

NEW JERSEY NOISE CONTROL COUNCIL MEETING
MARCH 9, 2010
MINUTES (APRIL 21, 2010 DRAFT)

NCC ATTENDEES: J. Lepis (Chairman, Civil Engineer), A. Schmidt (Vice Chairman, Public Member-Registered Environmental Health Specialist), J. Feder (Secretary, Public Member-pending confirmation), S. Szulecki (Public Member-pending confirmation, Ecologist), R. Hauser (DOL, Member), C. Accettola (Public Member-pending confirmation), I. Udasin (Public Member-Medical Doctor), T. Pitcherello (Member-NJDCA), N. Dotti (Public Member), M. Klewin (NJ Motor Vehicle Commission), John Kapferer (Public Member), John Surmay (Public Member – Local Governing Body), Eric Zwerling (RTNAC), D. Triggs (NJDEP).

I. ADMINISTRATIVE

Minutes of the February 9 meeting were approved with minor corrections.

1.1 Star Ledger Article Response

A letter had appeared in the Newark Star Ledger asking about the status of the New Jersey Noise Control Council. A number of members of the NCC participated prior to the meeting via email in drafting a response, which was submitted by Chairman Lepis, and published in the Tuesday, March 9, Newark Star Ledger. The letter briefly summarized major NCC activities, such as periodic updating of both the NJ State Noise Regulation 7:29 and the Model Code offered to municipalities seeking stricter noise control, recommending noise related updates to other legislation (example - motor vehicles), meeting with and advising officials and members of the public on local noise issues, and studying and making noise related recommendations with respect to newly introduced technology, such as wind energy electrical generators. The response emphasized that NCC activities were done by volunteers without cost to the State of New Jersey.

1.2 Interaction with NJ Clean Air Council

In response to an invitation from the New Jersey Clean Air Council soliciting closer coordination of activities, Chairman Lepis will attend and give a presentation at the April 14, 2010 Clean Air Council meeting.

II. WIND GENERATOR ISSUES

The Tuesday March 9 Star Ledger also contained an article on the wind generator recently installed in the Town of Ocean Gate in Monmouth County. Bill Simmons and Bill Haas from the Monmouth County Health Department had previously appeared at the January 12, 2010 NCC meeting with concerns and questions about the potential impacts, which have caused local concern and noise complaints by neighbors since the wind generator was placed into operation. It had previously been noted on January 12, that the NCC not yet acquired expertise in this area, and would further investigate the low frequency sounds produced by the wind turbine blades, although it appeared that noise from the gears used in the generator was also an important contributor. Two initiatives were undertaken: 1) several members of the NCC volunteered to search and gather relevant literature on experience and practice in other states with respect to wind generators, which could be used as a bibliography for the NCC as well as offered to those contacting the NCC on the issue; 2)

Mr. Dotti volunteered to visit the Ocean Gate facility, report to the group, and possibly perform sound level measurements.

It was noted that this issue would likely grow in importance due to the priority given nationally in searching for alternative energy sources. Within New Jersey, the most advantageous sites for harnessing this energy are windy areas near the coast, which also tended to be heavily populated. The information gathering dissemination initiative was agreed as a good initial step and should be coordinated with the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC).

III. NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR NOISE WITHIN BUILDINGS

Mr. Zwerling reported briefly on issues involving neighbor to neighbor noise within buildings. This is affected by what the neighbors do, but also by internal building modifications. There was some discussion of the control internal noise transmission via building codes. Even a simple action such as removal of carpeting could affect noise transmission, and, in fact, some condominium associations place restrictions to control the removal of carpeting. Mr. Dotti mentioned that he had, during his acoustical consulting work, rented a foot tapping machine used to perform measurements related to ceiling-floor noise transmission.

IV. MODEL CODE

Vice Chairman Schmidt had prepared a list of issues based on the latest, February 2010, draft of the Model Code. Most of the remainder of the meeting was spent going through this list and discussing Model Code modifications to address them. Among the items discussed were the distances selected for “plainly audible” for sounds from a motor vehicle, and necessity of regulations to allowing audible warning sounds to accommodate individuals with disabilities. In response to an extended discussion of one section, Mssrs. Szulecki and Zwerling volunteered to do a redraft. The meeting was extended somewhat beyond the nominal 12 Noon close, but not enough members could stay long enough to complete work. It does appear, however, that work on the Model Code draft is nearly complete, so that we should shortly be able to move on to the next stage.

V. NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is on April 13, 2010.

Respectfully submitted:

Jerome Feder