

LONG ISLAND

N. Hempstead contracts for airplane noise study

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North Hempstead officials have allocated \$40,000 for a study that will examine and seek to address noise pollution from low flying airplanes, an issue elected leaders said has plagued the quality of life of town residents for years.

Town board members approved the funding at a board meeting last week.

“The airplane noise issue has been a persistent problem for our community, impacting the well-being of our residents and their overall quality of life,” Councilman Peter Zuckerman said in a statement. “This resolution marks a critical step in identifying the root causes of this noise and exploring effective measures to address it.”

Zuckerman said the town has received more than 500 complaints about airplane noise in the last five years.

Both LaGuardia and Kennedy airports are less than 15 miles from North Hempstead.

In October 2019 the town passed a resolution to enter into an agreement with local villages to retain counsel and to initiate legal action against the Federal Aviation Administration because of the noise, but no progress was made on the matter after the onset of the COVID19 pandemic, Zuckerman said at the meeting.

The FAA said in a statement Tuesday that the agency “continuously works to help reduce the number of people exposed to aviation noise in communities around airports.”

The statement added: “If a community is concerned about aircraft noise, the best course of action is to contact their local aviation community roundtable or airport operator. The FAA can then work with airport operators to determine if the aircraft noise can be mitigated through changes in air traffic procedures.”

North Hempstead’s town board in 2021 hired Mineola firm Cuomo LLC for legal services related to the aviation matters.

Oscar Michelen, an attorney with Cuomo LLC, said at last week’s meeting that the study will analyze the FAA’s most recent flight plans — documents filed preflight specifying the route, timing and other details.

Michelen said the firm also will meet with government representatives on aviation committees and work to determine areas most affected by the noise before making recommendations.

“We would want to first analyze where those complaints are coming from, meet with the community members there and assess what we can learn from their problems,” Michelen told the town board.

One of those areas is the Village of East Hills, where Mayor Michael Koblenz said the issue has been ongoing for years.

“No one has ever said don’t fly through East Hills. Just have it balanced so there’s not a plane every two minutes,” Koblenz said.