



## Chamberlin Neighborhood-Airport Planning Committee

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### **FINAL REPORT OF THE SOUTH BURLINGTON NOISE SUBCOMMITTEE**

*Approved by the Chamberlin Neighborhood-Airport Planning Committee June 16*

On January 13, 2016, a Noise Subcommittee (NS) was created by the Chamberlin Neighborhood Airport Planning Committee (CNAPC, a body formed by the South Burlington City Council) to deal with subject of airport noise as an issue separate from the original CNAPC charge.

The subcommittee met eight times between January 27, 2016 and May 18, 2016, or every two weeks. As we developed our conclusions, we were driven by a set of guiding principles that included the conviction that our community should be served so that all who live, work, study, and travel here have a voice in matters that concern their well-being. To that end, we have established a series of categories of action that the subcommittee believes are incumbent on the CNAPC and/or the South Burlington City Council to deal with going forward. What follows is a summary of the subcommittee's slate of recommendations.

#### 1. PARTICIPATE IN THE FAA NOISE COMPATIBILITY PROGRAM

The City Council should, via a continuing CNAC or some other agency, proactively participate in, and have direct input into, the Noise Compatibility Program conducted by the Burlington International Airport (BTV.) The NS believes that this is a **time-sensitive issue** that should be acted upon immediately.<sup>1</sup> For example:

- a. How are properties affected when they are in an area the FAA has designated is "incompatible" with residential use?
- b. What disclosures are required to sell a home in a noise land?
- c. What disclosures must a landlord make to tenants?

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<sup>1</sup> The NCP process allows for a municipality that has jurisdictional authority over lands that host an airport to "humanize" the 65 dbA so as not to isolate individual or blocks of residential housing units nor leave significant portions of land unusable for their original purpose or current use. The NS believes the city of South Burlington should take full advantage of its position with regard to the NCP.

## 2. PROVIDE EDUCATION ON THE SOUND INSULATION PROGRAM

The City Council should ensure that all Chamberlin homeowners are properly educated on the details and ramifications of any proposed Sound Insulation Program (SIP).<sup>2</sup> This is also considered to be a **time-sensitive issue** and should be handled as soon as possible.

Homeowners need to know:

- a. How will properties be deemed eligible?
- b. What are the details of the SIP?
- c. What forms of assistance might be offered to homeowners and how?
- d. What do homeowners need to know about the conditions, or “strings attached” to participating in the program and the legal ramifications of “signing on the dotted line?”

## 3. STUDY THE HEALTH EFFECTS OF NOISE

A continuing CNAPC, under the auspices of the South Burlington City Council, should cultivate an understanding of the potential effects of high levels of noise on the health of all citizens. The NS believes this is of prime importance. The CNAPC should:

- a. Compile objective, expert information on the effects of high levels of noise on a populace.
- b. Consider having the Vermont Department of Health conduct a “Health Impact Assessment” of airport noise on adults, school children, and infants.<sup>3</sup>
- c. Make readily available educational material on the health hazards of noise, along with tips for taking precautions to protect hearing, etc.

## 4. CONDUCT NOISE MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

The City Council should assume responsibility for the ongoing monitoring and assessing of noise levels in the community. It should:

- a. Identify noise-related issues at schools both inside and outside, particularly at the Chamberlin School using live data from real-time noise monitoring.

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<sup>2</sup> ACRP 89 articulates the SIP in detail as it pertains to residential, commercial, public and sensitive structures. It defines minimum sound reduction objectives based on the type of structure, its use, building composition and/or material used and location/proximity to specific points of sources of sound sources. It also defines the legal obligations, limitations and duration of remedies by both contracted service providers and the owners of the structures/buildings. All of the aforementioned are important to know and understand in order to make informed decisions as to whether or not to participate in the SIP program.

<sup>3</sup> The NS notes that Dr. Harry Chen promotes “health in all policies” as a moral imperative in statewide governance.

- b. Review the regulatory environment, potential noise ordinances, and what other similarly challenged communities are doing.
- c. Study how noise levels might affect property values around the airport. (e.g., review the impact on City's Grand List and property tax rolls.
- d. Work with the airport to see the minimization of noise impacts through all possible channels: abatement/mitigation techniques, land use zoning.

5. DEVELOP NOISE MITIGATION STRATEGIES

The City Council, the ongoing CNAPC, or the successor to its own committee should investigate all possible strategies for mitigating noise in the Chamberlin neighborhood and school:

- a. Compile data on what has been done at and around other airports and what might work well for BTV and Chamberlin Neighborhood.
- b. Consider the practicality of either a manual or a fully automated Airport Noise and Operations Monitoring System (ANOMS)

6. CONDUCT LAND USE PLANNING AND ZONING

The City Council should:

- a. Create a new definition for the term "Noise Land" that coincides with FAA and other federal documents.
- b. Consider new zoning regulations for acquired Noise Land that designates it as compatible with airport uses and/or noise mitigation purposes.
- c. Work with BTV to educate the public on the workings of the Land Acquisition Program as they pertain to the current and future uses of the land.

7. DEVELOP A COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLAN

The City Council should work to form an Emergency Plan to be implemented if major material changes in noise or aircraft operations can be reasonably seen to have the potential for creating significant impacts - physical or economic - on the residents of the Chamberlin neighborhood and the school. Such a plan might call for emergency relief, economic compensation, and/or restitution.

## 8. FORM AN "AIRPORT NOISE ADVISORY COMMISSION"

The NS spent a great deal of its time contemplating a permanent, multi-community ("inter-local") commission set up to survive the current Noise Subcommittee that would monitor and assess airport noise, research mitigation methods, receive and report noise complaints to BTV, educate the community on noise issues, and research how other airports and surrounding stakeholders work together to address airport noise.

However it is formed, such a commission should be charged with serving as voice for ALL residents in an effort to work collaboratively and openly with the airport and military organizations, to coordinate and confer with industry experts, to conduct meetings in a thoughtful, democratic way, and to keep the public informed and up-to-date on airport developments that have the potential to affect us all. It should have the following characteristics:

1. Conform to the requirements of 24 V.S.A. § 4901 and 4902 for establishing an inter-local commission.
2. Consist of nine (9) members, three appointed by the City of South Burlington and one each from the Cities of Burlington and Winooski, the Town of Williston, and one representative each from BTV, VTANG, and ANG. Total votes: 9. Quorum: 5.
3. Hold meetings no less frequently than quarterly.
4. Be comprised of residents and other interested parties, particularly those who have relevant technical experience.
5. Provide input and/or initiate action whenever changes are to be made to the Airport Master Plan, Airport Noise Land and Re-Use Plan, or the Airport Noise Compatibility Program.
6. Collect technical information on noise monitoring and mitigation.<sup>4</sup>
7. Serve as a conduit of information between the airport and the surrounding communities.
8. Support open communication and transparency on all issues related to airport and military air operations and their impacts on the public.
9. Communicate with residents in a multi-modal fashion, i.e., websites, email, leaflets, Front Porch Forum, the Other Paper, RSS feeds from the S.B. website, etc. to effectively inform the public of airport events related to noise.
10. Create a Shared Site link to push event notifications of BTV and VTANG/ANG to the South Burlington home page.
11. Other charges that may be deemed appropriate and necessary.

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<sup>4</sup> Suggestions could include that BTV seek funding and install a ground run-up enclosure at the Pratt & Whitney FBO site, a sound wall at the southern concourse area, and blast deflectors at all taxiways north of the parking garage.

## **An introduction to the Proposed Airport Noise Advisory Commission**

*Prepared by the members of the CNAPC Noise Subcommittee, June 2016*

The purpose of the proposed Airport Noise Advisory Commission is to all interested parties an on-going, permanent forum to address airport noise related issues to:

- Communicate their concerns and understand the available methods to address those concerns.
- Conjoin with the airport and military personnel to demonstrate the importance of working in a positive and open fashion with the communities that are impacted by their presence amongst us.
- Collaborate with other affected municipalities that experience common challenges and problems. Through a multi-municipal approach we seek to explore ideas, responses and provide mutual support to mitigate noise and identify sources for funding when appropriate.
- Co-ordinate and Confer with technical advisers, government officials, other airports and experts in relevant fields (public health, education, audiology, sound engineering, etc.) to allow improved understanding of the impacts of noise levels and formulate responses for near and long term planning integrating best practices in ever evolving circumstances.
- Conduct meetings:
  - to inform the public of on-going or up-coming issues.
  - to encourage and reinforce all military and airport personnel's understanding of all approved operational best practices that serve to protect the community from unnecessary noise.
  - to review and provide input, along with municipal staff, to airport generated data: such as Noise Compatibility Studies, Noise Land and Re-Use Plans, Master Vision Plan, prior to their submission to the FAA or municipal approvals.
- Create for the Noise Land communities a voice for all who live, work, study and travel here. That voice will serve to create better understanding among all affected parties and ensure that the future development is created in a thoughtful, democratic way.