

Airport neighbors hear noise-relief options

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Photo credit: Handout | The new seasonal control tower at East Hampton Airport. The control tower will take control of the airspace up to 2,500 feet above the runways, bringing the busy airport under FAA control for the first time. Town officials say noise complaints about the airport should drop dramatically.

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[Long Island](#) residents seeking relief from aircraft noise need to increase their clout with elected officials, especially in an election year like 2012, a noise pollution expert says.

Arline Bronzaft, who for years has researched the effects of noise on people in New York City, delivered a presentation on Monday to the Town and Village Noise Abatement Committee in Lawrence that was as much about politics as about the science of noise pollution.

Bronzaft said getting politicians involved in their effort to press the [Federal Aviation Administration](#) and the Port Authority to move on noise reduction is essential to meeting their goals.

"What's happened is noise has become a back-burner issue," said Bronzaft, professor of psychology at Lehman College in the Bronx.

As evidence, Bronzaft held up a document from the FAA's airspace redesign project from 1999 that mentions noise reduction as one of the agency's goals, but a document dated two years later didn't mention noise reduction at all, she said.

One possible solution for Long [Islanders](#) who complain about noise is to win grant money to soundproof their homes. The FAA has a similar program for schools, Bronzaft said. "If you've done it with schools, I think you have to say you can do it with homes," she said. "And by the way, there are children in those homes."

Kendall Lampkin, chairman of the noise-abatement committee, said that he thinks the Port Authority is "too big to succeed" in granting relief to [Nassau](#) County residents. If residents in the shadows of [Kennedy Airport](#) ever achieved noise reduction, the authority would have to provide the same relief to residents living near its other airports -- [LaGuardia Airport](#), also in Queens, and [Newark](#) Liberty in [New Jersey](#), Lampkin said. "Because of that, we suffer," he said.

Tuesday, the Port Authority issued a statement about its efforts to address noise complaints.

"The Port Authority works with the FAA and its other aviation partners to track noise issues at its airports and determine whether modifications are possible," the statement said.

"Use of specific runways at each airport is dependent on a variety of factors, including weather and wind direction that constrain the changes that can be made," the statement said.

Jim [Peters](#), an FAA spokesman, said the agency considers noise reduction "a top priority" and will continue to provide soundproofing of school and homes.

The FAA is also working with manufacturers to develop quieter aircraft and with the International Civil Aviation Administrator to more stringent aircraft noise standards, Peters said.

About 15 people were at Monday's meeting.

The 40-year-old committee has called for equitable distribution of flights onto Kennedy Airport's eight runway approaches, a ban on low-flying planes and a reduction of late-night flights as a way to reduce aircraft noise.

The committee represents nearly 145,000 people living in 13 communities in the towns of North Hempstead and Hempstead.