

Thanks to the efforts of the Airport Commission, a few neighbors who attended meetings and wrote letters (maybe you), and even some aviation folks, there is one last opportunity to comment on the Minimum Standards. As they stand now, these standards will likely allow more flexibility in airport operations for the next decade and more.

Below for is a letter from Gavin Scott, a neighbor. Have a read and write one yourself for the permanent record. In addition to Gavin's comments we want the Minimum Standards to add more transparency with the ability to audit passenger, baggage, and fuel loads of aircraft if and when it appears the operator might be exceeding the aircraft specifications for our short, down-sloping runway. We cannot tell pilots how to fly, but we do have a right to audit users of our land to ensure our safety is not being subjected to undue risk.

Send your comments soon to the Airport Manager: stelios.makrides@smgov.net

Thank you.

Alan Levenson

Keeping Air Taxi Services out of Santa Monica Airport

Gavin Scott | JUN 12, 2018

We all know that given half a chance the Ubers of this world will start to use Santa Monica Airport to fill local skies with constant, noisy air taxis, making our lives as much of a misery as they were when the jets were at full throttle. What I didn't realise till I went to last week's Airport Commissioners meeting was that the Airport Manager is pushing for new rules which will give him - or whoever is in his job during the next ten years - the "discretion" to grant "waivers" that will make it much more likely this will happen in a way we're unlikely to even know about.

Some of the Commissioners, notably experienced pilot Joe Schmitz, are so worried that they insisted the proposed new rules - they're called "Minimum Standards" - be sent out to the public again so people can comment on them. This happened with an earlier draft, but we're now definitely at the Last Chance Saloon, and I suggest that when you get the chance, you weigh in before it's too late.

Here's what I took away from the meeting, and what I'll be saying when the chance comes.

- The new rules should not give the Airport Manager the power to help air taxi companies eager to increase the number of flights over Santa Monica, and they should include a list of aircraft that aren't suitable for use at SMO.
- The rules should insist on transparency so that whatever decisions are made that could help the air taxi enthusiasts lever their way in come up before the whole council first, so local people can have a say.
- And they should let anyone who wants to set up shop here know loud and clear that there are strict noise ordinance rules and they're strictly enforced.
- The new rules mustn't, as they do now, encourage operators keep flying until 11pm at night – even after the airport tower has closed down at 8pm. As Airport Commissioner Joe Schmitz put it "When the tower guys and gals go home, it's time for everyone to go home". Seems like common sense to me.

- The new rules should make it clear that planes should fly over the Penmar golf course instead of over the local neighborhoods. As one of the Commissioners said “if they keep turning right after takeoff eventually we will have pilots and passengers killed and residents injured or killed when an engine fails on takeoff.”
- And finally the new rules should include about tightening up noise code enforcement – because we all know what hell the planes produce when they're allowed to make as much racket as they want.
- The new “Minimum Standard” rules sound like the sort of document you might think it safe to ignore. But during the next ten years until the airport closes in 2028, those rules will play an important part in whether we get to enjoy our city – or it gets turned into a noisy, dangerous, air taxi hub for the benefit for rich out-of-towners. If you care about that, don't miss this chance to ensure that doesn't happen. I'm certainly not going to!

Gavin Scott, Sunset Park resident