

SASY

Schenk-Atwood-Starkweather-Yahara Neighborhood Association

News Release

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Madison Neighborhoods Ask County Executive Joe Parisi to Reduce County Airport Noise

Today, the Schenk / Atwood / Starkweather / Yahara Neighborhood Association (SASYNA) provided County Executive Joe Parisi with recommendations for reducing noise from the Dane County Airport. This past year SASYNA solicited noise reduction ideas from over 30 neighborhood surrounding the airport on the east and north sides of Madison. If implemented, these suggestions are expected to improve the quality of life in the neighborhoods surrounding the airport and make them safer, healthier and more desirable to live in.

Neighborhood recommendations for improving the airport's noise control plan include the following:

- Improve the counter-flow strategy.
- Update the 1996 noise abatement plan.
- Reduce noise from military aircraft.
- Offset the airport's adverse economic impacts.
- Create independent oversight of the airport's noise control program.

Improve the Counter-Flow Strategy – The cornerstone of the county airport's noise control strategy encourages flights to depart and arrive from the north, away from populous areas of Madison. However, last year, over 54%, or 44,000 aircraft, flew over populous neighborhoods. Neighborhoods asked are asking Parisi to monitor every flights in and out of the airport, and to create more incentive to encourage compliance with this noise control strategy such as charging higher fees for planes which fly over the city.

Update the 1996 Noise Abatement Plan – According to the Federal Aviation Administration, the county airport's noise abatement plan is over 16 years old. Airport noise abatement methods, like all forms of pollution control, improve over time, but the county airport's noise control strategy has fallen far behind. For example, the current noise insulation program by the Minneapolis airport provides up to \$14,000 to add noise insulation, windows, doors and air conditioning to surrounding homes. Unlike other airports, like the Milwaukee airport, our county airport does not conduct any objective monitoring of the resident noise exposure or determine if each flight is complying with its noise control plan. Parisi was asked to hire an independent contractor to identify modern noise control strategies and update the county airport's noise control plan.

Reduce Noise from Military Aircraft - During the past ten years, the source of the loudest airport noise, military jets and helicopters, has increased 50% to 9,000 flights per year. This summer, the county board approved the Wisconsin Army National Guard's expansion of its helicopter facilities without any

requirements to reduce noise. Military jet engine testing exceeds the city noise ordinance 3-miles away as far as the Capital Square. Neighborhoods asked for a noise control plan specific to military aircraft. Potential improvements include replacement of the “hush house” which has failed to reduce noise from jet engine testing; jet and helicopter training flights should be scheduled to avoid any flights over populous areas of the city; and, a long-term plan is needed to relocated all military training flights to Volk Field and out of Madison.

Offset Adverse Economic Impacts – The county airport promotes itself as an important economic asset, but the city neighborhood indicators shows that the airport is surrounded by the city’s lowest property values, highest rates of families on public assistance, and schools with the highest portion of low-income students. Similar to a \$500 million program by the airport in Los Angeles, residents ask that the county airport help improve the economic conditions of surrounding neighborhoods. For example, at a cost of \$12 per passenger, the county airport could fund the Madison School District’s *Achievement Gap Plan* to raise achievement levels of low-income and minority students.

Provide Independent Oversight – There is no independent regulatory agency like the EPA or DNR to monitor the noise pollution program of the county airport. By leaving the airport in charge, the noise control plan has become outdated and impacts on city residents have been ignored. Surrounding neighborhoods ask Parisi to have the airport fund independent oversight of its noise pollution program by the Department of Public Health for Madison & Dane County at a cost of only 10¢ per passenger.

With its recommendations, SASYNA reminded County Executive Parisi that the county airport continues to be a significant burden to surrounding neighborhoods. Each and every one of the thousands of aircraft that flies over Madison continues to make neighborhoods a less safe, healthy and desirable to live. Melanie Foxcroft, chair of the neighborhood's airport noise committee, said: "We'd love the opportunity to sit down and meet with Joe Parisi to discuss how to implement our recommendations. They will improve the quality of life for surrounding neighborhoods and make Madison a more desirable place to live."

For more information, contact Melanie Foxcroft at Melanie@sasyna.org or Steve Klafka at steve@sasyna.org (608/255-5030).

The SASYNA letter to County Executive Joe Parisi can be found on the SASYNA web site:
<http://tinyurl.com/SASYNA-Letter-to-Parisi-8oct12>

A few county airport facts:

- In its last noise impact study, the county airport concludes that over 6,000 people lived in areas exceeding the FAA noise standard. The county airport response – nothing! Other airports in the U.S. did much more including the creation of soundproofing programs for surrounding homes and schools, and relocating residents to quieter areas.
- In her comments to the county airport noise committee, UW Professor Colleen Moore summarized the health effects of airport noise to surrounding residents and their children including higher blood pressure, higher stress hormones, lower school performance, hypertension,

ischemic heart disease, and sleep disturbance. She concludes that the FAA noise standard used by the county airport does not protect surrounding residents.

- Madison's Comprehensive Plan accommodates the airport by removing over 7,000 acres or 11 square miles from residential development in the city. That's nearly 20% of the city's land area, large enough to contain the cities of Monona, Stoughton and Verona with combined populations of over 27,000 people.
- Travel by airplane, especially short commuter flights to Milwaukee or Chicago, consume more fuel and generate more emissions than any other form of travel. The most frequent destination for flights out of the county airport is Chicago. A family of four could drive their more fuel-efficient Toyota Prius to the Chicago over 20 times before consuming the fuel consumed by one connecting flight. The energy consumed during their short flight is greater than the electricity that would be generated during an entire year by solar panels on their home.



A jet flies over the Goodman Community Center.

For the complete video, click here -- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NaA02EEJjY4>