
Was secondary pad tested?

1 message

Sara Anne Donnelly <sara@saraannedonnelly.com>

Tue, Jul 23, 2019 at 12:29 PM

To: jf@portlandmaine.gov

Cc: Alvah <alvah.davis@gmail.com>, Elizabeth Trice <liztrice@gmail.com>, Spencer Thibodeau <spencerthibod2@gmail.com>

Hi Jean,

Sara again from 19 Ellsworth Street. I just read through a draft of the MMC helipad Sound Measurement Plan and related consultant correspondence that Alvah shared with me and an important question arises -- has the secondary helipad that hangs over our neighborhood been tested at all? Are there any plans to test it?

According to a map from Russell Acoustics attached to a letter dated August 6, 2017, two helipads were tested with sample flights. One is located away from the street on the East Tower (Pad B on the map which, I believe, will be the primary pad) and the other (Pad A), strangely, was the helipad atop the current parking garage that will soon be defunct. Why wasn't what will be the secondary pad also tested for sound? This is the pad that sticks out over the edge of the East Tower, hovers over our properties in Bramhall, and lacks structures around it to mitigate sound.

If I'm reading this all correctly, the dBA of helicopter noise according to the study on pads A and B is in the red zone -- above 90 in some cases. And this only covers the pads set back from the street. I can only imagine that the secondary pad, jutting out as it does, would have a dBA significantly higher. Can you tell me whether there are plans to test that secondary pad? And if that study has been done, can I see the results? I have CC'd Alvah, Liz, and my councilor Spencer Thibideau on this email.

Thank you!

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MMC helipad questions and concerns

1 message

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Mon, Jul 22, 2019 at 10:00 AM

To: jf@portlandmaine.gov

Cc: Elizabeth Trice <liztrice@gmail.com>, Alvah <alvah.davis@gmail.com>

Hi Jean,

Thank you for chatting with me last week about the upcoming sound tests for the two new Maine Medical Center helipads. As we discussed, my property at 19 Ellsworth Street is in close proximity to both of the new helipads, and has even been noted by the hospital as one that might qualify for sound mitigation assistance.

As you work with the hospital to accurately assess helipad noise, I wanted to put forward a few questions and concerns. I understand that you are meeting with your supervisor at the Portland Planning Department this week to begin to clarify the city's positions in these conversations with the hospital. I hope my notes below will be helpful in that regard.

I have CC'd homeowners in my immediate vicinity should they also want to weigh in, as well as Alvah Davis and Liz Trice, members of the community committee that has been meeting with MMC representatives about this and other expansion concerns, and who have helped me understand the nature of the current talks. Anyone on the thread who would like to pass this along to other effected parties, please feel free.

Thanks for listening, and I look forward to working with you as this process moves along.

Questions and concerns:

- Can you clarify the projected use of the primary pad versus the secondary pad, including frequency and approximate times of day, and confirm that the secondary is the one visible from the Ellsworth Street?
- As Alvah mentioned in an earlier email, estimating the sound effects of the helipads using DNL (day-night average sound level) does not accurately capture the experience of living so close to the helipads. Can the study also include high and low measurements? This is an important detail that could make or break the validity of the sound tests because the negative effects of the helicopter noise are by definition brief and extreme.
- Similarly, will the tests measure sound at ground level only? What about at bedroom level, like on the third floor of my home where my family sleeps?
- Will the study include the secondary helipad and, if not, can it be added? The secondary's effects on my property and others around me looks to be significant because of its position on the East Tower. Part of the pad is reaching over the side and is almost literally above my house, with no hospital structure muffling that sound.
- Over the past couple of weeks, I have been awoken more than once by a helicopter flying overhead between midnight and 2 a.m. Why is this happening when the flight path should be further west, and how are residents to contact the hospital when this happens?

That's all for now. I open this to others on this chain to add any questions or concerns they'd like raised when you meet with your supervisor at the planning department this week. Thanks again, Jean. Talk soon!

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