

EAB Plane Noise

September 2025

Increased number of planes over Garden City!

The airplane noise you heard over your house this summer was due to the OVER 2 ½ TIMES MORE PLANES flying over Garden City in July 2025 versus January 2025 (13,107 vs 5346) despite total airport operations showing only a 15% greater total airport volume (40,707 vs 35,468).

The noise is significantly worse!

Arrivals on runway 22L for JFK are the problem.

JFK arrivals are usually dispersed among several runways but over the last decade runway 22L has become the single most used runway for arrivals.

Runway 22L flights go over New Hyde Park, Garden City, Floral Park, Stewart Manor, Franklin Square, and Elmont as they funnel down into their final landing approach.

For any year to year comparison, the problem is worse

For the months of April through August 2025, the average number of flights using 22L have increased significantly when compared to 2013, 2018, 2021/2022.

Total monthly increases ranged from 10% to 74% with no month showing a decrease.

For the month of July, the increase has averaged over 50% for each comparison year.

Noise is measured in decibels.

Noise is measured in decibels (db). The World Health Organization (WHO) classifies a 55 db noise as a troubling noise incursion. This is the level at which normal conversation is drowned out by the noise.

The Federal Aeronautics Administration (FAA) uses a 65 db noise as a noise event. This 10 db difference is perceived as a noise TWICE AS LOUD.

The models used to evaluate noise converts the total sound energy over time at which the event occurs (55 db or 65 db) into an equivalent 1 second sound event. The highest db portion of the sound is often MUCH HIGHER.

Excessive noise harms health.

Noise over 55 db stops normal conversation.

Noise over 55 db is associated with higher risks for stroke, high blood pressure, heart attack, decreased learning, and overall reduction in lifespan.

Noise monitors run by the Port Authority of NY and NJ (PANYNJ) show July, 2025 monthly average plane noise at the two closest monitors (Floral Park and New Hyde Park) at 63 db and 58 db.

The PA monitors document noise levels harmful to our health.

Lower altitude planes mean more noise, more concentration pollutant dispersal, and greater risk of catastrophic plane crash in cases of engine failure.

Average altitude over Floral Park noise monitor is 1,450' to 1,550'.

FP monitor is 5.9 nautical miles from runway 22L.

Planes are designed with a 3.1 degree glide slope to allow the plane to glide to a landing in case of catastrophic engine failure.

A 3.1 degree glide slope over FP requires an altitude of 1,828'. If engines fail over FP, the plane will crash before the airport, over Rosedale or Laurelton.

A personal example.

My house in Garden City is 7.28 nautical miles from JFK - dictating a 2,256 altitude for a 3.1 degree glide slope.

Planes using 22L presently use a “step-down” approach - essentially flying flat for several miles before the next step-down altitude.

When I was young, planes flew into JFK at 2,200 - 2,400' over my NHP house. They now fly 500 to 600' lower for that same location. NHP is on that same flat portion of the step-down approach. They fly 500 to 600' lower than the recommended glide slope altitude for my GC house.

Higher altitudes mean both less noise and a larger safety margin.

Pollution

Pollutant dispersal is minimal when planes are flying lower than 3000'. The lower the plane, the more pollutants land underneath.

Fine particulate pollutants (under 2.5 m) and ozone are major air pollutants over our area.

There are supposed to be environmental reviews (NEPA) for pollutant issues when a major change is made but these has yet to be done.

What is being done?

TVASNAC (Town, Village, Aircraft Safety and Noise Abatement Committee) with the Town of Hempstead, and Town of North Hempstead on behalf of several named individuals (myself included) have filed litigation with both the FAA and PANYNJ to address these issues.

Federal and multi-state agency suits follow a two step process involving “asking permission” to sue followed by the suit itself. The FAA suit was sent back to us saying they need more time to address the issues but we are allowed to refile. The PANYNJ suit is ongoing.

Complaint lines exist and should be used.

The PANYNJ suit

We are requesting a re-evaluation of the noise contour maps to better reflect actual conditions experienced.

Their assumptions used in their models are 12 - 14 years out of date and were supposed to be updated several years ago. Any area within a 65 db noise contour is entitled to noise mitigation.

The model used would reflect higher values if current data were used and MUCH HIGHER values if the WHO 55 db model were used.

Most of Floral Park, Franklin Square, Elmont, Stewart Manor and parts of Garden City and New Hyde Park would be eligible for mitigation if this were done.

The airport hasn't moved and planes have to land.

I have spent my entire life under the 22L approach. Yes, JFK hasn't moved and planes have to reduce altitude to land.

BUT, the number of planes flying overhead has greatly increased despite only moderate increases in total arrivals at JFK. Other runways can and should be used.

BUT, approach patterns and altitudes flown have changed. Both place a heavy burden on the communities below.

What next?

In addition to the ongoing litigation, communities should increase pressure on the FAA and PANYNJ; log additional complaints via phone, text, and apps; write to federal representatives as well as local representatives to express our concerns; join political action groups and various on-line groups; petition for relief.

Excessive environmental noise is more harmful to our physical and mental health than originally suspected. The noise issue has gotten considerably worse. Federal agencies have minimized their focus on noise issues. We should LOUDLY ADDRESS OUR CONCERNS and not allow our voices to be drowned out by the rumble from above.