

## Money to Spend

East Hampton

September 26, 2011

Dear David,

It is not surprising to see full-page ads by the East Hampton Aviation Association perpetuating the airport propaganda machine and exclaiming the residents of East Hampton should celebrate. Not! The ads are replete with false, self-contradictory, and unsubstantiated forward-looking statements.

The association has a long history of creating misleading advertisements. Its membership is thought to be mostly out-of-town posers seeking to pollute East Hampton residents with noxious spent jet fuel, unrelenting noise pollution, and expanding the environmental ticking time bomb at East Hampton Airport.

Little is known of the association except it has a lot of money to spend on full-page ads. That should not surprise anyone since owning a jet or helicopter is a rich man's sport. The association has no Web site and its membership is unknown. The ad states an address at a Wainscott Post Office box, however a search reveals a physical address at 33 West Second Street, P.O. Box 9398, Riverhead. This is the same address as the law firm Twomey, Latham, Shea, Kelly, Dubin and Quartararo. This is shocking and makes no sense since one of the partners has been extremely active in the East Hampton Democratic Committee during a time when they were strong proponents of environmental protection. Another partner taught environmental law and owns an ultra-green home. How does this law firm square such conflicting and divergent environmental positions?

Barry Leach, a former East Hampton Democratic committeeman and East Hampton Airport manager, had this to say about the association in 1999, "It's not the airport itself that's the problem (although some people may differ); it's the incapable airport management that is largely to blame along with the East Hampton Aviation Association whose only goal in life has been to support expanded airport operations at every opportunity under the guise of flight safety. The East Hampton Aviation Association is composed mostly of Southampton Town residents who base their aircraft at East Hampton." I published the owners of the helicopters tormenting East Hampton residents on ehelicopternoise.com. Almost all are from New York City and Westchester and Dutchess Counties.

An article by New York magazine in 2006 included these quotes about prior ads from the association, "The ads are completely misleading, and they're frightening people." The East Hampton Aviation Association, a group of local pilots fighting the town for airport upkeep, is behind the ads. "Tom Livinio, E.H.A.A. president, says, 'Well, we didn't do the wording of the ads, but it doesn't matter anyhow. We think they're correct.' " It doesn't matter anyhow? You think they're correct? Are you serious? Nothing has changed except Harold Levy is now president of association.

Here is the truth:

- The airport layout plan and airport master plan address an entire airport makeover that will allow for extensive expansion. Expansion is already occurring at an alarming rate. In response to a recent freedom of information request the airport manager, Jim Brundige, discloses an almost 20-percent increase in aviation fuel sales from 2009 to 2010 with sales on track soon to approach 1 million gallons per year.

The answers confirm that airport management does not perform groundwater monitoring, does not monitor air quality surrounding the airport, and they have no information regarding the toxic effect of aviation-fuel emissions. At minimum this is a federal violation since safety data sheets are required to be present to protect town workers from potential harm. What about the potential harm to residents surrounding the airport?

- The airport layout plan increases federal control of a 10-mile area around the airport in both East Hampton and Southampton Towns when the F.A.A. control tower is operational. The town will then

cede control for routing and noise responsibilities to one F.A.A. air traffic controller, like a dictator, as the association ad says, “The tower will have full F.A.A. authority to control the arrival and departure routes as well as the altitude of all aircraft that enter the airspace.” Two paragraphs later, a self-contradictory statement of, “East Hampton will for the first time have control of its airspace.”

- The control tower is “seasonal” to be operational only three months during the year. What happens the other nine months? It is uncertain, at best, to know the real impact of a seasonal control tower.

- East Hampton Airport is not quieter; it is noisier than ever and every resident within the 10-mile area of the airport will attest to that. Nothing can make helicopters quieter except for nonexistent helicopter technology. Jet noise became quieter with the incorporation of “whisper jet” technology.

- The Atlantic route may reduce impact from helicopter noise on folks living north of the airport but at the same time it may increase impact from helicopter noise on folks south of the airport. According to Southold’s aviation representative, Joseph Fischetti, who said in a Newsday article last week that special equipment is required on board helicopters flying the Atlantic route and he predicted less than 15 percent of traffic will be able to fly the southern route.

With an almost 20-percent increase in expansion at the airport, the net result of the Atlantic route may be less than zero. It is much too soon for the association to make such a definitive, forward-looking statement. It may be a lot of hype over nothing.

- There is no bipartisan solution at the moment. It is only the present Republican administration that is railroading airport expansion initiatives, publicly committing to take F.A.A. money, and wishing to saddle our town with another agreement that will cede control of the airport to the federal government for another 20 years. What kind of fuzzy reasoning brings one to the conclusion there is local control?

The only way for airport expansion proponents to succeed is to continue to give false information and mislead the public by such ridiculous ads.

A local election will be held this November, and a message needs to be sent by the folks living in East Hampton who are concerned about the biggest polluter in town, East Hampton Airport. When that environmental disaster is fixed we will indeed celebrate.

FRANK DALENE  
Vice Chairman  
Quiet Skies Coalition