resolved re helipad SMP

1 message

Jean Fraser <jf@portlandmaine.gov>
To: "Alexander M. Green" <AGreen@mmc.org>

Tue, Aug 6, 2019 at 10:52 AM

AI

Below is a note of what I think are the key (more technical) issues that need to be resolved. I am using this list as a basis for a discussion with our Peer Reviewer and you may want to discuss these with your consultant.

Is there an agenda or key set of talking points for the meeting with Jennifer McCarthy next week? I need to brief Christine Grimando so it would be helpful to know the key objectives of the meeting. We appreciate that Jennifer is able to meet at City Hall, as Christine is now the Acting Director of Planning and Urban Development as well as the City Planning Director with almost non stop meetings every day just now.

thank you
Jean

NOTE OF KEY ISSUES

Already resolved:

- Flight paths intended to be same as agreed in IDP; recent departures from that are being investigated by MMC (probably not LifeFlight helicopters)
- DNL appropriate measure; no other standard (but note request from property owners described below)
- Data on max number per day/night and variations from flight path being sought
- Include monitoring arrangements and a "what if more" "what if changed" response

To Resolve:

1. MMC consultants focused on comparing test data with historic info for the measuring points associated with assessment of the first helipad, and they show that the sound from helipads generally less than ambient (not clear what times of ambient measurements are in the table). City is seeking comparison of the sound of the existing helipad with the relocated helipad (same ambient), and for properties previously not impacted. Can the existing data be recast to show this? Do we need to get data from Accentech?
2. The City's Peer Reviewer recommended an additional measuring location (CP10), but it would require suspension of construction on East Tower and is so close to CP 3 and CP 4 it appears to add little information (as properties near it will be eligible for mitigation anyway). Can we omit CP10 ?
3. Local property owners are requesting that the actual high and low sound levels be measured and taken into account to reflect the actual sound level experienced at any one time by those near the helipad; they also note that DBA does not capture the low frequencies. While the DNL has weighted the night time sound levels, is there any precedent or basis for taking this approach?

4. Local residents have pressed for the addition of a measuring point farther to the east to capture impacts of the relocated pad in horizontal direction and with apparently less shielding by existing buildings. In absence of further measuring, how can we create criteria for a complainant where there is no nearby measuring point? Can the sound impacts be modelled? Or a “cone of potential impact” be described?

This is the basis of the concern (from neighbor):

I believe additional locations are needed. I see a need for a line-of-sight measurement location in-between the radiuses of CP-4 and CP-6 and -9. The first represents a potential worst case location, which is useful, but CP-6 will have some building shielding, and CP-9 is significantly distant. Some middle-distance readings are needed, since this region of the West End is one that will likely experience a significantly changed sound pattern. With the loss of the sound-mitigation through building blockage that exists now, and a greater height, yielding line-of-sight and sound to hundreds more homes than the previous location, a significantly changed soundscape seems almost inevitable.

5. Local residents have asked about whether the secondary pad (nearer to them) has been tested re sound impacts? This is virtually over some of the houses. Is there data on how often this pad would be used? (DNL not applicable here as use will be very infrequent)

6. Local residents have noted that the sound measurements would have been at ground level - and asked about measurements at the bedroom level which would be 2nd or 3d floor and other higher living spaces. How could this be taken into account?

Jean Fraser, Planner
Planning & Urban Development Department
City of Portland
389 Congress Street
Portland, ME 04101
phone: (207) 874-8728
email: jf@portlandmaine.gov