

PORT OF SEATTLE

P.O. BOX 1209

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98111

September 30, 1983

Dear Workshop Attendees:

Re: Henry M. Jackson International Airport
(Sea-Tac) Noise Remedy Update Workshops

Thank you for taking the time to attend the Noise Remedy Workshops held on August 29, 30, and 31, 1983. Your suggestions for formulating details of a purchase guarantee program will help to carry out such a program in the airport communities should purchase guarantee be adopted as a major noise remedy. This community input continues to be extremely valuable to the project staff in the development of an updated Noise Remedy Program.

Attached is a summary of the three workshops. In addition to workshop attendees, this summary will be forwarded to decision-makers in the agencies, organizations and local governments who have the opportunity to possibly implement future noise remedies.

If you have any questions about the Airport Noise Remedy Update, feel free to call Ms. Jody Yamanaka, Project Manager at 382-3327, or if you have questions about community involvement activities call Ms. Diane Summerhays at 382-3320. Further information regarding future workshops and progress on the Noise Remedy Update will be sent to you as it becomes available.

Sincerely,

Joe Sims

Joe Sims
Acting Director, Planning and Research
Project Director of the Airport Noise Remedy Update

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Attachment

cc: Airport Noise Remedy Update Mailing List

SUMMARY OF HENRY M. JACKSON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (SEA-TAC) NOISE REMEDY WORKSHOPS
AUGUST 29, 1983 HIGHLINE HIGH SCHOOL CAFETORIUM
AUGUST 30, 1983 DES MOINES CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
AUGUST 31, 1983 RIVERTON HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GYM

INTRODUCTION

A number of actions can be taken to reduce the adverse impact of aircraft noise on residents of communities surrounding airports. The Port of Seattle's Noise Remedy Update Study--currently underway for Henry M. Jackson International Airport--is in the process of developing a noise remedy program that will include both noise reduction and noise mitigation measures.

One of the measures being considered is purchase guarantee. Purchase guarantee would be an off-airport noise mitigation program in which the airport operator or sponsor provides a guarantee to the owners of developed residential property that their holdings will be purchased at fair market value if they decide to sell in the future. Following acquisition by the airport operator, the residential structure would be soundproofed to the extent feasible and resold with an aviation easement attached to and made part of the property deed acquired by the new owner.

Purchase guarantee was the subject of three neighborhood workshops held for the airport community residents on August 29, 30, and 31, 1983. The workshops were held to familiarize community members with the concept of this voluntary acquisition program which was voted a priority issue by participants of the May Airport Noise Remedy Workshops. (A purchase guarantee program was originally recommended as a noise remedy of the 1976 Sea-Tac/Communities Plan but was never implemented.) The workshops conducted by Port of Seattle staff drew about 350 residents.

Community Comments

If purchase guarantee is included as a recommended noise remedy in the updated Noise Remedy Program, boundaries will be drawn based primarily on noise levels. However, within these boundaries, guidelines will need to be developed which will address "buy-out" order. As in the on-going acquisition program at the Airport, only a designated number of properties can be purchased each month. This will be determined by such factors as estimated costs and levels of available funding, real estate market, compliance with local regulations and ordinances and other elements of the physical and social environment. More property owners may want to be bought out than could be bought out at that particular time. It was in this context that workshop participants were asked to identify those factors to be used as guidelines for "buy-out" order.

The factors workshop participants wanted to see used to determine "buy-out" order were primarily location (e.g. location within areas of certain noise levels, and proximity to the airport and prior acquisition areas) and duration (e.g. length of residency within an impacted area). These preferences were shared among participants at all three workshops which were held in three different neighborhoods around the airport. "First come/first served," the process used to determine buy-out order in St. Louis' Airport purchase guarantee program, was not considered desirable by workshop participants.

WORKSHOP FORMAT

These neighborhood workshops are one component of the Airport Noise Remedy Update's community involvement program developed to provide opportunities for public input and participation. Each of the workshops was organized into three parts: project staff presentation, coffee break and staff circulation, and small group discussions. The project staff presentation included a review of the purpose of the workshops, the scope and objectives of purchase guarantee, and a description of how purchase guarantee has worked at other airports and what we can learn from their experiences. The coffee break then provided an opportunity for meeting attendees to approach and question individual staff members. After the coffee break, attendees broke into small discussion groups. Each group was asked to list on large easel tablets those factors they would like to have considered in determining the order in which property owners should be bought out in an area designated for purchase guarantee. A "voting" process was then used to identify which factors on the lists were most important to them. Each person was given three "votes" to spend among the items on the list. In concluding the discussions, a spokesman from each group reported what their ideas and suggestions for "buy-out" order were.

A hand-out entitled "Discussion Guidelines" was given to attendees with samples of these possible factors. Some groups worked directly from this list while others chose to develop for themselves criteria for who should be bought out first.

The lists that resulted from the small group discussions have become a record of those discussions and are on file in the Port of Seattle Planning and Research Department. A summary of those criteria which workshop attendees listed as preferred when determining who should be bought out first in a purchase guarantee program follows. They are ranked in order of the total number of "votes" received during all three workshops. All items which received at least one "vote" are included here with ties identified by like ranking. Percentage of total votes received is indicated in parenthesis.

1. Noise levels. (23%)
2. Length of Residency. (22%)
3. Distance to Airport. (16%)
4. Health or financial hardship. (13%)
5. Proximity to prior acquisition area. (8%)

6. Previous purchase guarantee designation. (6)
7. Age. (3%)
8. Pollution. (2%)
9. Ambient noise levels. (1%)
9. Previous acquisition designation. (1%)
10. Property value. (1%)
11. Length of time unsold on open real estate market. (1%)
12. Increasing aircraft noise. (1%)
13. First come/first served. (less than 1%)
13. Proximity to future airport expansion. (less than 1%)
13. Proximity to regional park. (less than 1%)
13. Non-resident owners. (less than 1%)

In addition to buy-out criteria, many groups also listed opinions or desires related to their feelings about purchase guarantee. These issues of concern were not actually buy-out criteria. They included the following:

Consideration for the impact on the quality of those neighborhoods designated for purchase guarantee; a desire for quick implementation of a purchase guarantee program; expansion of the purchase guarantee program to recognize impact factors other than just noise; implementation of a point system based on the criteria to determine order of program application; recommendation for the use of some of the same purchase rules for purchase guarantee as for acquisition (e.g., appraisal, relocation, property value determination.)

HIGHLIGHTS OF STAFF PRESENTATION

Although the staff presentation covered a large amount of information, only a few of the topics are highlighted here:

ON DEFINITION OF PURCHASE GUARANTEE:

Purchase guarantee is an off-airport noise mitigation program in which the airport operator or sponsor provides a guarantee to the owners of developed residential property that their holdings will be purchased at fair market value if they decide to sell in the future. Following acquisition by the airport operator, the residential structure is soundproofed to the extent feasible and resold with an avigation easement attached to and made part of the property deed acquired by the new owner.

ON WHERE A PURCHASE GUARANTEE PROGRAM IS GENERALLY APPLIED IN AIRPORT ENVIRONS:

- A. In areas subject to high aircraft noise levels,
- B. In areas predominantly zoned for and occupied by existing single-family dwellings and related uses,
- C. In areas expected to continue functioning as a residential neighborhood in future years.

ON PORT OF SEATTLE USE OF NOISE REMEDY FUNDS TO DATE:

Up to the present time, the majority of funds (local and federal) available to the Port of Seattle for noise remedy purposes have been required to carry out the extensive land acquisition effort called for by the Sea-Tac/Communities Plan. As a consequence, the purchase guarantee program that was proposed in the 1976 Sea-Tac/Communities Plan has not yet been offered to property owners by the Port.

ON "BUYER-OF-LAST-RESORT" PURCHASE GUARANTEE PLAN:

In a "buyer-of-last-resort" approach, a perspective participant must have made every effort to sell his or her property on the open market before turning to the airport operator. This is one approach being considered for an eventual Port-sponsored purchase guarantee program.

ON PURCHASE GUARANTEE AT OTHER AIRPORTS:

Although purchase guarantee has been accepted as a viable off-airport noise mitigation measure by the FAA and numerous airport sponsors, there has been little application of the concept to date because of one or both of the following reasons:

1. Most of the noise remedy programs that have been cited are scheduled for implementation on a staged basis over a 15-20 year period. As with the Port of Seattle, higher priority activities (outright acquisition) have typically consumed all available funds in virtually every instance.
2. Significant dollar assistance from the FAA for qualified airport noise mitigation plans did not become available until passage of the Airport and Airway Improvement Act of 1982 in November of last year. Not enough time has yet elapsed to provide actual experience with noise remedy programs such as purchase assurance.

It should be noted, however, that St. Louis has allocated up to \$12 million for early purchase assurance activities as part of a \$65 million, 18-year program. Also, the Airport Authority of Washoe County in Reno, Nevada, recently decided to acquire (if necessary) four residential properties valued at nearly \$350,000 under a purchase assurance agreement.

ON ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF A PURCHASE GUARANTEE PROGRAM:

Advantages include:

1. A property owner who is really bothered by high levels of aircraft noise can readily relocate from the affected area if he or she so desires.
2. An owner wishing to remain but who is concerned about selling his or her property in the future has the assurance needed to reduce, if not eliminate, such fears.
3. Desirable residential neighborhoods can be preserved. This is an important consideration vis-a-vis the local tax base, school enrollment and the provision of public services.
4. The airport operator can use purchase guarantee to achieve airport/-environs compatibility at a reasonable cost.
5. Available funds of both the airport sponsor and the Federal Aviation Administration can be applied more effectively and to the benefit of more people if purchase guarantee is selectively used in place of out-right acquisition and subsequent clearance of noise affected housing areas.
6. The potential for future noise-oriented litigation with its associated time and dollar cost to all parties is reduced.

Disadvantages Include:

1. The exterior noise environment is not improved.
2. Uncertainty of the number of property owners who will want to sell at any one time because the property owner initiates action when and if he or she desires to do so.
3. Residents are still living in noise impacted areas, even though they have chosen either to remain in the neighborhood or have chosen to move in.

CONCLUSION

The community workshops scheduled for the Update, including the most recent ones, will provide an opportunity for continued exchange of information between the community and project staff. This will help us to address a number of important issues in the Noise Remedy Update which may include, for example, the identification of noise remedies which will be a part of the recommended program, the distribution of funds among noise remedies, the drawing of boundaries for remedial measures to be carried out in the community, use of land acquired under the past or ongoing acquisition programs and density guidelines for the North Sea-Tac Park.

For further study information, contact Ms. Jody Yamanaka, Project Manager (382-3327) and for more details on community involvement activities, including future workshops, contact Ms. Diane Summerhays, Community Involvement Coordinator (382-3320) at Port of Seattle, Planning and Research Department, P. O. Box 1209, Seattle, Washington 98111.

The Sea-Tac Noise Remedy Update is sponsored by the Port of Seattle and the Federal Aviation Administration.