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Port Authority's Plan to Address Aircraft Noise

Aisha Al-Muslim
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TOWN BOARD. North Hempstead officials are expected to consider requiring carbon monoxide detectors in places of assembly and public assembly at an April 1 hearing at 7:30 p.m. at North Hempstead Town Hall, 220 Plandome Rd. Check Scott Eidler’s Twitter updates @EidzTowns.

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Port Authority and local groups discuss plans for upcoming studies on aircraft noise

BY AISHA AL-MUSLIM
aisha.al-muslim@newsday.com

Three years and as much as $6 million will be needed to study aircraft noise and its impact on communities under the flight paths for Kennedy and LaGuardia airports, including much of Nassau County, officials said.

The estimates, detailed at a Monday night meeting of the Town-Village Aircraft Safety Noise Abatement Committee, follow Gov. Andrew Cuomo ordering the Port Authority — which owns and manages the airports — to conduct two separate studies, double the number of noise monitors and set up advisory groups of aviation and community representatives.

“The cost is going to be greater than any other airport that has done this,” Edward Knoesel, Port Authority environmental services manager, said. No other airport operator has conducted two studies at the same time, he said. One of the studies will focus on Kennedy, the other on LaGuardia.

Noise-reduction advocates and elected officials in Nassau and Queens have been waiting for details about how the Port Authority would address Cuomo’s November mandate, including how quickly the studies would be undertaken.

“We’re not looking for a sloppy job, but I think you hear us when we say, ‘we don’t want to wait five years,’” Kendall Lampkin, noise committee executive director, said at Monday’s meeting.

But despite the studies, safety and efficiency are the Federal Aviation Administration’s top priorities, not noise abatement, Knoesel said.

Mitigation efforts at airports that have undertaken similar studies include reworking flight routes and approach procedures, encouraging airlines to use quieter planes and installing soundproofing for some properties, Knoesel said.

Cuomo ordered the noise analysis after vetoing legislation for such studies that would have required approval from New Jersey lawmakers. The Port Authority also operates Newark Liberty Airport.

The agency will seek an aircraft consulting firm to conduct one or both studies. Most of the costs would be eligible for federal reimbursement, Knoesel said.

“The aviation and community advisory groups are to begin meeting next month and will include Port Authority and FAA representatives, local elected officials and community members,” said Brian Simon, Port Authority director of governmental and community relations. “We hope that through these roundtables we could improve that.”

The agency also will add 16 portable noise monitors — doubling the number of existing units, officials said. It will also create an Aviation Noise Office to review data from the noise monitors, and respond to community complaints.

“In the past year and half, there has been a tremendous increase of flights going over our community, so much so that it is disturbing our ability to live,” said Naomi Morse, representative on the committee for Hewlett Neck.