

G. NOISE

Comment G-1

The longer-term rock crushing operation has some dBA's above recommend dBA's of 55 [at the Midland Avenue southbound exit ramp]. What additional attenuation measures can be taken? The pile driving operations also happen over a longer period of time although impacting different locations and have relatively high level dBA's even with proposed attenuation. What else can be done to reduce noise impacts on surrounding homes? Does the City of Yonkers have a noise ordinance and how do these levels comply or not comply with such an ordinance?

(Memorandum from Saccardi & Schiff, Inc., dated 11/01/2005)

Response G-1

Pile driving will be scheduled during the daytime hours to have the least impact on nearby sensitive receptors. A number of mitigation measures are described within the DEIS that help reduce the noise associated with rock drilling, blasting and pile driving. Additionally, the use of the rock crusher can be optimized by staging rock to be crushed so that large batches are crushed at one time, rather than operating the rock crusher intermittently over several days. Some additional noise mitigation measures for pile driving could include:

- *Avoiding pile driving and rock crushing activities occurring on the same day.*
- *Pile driving noise control may be achieved by reducing exhaust noise with a sound-absorbing muffler.*

- *Alternatives to impact hammers, such as vibratory or hydraulic pile installation systems, or caissons could be used where possible. Although these systems may reduce pile impact noise, they all produce roughly the same operational equipment noise and generally take a longer duration to achieve the same end result.*

The City of Yonkers currently has a noise ordinance in effect under City Code Chapter 66, Part VII “Nuisances, Public Welfare and Criminal”. Section 66-3, “Noise Disturbance Prohibited” states “It shall be unlawful for any person to make, continue, cause, permit or allow, verbally or mechanically, any noise disturbance.” Relevant prima facie evidence of noise disturbance under the ordinance includes:

- *“A sound-level reading taken at a residential property, arising from a commercial property, an industrial property, a public space or a public right-of-way, above seventy-five (75) dBA during the time period commencing at 7:00am and ending at 10:00pm”.*
- *“A sound-level reading taken at a residential property, arising from a commercial property, an industrial property, a public space or a public right-of-way, above fifty (50) dBA during the time period commencing at 10:00pm and ending at 7:00am the next day”.*
- *“A sound-level reading taken at a commercial property at any time, arising from any property source, above seventy-five (75) dBA”.*

Construction activities are currently proposed to occur between the hours of 7:00am and 4:00pm each weekday. Therefore, the noise standard that would apply to the project is 75 dBA. Based on the predicted sound levels from construction activities combined with ambient background noise, it is likely that peak noise levels will exceed the 75 dBA standard unless some attenuation / mitigation measures are put in place. However, a variance could be requested from the Bureau of Housing and Buildings under article II of the same ordinance.

Reviewing, proposing and implementing additional noise mitigation measures during the course of construction activities will fluctuate based on several factors. Measures

are subject to activity sequencing based on overall site plan approval timing, building department permit release, tenant lease requirements, site availability and numerous other phasing issues. In general the applicant currently proposes avoiding pile driving and rock crushing activities conducted on the same day, utilizing properly maintained equipment that employs current noise control technology, and the continued effort to work with the design consultants to develop scope of work items that limit potential impacts or shorten installation durations to reduce the disturbances to surrounding residences and businesses.

Comment G-2

p. 318 — While it is stated that rock crushing operations “should not affect adjacent residential neighborhood”, there is no analysis of the cumulative short term impacts of all construction activities including blasting, chipping and increased truck traffic on residences. Therefore, it would seem reasonable to reduce noise impacts to the maximum extent practicable. Thus, the potential to reduce noise through the use of noise reducing screens and continual misting should be considered by the lead agency.

(Memorandum from Saccardi & Schiff, Inc., dated 11/01/2005)

Response G-2

Throughout the multiple phases of Center construction and renovation, monitoring and minimizing the noise and other disturbances created by the construction activities will be a top priority. The use of efficient and modern equipment, establishing and maintaining proper dust/soil and erosion control measures and maintaining public relations will help ensure that this project proceeds with as little impact as possible.

Comment G-3

Noise Analysis

The noise analysis presented in the DEIS includes the identification of existing measured sound levels at three (3) area receptors. The peak hour noise levels range from 57 to 65 decibels. The procedures described to collect these data were completed in accordance with accepted standards. The analysis of potential impacts due to increased traffic indicates no significant increase in noise levels with increases of less than 1 decibel or less. This analysis is reasonable based the projected traffic volumes, however if the traffic volumes change as a result of the technical review comments referenced above, there may be some additional sound level increases which will need to be addressed.

(Letter from John Collins Engineers, P.C., dated 10/26/2005)

The term " L_{dn} " is not explained in the second paragraph.

(Memorandum from City of Yonkers Planning Bureau, dated 11/18/2005)

Response G-3

The changes in projected volumes were of a nature that did not change the results of the noise analysis. No perceptible sound level changes are anticipated based on traffic volume changes from project modifications.

Day-Night Sound Level - L_{dn} is the A-weighted equivalent sound for a 24 hour period with an additional 10 dB imposed on the equivalent sound levels for night time hours of 10 p.m. to 7 a.m. Weighting the night time noise is done to reflect increased sensitivity to night time noise.

Comment G-4

DEIS states that the excavator will be below the grade of the Co-op thus mitigating the noise impact but ignores that it will be on grade and reflected back at the College apartment building across the street.

Air and Noise Mitigation

No studies of the time-of-day noise impacts were submitted. Given the location of noise receptors at the intersection of two highways it is reasonable to assume that noise peaks are present during the AM and PM rush hours. Noise should then fall off during the day. Is this the case at the site? Will construction extend the high noise periods throughout the day? Will the construction noise plus the traffic noise exceed any standards?

(Memorandum from City of Yonkers Planning Bureau, dated 11/18/2005)

Response G-4

The entrance to the College Apartment Building located on the opposite side of Midland Avenue from the slope that will be re-graded is approximately 125 feet from the closest area scheduled to receive rock removal. Other, closer areas, of this building are shielded by existing ledge and moderate vegetation. A perfect reflective surface can cause a 3 dBA increase in noise. As the College Apartment Building would be considered a less than perfect reflective surface, the increase from reflection caused by the placement of the excavators on Midland Avenue would be calculated at approximately 1-2 dBA. However, this increase is not expected to be significant compared with the overall noise level currently in the area.

Road traffic, including commercial trucks and buses, generally dictate the overall background levels of noise in any given area. This background noise would not fall off significantly outside of rush hour. The maximum expected construction noise associated with blasting, rock drilling and pile driving may create intermittent sound

levels over the City of Yonkers 75 dBA standard at residences. These construction elevated noise levels, if unmitigated, would represent the peak noise level in the area, regardless of the amount of traffic present. Because noise is measured on a decibel scale, combining two noise levels is not achieved by simple addition. For example, if the background noise from traffic on Midland Avenue was 65 dBA and a rock chipping operation created 90 dBA, the combination of both noise sources would remain at approximately 90 dBA.

It is important to note that noise standards do not apply to traffic noise or a combination of traffic noise and another source. It is likely that during elevated noise activities, such as rock drilling/chipping and pile driving, the City of Yonkers 75 dBA noise ordinance standard could be exceeded at the property lines of homes surrounding the offsite work areas. Because rock crushing would be conducted below grade, noise from crushing operations would not exceed the standard at residences.

Comment G-5

Perception of noise impacts vary between individuals. Lack of information, powerlessness over the impact and lack of communications can also affect the perception of an impact and ones feelings about the impact. Can the applicant establish a means to notify the area residents, either directly or through neighborhood association and co-op/condo boards, about upcoming impacts? A point of contact that can answer questions and take complaints together with a newsletter about the projects upcoming issues would be helpful to defuse problems and reduce the perception of impacts.

Response G-5

Prior to the start of construction, residents, condo/co-op boards and businesses within the immediate area will be contacted and notified of the current construction schedule and anticipated impacts. Contact may be established through the use of mailings, postings throughout the Center and surrounding areas (as applicable by code), newspaper and other circulation methods. As part of the notifications the point(s) of contact will be established and information regarding future sources will be identified.

Throughout the course of Center construction and renovation, updates will be provided to maintain positive relationships with the surrounding communities.

Comment G-6

The sound of blaring horns is a constant. Any plans for renovation should take the noise pollution factor into consideration, as any expansion would only contribute to the ever-increasing air and noise pollution.

(Letter from Mary Beth Macina, Esq., dated 10/25/2005)

Response G-6

Air quality and noise impacts were addressed in the DEIS.