

Can Be Resolved

East Hampton
September 1, 2012

Dear David,

Routes are not the place to focus. Routes are a zero sum game. The obsession with one flight path as opposed to another simply pits one community or neighborhood against another. No doubt to the amusement of those who do not wish to have the intolerable disturbance of the entire South Fork community caused by aircraft resolved.

The place to focus is on regulation. Regulation of a massive community-wide disturbance caused by the inevitable loud noise generated by all forms of aircraft, but most particularly by the lingering racket of helicopters.

We are a community that successfully adopts zoning, noise controls for construction hours of operation, permits for large gatherings, and so on — all in the name of equitable treatment of all residents and sensible sharing of resources. The air is a common resource and quiet enjoyment of property and surroundings is a legal right of all residents.

What should be regulated?

Hours of permitted operation. I suggest 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., roughly business hours when most residents are engaged in their daily tasks, not trying to rest.

Volume of traffic. Reservations should be required so that the volume of traffic is tolerable. As it is, in many locales, including where I live, low-flying, blasting noise occurs every two or three minutes during peak aircraft operation time.

In addition: How about charging for parking, as at beaches? And why not make the charge high enough to help town finances? How about charge for use of the airport facility for non-resident aircraft, enough to make the airport a meaningful profit center for the town?

The issue cannot be resolved by addressing aircraft owners or pilots or contract companies that profit from the disturbance to all of us. The issue can be resolved by sound, thoughtful, civil, and equitable governance on behalf of the huge majority. This is what is expected of our elected officials. Let us hope that before more intense measures have to be taken that they will rise to their expected responsibility.

PETER M. WOLF