For inclusion in the official record of the Town Board of Easthampton:

Members of the Town Board,

            We thank you for providing some relief to the besieged community of Easthampton and its East End neighbors by correctly limiting helicopter traffic from May-September. You are also to be applauded for imposing graduated criminal enforcement for violations. Nevertheless, there are still serious omissions which must be addressed in the final legislation.

            1 - The vast preponderance of Easthampton residents need a 5pm - 9 am curfew at the airport. If this cannot be accomplished politically for all aircraft, “noisy aircraft,” as officially designated under FAA standards, should certainly be forced to adhere to a 9 am - 5 pm curfew. To permit noisy aircraft to operate later than 5pm, as you now propose, robs residents of the peaceful enjoyment of their homes and property precisely when being outdoors and family dinners are most practiced.

            The overall curfew from 11pm - 7 am which you propose accomplishes almost nothing to relieve our residents of the noxious noise that has triggered this whole community controversy. Planes which violate a threshold noise standard should be distinguished and more severely regulated.

            2 - Moving from the standards for regulation to the legal process: The Town should intervene as an interested party in any suit which has the potential to impact this vital legislation, in order to assure that a maximum and relevant legal defense is mounted.

            3 - The Town should only use a fully competitive Request For Proposal process, on a fully competitive basis, in accordance with the best and well established government practices followed by almost all national and state government agencies for the selection of its legal representation in forthcoming litigation. This after all is a multimillion dollar outlay and involves the entire future of Easthampton. At a minimum there should be 3-6 competing national law firms with extensive relevant experience in regulatory and litigation matters. No representation should go forward without the Town following this normal public bidding precess including competitive examination of each submitted proposal.

            Such an RFP process will provide the town free substantive information on the critical matters to be in litigation, as seen differently by each law firm participant. It will expose conflicts of interest by any bidder and allow Easthampton taxpayers to get the best price for these anticipated multimillion dollar services. A transparent RFP process is a must!! Perhaps a local independent citizens committee with legal and business experience should be established by the Board to conduct this search on an expedited basis.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Lipper

Peter Wolf