

SCSC Roundtable All Correspondence

November 6, 2021 – November 10, 2021



SCSC Roundtable <scscroundtable@gmail.com>

Letter for SCSC RT relevant to upcoming Nov. 11 meeting

1 message

Alastair Fyfe

Mon, Nov 8, 2021 at 12:08 PM

To: "scscroundtable@gmail.com" <scscroundtable@gmail.com>

Hello,

please include the attached letter to correspondence made available to SCSC RT members ahead of the meeting scheduled for Nov. 11, 2021.

Thank you,

Alastair Fyfe



Nov8.pdf
28K

November 8, 2021

Dear Chair Bernald and SCSC Roundtable Members,

On July 20 and 21, 2021, the FAA sponsored a Community Engagement Workshop focused on the Northern California Airspace, “the FAA provided an update on some key recommendations from the Select Committee on South Bay Arrivals that area members of Congress established”. Though various topics were discussed, by far the most controversial was a proposed westward shift of the SERFR arrival procedure covered in Select Committee recommendations 1.2R1 and 1.2R2.

I am writing to urge the SCSC Roundtable to thank the FAA for organizing this workshop, an unprecedented outreach effort, and for carefully conforming to both the spirit and the letter of those recommendations. After careful analysis, the FAA determined it could not design a path that met both 1.2R1 and 1.2R2 and thus opted to make no change. The restraint shown is a model for appropriate FAA response to unimplementable community requests. The alternative, for the FAA to implement a variant that had not been asked for, and thus would likely aggravate community annoyance with flight noise, was avoided.

Some background is relevant. When the Select Committee (SC) was formed, on April 4, 2016, Representative Eshoo noted “This is a regional problem which calls for regional solutions. Simply shifting noise from one community to another is not an option.” In accordance with that directive, the twelve members of the Select Committee agreed early on that any proposed recommendation required support from a super majority of its members to move forward. This was the working definition of “community consensus”. Much of the discussion between May and November 2016 was taken up with a proposed westward shift of SERFR. In November, the Committee finally reached a carefully-crafted compromise. The path should be shifted (1.2R1) but in such a way as to preserve essential noise mitigating requirements (1.2R2). It is significant that 1.2R1 only reached the required super majority by a single vote, whereas 1.2R2 passed unanimously.

By December 2017 that fragile compromise fell apart. In response to information released by the FAA in “Update on Phase Two” issued in November 2017, Mayor Gary Waldeck of Los Altos Hills wrote to the FAA retracting support for 1.2R1. In explaining this retraction Mayor Waldeck commented to a local newspaper “My vote was predicated on the assumption that all nine of the validating criteria were possible and would be used”. **The loss of community consensus for 1.2R1 has never been reversed.** In the intervening years, Mayor Waldeck’s letter to the FAA has been followed by similar letters from Mayor Martine Watkins, Mayor Cynthia Mathews, Mayor John Radford and Mayor Roger Spreen. All those letters, along with letters from Santa Cruz County Supervisors Bruce McPherson and Ryan Coonerty have urged the FAA to either fully implement 1.2R1 and 1.2R2, as the SC intended, or make no changes to the SERFR arrival route.

The FAA listened. They should be recognized for their appropriate response, even if events interfered with a more rapid response.

Thank you for your consideration,

Alastair Fyfe
Brookdale