

8/30/16

Dear Sirs...

As you requested at the last Airport Authority meeting, I am listing our concerns as neighbors of the airport for activities that are allowed to continue even though we have been promised that such activities would not occur, especially after the runway was lengthened. We were promised, as a condition of our support for the project, that no longer would planes be allowed to approach the airport when landing by coming in from the south over our houses in the Apollo Drive and Hiko Street areas, as well as Bowers.

I. The approach from some of the airplanes who land at the airport is contrary to the recommended flight plan that the FAA has recommended. I understand from my conversations with the FAA personnel, that the planes are to make the approach by circling along Highway 50 and then turning towards the airport as they go over the commercial-industrial area near Centennial Drive and then turn west into the runway. This pattern is not being honored by many planes. This issue has been brought to your attention on many occasions and it still continues.

A. A list of recent dates and times of these types of approaches follows (this is, by no means, an exhaustive list of all of the occurrences, only the ones I have been able to observe of late):

1. June 3, 2016, 12:30 p.m., Sunday, a low-flying aircraft almost clipped the trees and the telephone poles as it approached the airport over our house at 3064 Apollo Drive and the two houses directly to the north of us on Apollo. My wife and I were turning onto Apollo Drive from East Nye Lane and witnessed the whole thing. It was a white plane with yellow striping. It seemed that he had cut his engines and was approaching only on glide mode. Unfortunately, we were unable to see the numbers on the plane. Not being able to see the numbers is usually the case, even though you have requested that we attempt to do so.

2. June 5, 2016, 9:45 a.m., I spoke to Tim Rowe about this incident and he advised me to call Larry Cheek of the Reno Federal Aviation Safety Standards Office to have this put on an agenda for the next training session. I have not done that because Tim basically told me that there was not much he or the Authority could do to make sure that the pilots follow the assigned approach pattern, except talking to them and asking them to be good neighbors. He also suggested that, perhaps that plane was practicing an emergency approach to the airport. NOT OVER MY HOUSE, THANK YOU! I question these responses.

At 10:15 a.m. that very day a Care Flight helicopter flew right over our back yard. We realize that Care Flight events are usually emergencies, but they do not need to make another emergency by approaching the airport over our houses.

3. On July 16, 2016 at 10:30 a.m., a white plane with red striping on both sides flew directly over our house and others in the neighborhood. I was up the street on Apollo walking my dogs, otherwise, I may have been able to see the numbers on the plane.

4. On August 3, 2016 at 2:15 a.m. a white plane with blue or steel striping came in directly above our street and over three houses across from ours and others on Hiko.

5. On August 8, 2016 at 8:15 a.m. a white plane with no visible striping or other colors flew directly over our house and others to the north on its approach to the runway. No numbers were visible.

6. On August 9, 2016 at 3:30 p.m. an almost totally red plane flew very low over our house and others on its approach. No numbers visible.

7. On August 22, 2016 at about 2:30 p.m., a white plane with blue wing tips flew low over our house. Again I could not make out the numbers on the aircraft.

II. Our second concern is about the apparent lack of security at the airport. When I spoke to Tim Row on June 5, it was after my wife and I had gone over to the airport specifically to see Tim, but when we entered the building, there was not a soul there. We called out and even approached his office where I had met with him on another day. Since no one was there, we left a message on the whiteboard in the lobby for him to call us. This caused us to have pause over the apparent lack of security there.

In that same conversation he explained to me that anyone can fly into the airport and the officials there do not always know who they are or why they are coming in, because they sometimes fail to use their radios. In fact, he mentioned that one local rancher had the radio on his plane go out on him and he had failed to replace it. Does this mean that no one knows who or what is coming into the airport at any given time? This, too, gives me concern for the overall security at the airport.



III. The final issue I will address concerns our remedies as neighbors at the airport. It appears that we are being ignored in our requests for a tighter rein on these "rogue" pilots (as Tim called them). In order to get satisfaction, we are required by the law to exhaust our administrative remedies before we go to a higher authority. For this reason, we are coming to the Airport Authority first. We hope, that the Authority can correct these problems and we will not have to proceed to the Board of Supervisors with our concerns.

As counsel for the Authority should know, that by putting the Authority on notice of these problems and nothing is done to fix them, will put the Authority itself and, perhaps, even the Board of Supervisors on the proverbial "hook", as well as the tortfeasor, in the event that a tragedy occurs, as has happened in the past in our neighborhood. We need not mention the specifics of those events, but, needless to say, it is rather nerve racking to come home from work and see the fuselage of a plane in the middle of the street. Both my wife and I, likewise, had our hearts in our throats when we saw the plane fly so low over our house on June 3, and without any indication that the motor was functioning on the plane. We and our neighbors have lived through at least two tragedies on Apollo Drive and should not have to do so again. Fortunately, my wife and I were not at home when the event occurred with Dr. Jensen's plane.

IV. I am puzzled that legal counsel has requested that we suggest what can be done to correct these problems. I do not think that it is our responsibility to come up with proposed solutions. We do not have the expertise, nor the authority to do anything about these problems, for this reason, we have resorted to the Authority to address them

Nevertheless, I will try to make a few suggestions and comments accordingly:


A. If pilots cannot follow the guidelines for approach to the airport as recommended by the FAA, they should be forbidden from landing at this airport. There are others in the area: Silver Springs, Reno, etc. However, I understand from Mr. Rowe, that you cannot refuse to allow someone to land at the airport. This causes a security concern for us. If you cannot refuse to allow someone to land, who or what are you allowing on the soil of this City? The 9/11 Arabic attackers were not questioned about their reasons for wanting to learn how to fly large commercial jets. So, we will allow anyone to come into this airport without radio contact with them and not following up with the FAA, Homeland Security or local law enforcement to find out who they really are, either before or afterwards? This really makes me feel secure!

B. Training sessions with the pilots that use this airport should be mandatory and, if they do not attend, where they should be instructed on the correct landing pattern for this airport, then they should be denied access to the airport.

C. The use of the radio should be mandatory also, and a workable radio. Otherwise, they, too, should be banned from coming into this airport.

D. The only possible incident where these denials of use of the airport by planes, might be justified, and I emphasize, might be justified, is where the airport is way outside of a populated area and not surrounded by housing or vulnerable structures. The only airport in this area that I am aware of is the Lovelock airport which could qualify, perhaps.

Thank you for considering these concerns and we hope that some solutions can be found. We only want to live with some assurances that we will not have an airplane in our front or back yard some day or an explosion or other terrorist act in our neighborhood.



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