



TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON

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KATHEE BURKE-GONZALEZ
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TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON PROPOSES FOUR RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF AIRPORT

East Hampton, NY – The East Hampton Town Board today considered a local law designed to relieve the long-suffering residents of the East End from aircraft noise. Councilwoman Kathee Burke-Gonzalez has proposed that the Town implement four restrictions on the use of the East Hampton Airport:

- 1.) A mandatory nighttime curfew, from 11pm to 7am
- 2.) An extended curfew on noisy aircraft, from 8pm to 9am
- 3.) A ban on all helicopters on weekends during the summer season
- 4.) A limit on operations by noisy aircraft of one trip (one arrival and one departure) per week during the summer season.

The proposed local law follows several years of analyses, studies, public outreach and community meetings, technical outreach and discussions with stakeholders. The Town also appointed several citizens committees to assist in this effort. The latest technical analysis, which was presented at today's Town Board Work Session, showed that the four proposed restrictions are closely tailored to the Town's needs, are no more restrictive than absolutely necessary, and are based upon objective data that supports the restrictions. These restrictions could substantially reduce the number of aircraft noise complaints while having a modest effect on the use of the Airport. Harris Miller Miller & Hanson (HMMH) reports that, combined, the four proposed rules would restrict types of aircraft at the times of the day, week, and year that are associated with the greatest number of complaints. HMMH estimates that the four proposed rules will affect only 31% of all operations, while addressing 74% of all complaints.

“The Town Board recognizes the value of the East Hampton Airport to the community and does not want to impose any greater restriction than is necessary to achieve the Town's objectives,” stated Burke-Gonzalez. “Our next step is to have the BFAC (Budget & Financial Advisory Committee) analyze the proposed legislation to ensure that the Airport remains financially sustainable and is able to meet its capital needs. This is the very job that the BFAC Subcommittee was appointed to do. We expect to have those results before we vote to notice the legislation for public hearing, which is currently planned for the Tuesday, February 10 Work Session.”

“The Town Board has a public policy responsibility to protect residents from the adverse effects of aircraft noise. We need to strike a balance that ensures the peace, quiet, tranquility and health of our community while preserving for the community the benefits of aviation. We know that some well-funded opponents will sue us – some of them have already done that – but we will not be intimidated. We will do whatever it takes to protect this community and our quality of life,” Burke-Gonzalez commented, in response to threats of litigation.

Town Supervisor Larry Cantwell said “People are entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of their homes and the quiet of the open space East Hampton has fought to protect. It is a fundamental reason why people want to live here and it is the basis of our local economy. The increasing footprint of noise and complaints threatens this balance.”

Supervisor Cantwell encouraged residents and stakeholders to provide comments on the proposed local law and to attend the Town Board public hearing tentatively scheduled for March 5, 2015 at 4:30 pm. “This is an important opportunity for us to hear from all those affected by the restrictions,” Cantwell noted. “We need to hear from both supporters and opponents alike before we take final action.”

Final Town Board action is currently scheduled for mid-March.

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For further information:

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A copy of the local law and supporting technical information is available at:

www.HTOPlanning.com

Comments can be submitted to

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