

FRESH AND SALTWATER SPORTS
ON CHUCK LAWHATCHEE BAY



HOME OF
104th AIR FORCE BASE

CITY OF VALPARAISO
465 VALPARAISO PARKWAY • (850) 729-5402
VALPARAISO, FLORIDA 32580

November 20, 2008

Dear Valparaiso Residents:

This letter is to inform you of a precarious situation which will occur if the Air Force F-35 flight training profiles of the BRAC 2005 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are adopted by a Record of Decision (ROD) by order of the Air Force. To illustrate my point let me tell you about a similar circumstance involving the US Navy.

There was a plan for the Navy to relocate some F-18 aircraft from Cecil Field, Jacksonville, FL to Oceana, Virginia. The EIS for this move, amongst other things, showed high noise contours that would significantly impact the City. These highly negative impacts, though well documented, were overridden by the Navy in the interest of National Defense. The Navy ROD recommended that affected dwellings undergo extensive sound proofing modifications. That ROD further stated that Navy monies could not be used for these purposes and local governments should apply for congressional funding. This funding was not made available and the property owners were forced to sue the federal government. This was almost six years ago and just recently partial funding of 35 million dollars was awarded. It is estimated the cost will be between forty and fifty thousand dollars per dwelling for sound deadening modifications.

It appears to me that this may be the same fate for Valparaiso, as we have received no official correspondence from the Air Force requesting meetings with decision making officials to discuss possible mitigation actions to reduce projected noise levels to acceptable levels.

As of today the Air Force published noise levels in the draft and final EIS would be disastrous for the City and property owners. Over 57% of all dwellings would require noise deadening modifications and an additional 35% will be declared unsuitable for residential purposes and should be rezoned for agricultural or industrial type purposes. Only 7% of our city is projected below the 65db level requiring no action.

Not only has the Air Force not responded to our official correspondence outlining the disastrous effects of the planned F-35 flights, our local elected officials at both the state and federal level, who have been informed of our possible plight, have also failed to respond. It seems as if all are willing to trade your city for the projected financial stimulus the BRAC 2005 actions might bring to the tri counties, and especially Okaloosa.

Politically this is a no win situation, only bad publicity for all our elected officials. It appears they are taking no action or making any comment; thus we are in this debacle

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all alone. Accordingly I will urge your City Commission to take whatever actions are required to save our city and your investments in homes, businesses, and city real estate.

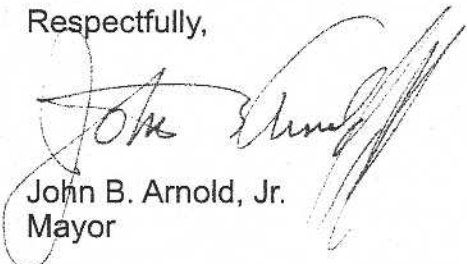
I have also requested home loan criteria in high noise level areas from VA and FHA with no responses. The above mentioned Navy ROD states funding from these agencies will be restricted.

It is still my hope that this controversy can be negotiated to an acceptable conclusion, but it appears Valparaiso will be treated like Oceana with an Air Force ROD directing the EIS flight training profiles be implemented, thereby devastating the city. You and I will have to live with the devastating results, sue the government for damage to our dwellings, and determine if our city can survive and provide adequate municipal services.

You may ask "what can I do?" My only answer is to bombard all state and federal elected officials with correspondence requesting a resolution of this problem now – before the ROD. We can't wait years like Oceana for partial financial relief. You can also contact the local media so that they will know there is a large downside to the proposed unrestricted F-35 flight training at Eglin AFB as proposed.

Large Air Force Noise Contour maps are posted in your city hall for your determination of your property's projected noise level zone. Also additional information is available at <http://impact.valp.org>.

Respectfully,



John B. Arnold, Jr.
Mayor