

MEETING ALERT: 2 IMPORTANT MEETINGS AT CITY COUNCIL ON NOV.8

Hillside Overlay* and Airport Noise Meetings at CITY HALL, 3031 Torrance Blvd. at 6:30 PM on NOVEMBER 8

Hearing #1 Will be a council report on the new **Airport Noise Monitors** that were installed in August, along with a General Report on the status of **Noise Abatement at the Airport**. The public is invited to speak at this meeting. If you speak, have a short speech prepared, written out and practice timing it, if you can. You can also send an email to Council to make a longer statement. The address is below. You may choose to tell your own personal story of how airport noise has impacted your life. You may want to send an email to Council as well. You may use the suggestions to council that follow.. The best thing to do is both: speak at the hearing and send an email. The email address is below
(*if you want to see the Hillside Overlay Case, scroll down)

Airport noise has increased dramatically since the spring of 2020, when training flights were first allowed to use the south runway and turn left (south) on takeoff. The airport is on track to reach 180,000 operations by the end of this year, with over 60% of them for training flights. This is due to two things: the lack of enforcement of the “no early left turn rule” and the increase in the number of flight schools at Torrance airport. The training flights that turn left are creating most of the noise that we experience now in South Torrance.

We would like to see the City of Torrance discuss the following possibilities with a legal firm that specializes in aviation law and take action. The City should use the Airport Fund monies instead of the General Fund to pay for this service. Feel free to discuss these ideas the meeting

13 OPTIONS TO REDUCE THE IMPACTS OF TRAINING FLIGHTS—WHAT TORRANCE CAN DO

1. **Reduce the number of training flights.** The repetitive sounds of training flights, the “touch and goes” are very disturbing. Why not limit the number of flight schools based at the airport? Or make the flight schools simply comply with the city’s noise abatement rules? Or limit the number of training flights each day? The City could ask outside legal counsel if this is allowable.
2. **Charge landing fees.** Currently, the City does not charge any landing fees. Out-of-town aircraft from Long Beach, Paramount, Orange County and other areas are allowed to use the airport and facilities free of charge. City staff has estimated that the City could earn between \$ 257,000 and 642,000 yearly, just by charging landing fees. This is legally permitted. These funds could go to the Airport Fund or City General Fund or to legal costs
3. **Enforce the no-left-turn rule for training flights (or all flights)**
The City’s Muni Code currently states that no plane when taking off to the west shall turn left (south) until it reaches the ocean or 1,500 feet. At one time the City Noise Abatement brochure said the no-left-turn- rule applied to training flights. This rule was

in effect for 40 years. This spring, the City reversed that rule, without any explanation. Currently, **any** plane may turn left at takeoff. When they do, they fly over a densely populated residential area with a hill.

4. **Limit the area of operations in the north Pattern**

The City's noise abatement program used to recommend that pilots training on the north side of the airport stay as close as possible to the airport, over the commercial and industrial areas along Lomita Blvd. and not over residential areas like New Horizons and Marble Estates. However, recently, that has not been enforced or recommended. Residents on the north side now have a lot of airport noise. The City could easily recommend that the old policy be followed again.

5. **Close the south runway**

The City of Torrance owns the airport and could, if they wanted to, close the south runway. If they did this, they could limit the number of training flights. If they want to close the south runway they should get legal advice before doing so.

OPTIONS TO REDUCE THE GENERAL IMPACTS OF THE AIRPORT

1 .**Resume enforcing the no-left-turn rule**

The City's no-left-turn rule was adopted to protect residents on the higher ground south of the airport. It is a safety rule, as well. Letters from the FAA have said their opinion is that the City does not have legal authority to enforce this rule. But these opinions are not a binding or legal decision. The City's laws are grandfathered into the current Municipal Code, a fact which the FAA has ignored. The FAA also stated that the City cannot control aircraft "in flight". However, pilots often make the decision to turn left or right at takeoff, while still on the ground. The City is not directing aircraft while it is "in flight." We therefore respectfully request that the city seek out a written opinion from a qualified legal counsel that specializes in aviation law to determine if this is true or not.

2 . **Hire non-FAA control tower operators**

The FAA does not help the City enforce their noise abatement rules. Their goal is to keep the pilots safe while in the air. We believe the City has the right to choose non-FAA controllers, who would be more receptive to enforcing the no-left-turn rules. Other airports have done this. If Torrance had non-FAA controllers, they could approve training on the north side only.

3. **Follow Torrance Muni Code section 51.7.3 – Ban violation-prone aircraft**

Torrance does not follow its Municipal Code section 51.7.3, which states that aircraft that exceed the noise limit three times in a three-year period are considered violation-prone and will be banned from the airport for three years. Currently, violations may be appealed to the Airport Manager. Also, Torrance uses a Hearing Board to determine guilt or innocence, which are time-consuming and ineffective.

4. Charge monetary fines

Santa Monica Airport has similar noise limits and uses monitors like Torrance Airport to detect noise violations. However, the enforcement is different. Torrance uses a hearing board, similar to a jury, and does not charge fines. Santa Monica uses monetary fines from \$2,000 for a second offense to \$10,000 for a fourth offense, followed by suspension. Santa Monica has a much lower rate of violations. Furthermore, the fines would be a source of revenue for the City. .

5. Close the gaps between the noise monitors

The city code limits the noise level to 82decibels or 88 decibels for a single burst of noise. But the City only has 7 noise monitors which are spread around the airport with a gap of about ½ mile between them. The monitors have been in the same location for decades. Pilots know where they are located and simply fly between them. The city could relocate some of the underutilized noise monitors to close the openings between the monitors at the end of the runways, where the aircraft noise is often loudest.

6. Close the public airport and reopen as a private airport

Recently, the Town of East Hampton, NY was advised by its outside legal counsel they could close their public airport for three days and reopen as a new private airport with authority to enforce restrictions. This action would allow the City to control local noise and restrict training operations. The city should consult with legal counsel regarding this

7. Ban the sale of leaded aviation fuel

Many of the aircraft in Torrance still use leaded fuel. Decades ago, automobiles were prohibited from using leaded gas because of the health impacts, especially to children. The FAA's current goal is to eliminate lead from aviation fuel by 2030.

Instead of waiting, the City of Torrance could do what the County of Santa Clara did, to ban the sale of leaded fuel at its airports, effective January 2022. Torrance should consider doing the same. Training flights now go directly over South High School, Richardson Middle School and Walteria Elementary, as well as Walteria Park.

8. Legal costs

Residents want the City to maintain our health, safety and quality of life. To do this, the City may have to litigate and take on legal costs. The City measures may also bring legal action from pilot groups. The City's legal costs should be paid from the Airport Fund and not the City's General Fund. Outside counsel could confirm this use of the Airport Fund.

Please come to the council meeting to show your support for the Noise Abatement people. You do not have to speak. Your presence at the meeting says a lot.

You can also email your opinions to Council at CouncilMeetingPublicComment@TorranceCA.gov One email will go to all the council members. Or, if you prefer, you can send a single email to all the council at GChen@TorranceCa.gov, JKaji@TorranceCA.gov, ASheikh@TorranceCA.gov,

MGriffiths@TorranceCA.gov, S.Kalani@TorranceCA.gov, AMattucci@TorranceCA.gov,
BLewis@TorranceCA.gov,

It may be quicker and more secure to send it this way. Be sure to send your email in by Tuesday November 1 to make sure that it gets to council members before the meeting.

Thanks and good luck!

HEARING #2 The second hearing will be the Hillside Overlay Case hearing on 139 Via Alameda. If you are concerned about the status of our Hillside Overlay Ordinance, please come down to City Hall for this meeting. The Council and Planning Department pay attention to a PUBLIC CONTROVERSY. So come on down, join the public controversy and make your comment to Council (or write an email, see below). For this meeting, speakers may speak for 2 minutes but are cautioned to speak only about the revised plan (which is essentially the same as the original plan. See REVISIONS below).

The remodel at 139 Via Alameda first went before council on September 27, 2022. The council ended up in a tie vote 3-3. Council decided to send the plans back to the designer to amend it to lessen the impact on neighbors. The case will be heard again, with the new plans on November 8. If it is a tie this time, the project will be denied (as it was by the Planning Commission earlier). The neighbors nearby have written letters and stated that they are opposed to the remodel. We can support these neighbors and uphold the overlay by going down to city hall and attend this meeting. The Council will take notice of a large group of supporters and will be more inclined to deny the project.

The F.A.R. (floor area ratio) of this home would be **5.5**, the same FAR as before the latest redesign. For the Hillside, homes are supposed to stay at 5.0 FAR. If a larger FAR is proposed and neighbors object, it is not supposed to be allowed. The City approves the plans and allows these larger homes to be built. The original home was built in 1954 and was **1400 Sq Ft**, and now would become a **3,564 sq. ft. mansion (over twice as large)**. **The height and the mass of the building are intrusive.**

The REVISIONS to the plan since the first City Council meeting are **minor**: 1) A 9x5' portion of the south-facing roof ridgeline was slightly reduced to accommodate a roof "bubble" for a skylight from 24.39 feet to 23.44 feet down from 23.55). 2) Instead of an 8-foot wall at back

there would be a 5- foot wall with a 3- foot lattice on top. 3) The residence is upslope and would be lowered 1.8 feet to match the height/grade of the nearby lots. 4) Two of the windows on the east side will be glazed with Milk Glass (opaque glass) on the bottom half. There are still 10 windows on the east side of the house. None of the changes will significantly mitigate the impact of this project on the neighbors.

The outdoor deck on the back side of the house, attached to the second floor and located **on the roof of the first floor** is the same size as before. It is a concern. It is 19x 19/1/2 feet in diameter, which is 370.5 square feet of outdoor living space. It is as big as a living room. This could become a noise issue with a large group, and intrude on the privacy of the neighbors. The open deck can contain a boombox, lighting, a bar, a television, a barbecue, 40 people— anything, really.

Also, the 370.5 square feet of the deck **do not** count toward the F.A.R. because it is OUTDOOR living space, not INDOOR living space. If it were included, the **F.A.R. would be 6.09** which is too large for even the R-1 zone. In other words, the home including the outdoor deck, is too big.

Finally, there are 10 windows on the east side of the proposed home, which directly face 145 Via Alameda. Two of those windows will be made with opaque “milk glass” at the bottom, for privacy. The top half of those two windows will have clear glass, the other 8 windows will be clear. This will create a problem with light glare from the windows at night and a lack of privacy during the day and at night. It is a wall of windows.

There are ways to build a roomy, modern home in the Riviera, but this is not the way. This design could work in many neighborhoods, but it does not fit here. To see the rendering of the house design, see below.

Please write an email to express your opinion to the Torrance City Council at CouncilMeetingPublicComment@TorranceCA.gov

Or, if you prefer, you may address one email to all the councilmembers at MGriffiths@TorranceCA.gov , SKalani@TorranceCA.gov , AMattucci@TorranceCA.gov, ASheikh@TorranceCA.gov, JKaji@TorranceCA.gov, BLewis@TorranceCA.gov and Ghen@TorranceCA.gov. Sending it this way may be more secure and quick.

Important: Please send your email in to council by November 1, to be sure that it gets included in the packet that the council members will read before the meeting.

Below is the design for 139 Via Alameda.



Schematic rendering for a new home at 139 Via Alameda, Redondo Beach CA

Submitted for Torrance City Council Meeting
September 27, 2022

The home is designed to carefully comply to Hillside Zoning parameters with regard to light, air, privacy and views. Cladding materials include grey brick, light grey Santa Barbara stucco and wood siding. The house is recessed into the ground, and roof eaves are oriented to diminish the perception of height and massing.



Mr. & Mrs. Kim

ESTHER KIM DESIGN
1701 S. FIGUEROA ST #1116
LOS ANGELES, CA 90015

Dear Resident,

My name is Esther Kim, and my colleague and I are home designers based in Los Angeles.

As residents of a new or two-story home in the vicinity of Redondo Beach Hillside zone, we would like to request your support for a new two-story home in the Hillside which is being appealed at the Torrance City Council public hearing on Tuesday Sept. 27, 2022 at 6:30pm.

Mr. Hwan and Mrs. Youmi Kim, the owners of 139 via Alameda, are 30-year residents of Torrance, CA and first moved to the area in 1991. Their children were educated in the Torrance public school system, and the Kim's are active participants in the community. Mr. Kim is part of a local senior's soccer league and the family have been members of a Torrance-based church for many years. The proposed home is intended as their retirement residence.

The Torrance planning staff have supported the project twice, recommending approval to the Planning Commission and the upcoming City Council appeal. We also have the written support of an adjacent neighbor. The house size is under 50% lot area in accordance with Hillside zoning rules. The Planning Commission denied the project on a few grounds including that there are no "metal standing seam shed roofs" in the vicinity—we have found many examples, however—and we are appealing the City Council as the next step in the civic process.

I have enclosed images of the project. The agenda & staff report w/project details are found on www.TorranceCA.gov > Government > City Council

We would appreciate your support in the form of attendance at the Public Hearing to provide direct comment. In lieu of that, we would be grateful if you could send a supporting email to:

CouncilMeetingPublicComment@TorranceCA.Gov
Write "Public Comment" in the subject line and PRE22-00006 Agenda 10A in the body, and send prior to 2pm on Sept. 27th.

With sincere thanks,

Esther Kim and David Milner, Architectural Designers

For further info, please contact eskim.arch@gmail.com, call/text 917-583-5909