

Markland Wood Homeowners Association

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December 30, 2014

The Honourable David L. Emerson
Canada Transportation Act Review Secretariat
350 Albert Street, Suite 330
Ottawa, ON K1A 0N5

Sir:

The Markland Wood Homeowners Association is a not for profit organization representing approximately 1250 homes at the west end of the City of Toronto. Further particulars on the Association can be found at www.marklandwood.org. We thank Minister Lisa Raitt for the opportunity to participate in the review of the structure and purpose of the *Canada Transportation Act* (CTA) as she announced on June 25, 2014, to be carried out under your appointment as Chair.

Upon review of the Discussion Paper and our own experience over approximately the past twenty years, our comments will particularly address the areas of Governance and the Environment.

1. The recognition of the importance of sleep and the negative impact of night time transportation activities on the neighbouring community environment which interfere with this basic necessity.

We note the increasing evidence of the essential biological importance of full and restful sleep for both individual Canadians, and in turn, for Canadian society and its productivity. There are an abundance of articles and studies on this subject that have been put out in recent years. In amending any aspect of the CTA which could potentially impact the relevant community and its environment, sound sleep must be recognized as a legitimate right of Canadians, a quality of life parameter equal to food, water and housing.

It is our strong submission that the CTA include an overarching provision that ensures that all transportation activities, regardless of transportation mode, in or near to residential populations in excess of 50,000 persons, have demonstrated and recorded consideration of the impact of the respective operational activities upon local residential sleep. It is further submitted that such provision should have noise or vibration standards applied based upon human health impacts established by Health

Canada. These would be subject to an appropriate and ongoing monitoring system, local or federal, to ensure compliance with those federal standards developed to protect the night time sleep environment of the neighbouring residents.

The foregoing would establish rules based upon science through which health challenges can be adequately measured and addressed.

An explicit example is the conflict extant at present where airplane takeoff and landings overnight are a very clear and decided problem for sound sleep to neighbouring residents. Yet, fully aware of this, airport authorities make requests for more night flight allowances which are subsequently approved by the Transport Canada officials in the absence of either scientific standards or community approval.

2. The governance framework needs to be made more accountable to government officials directly elected by the people as well as more responsive to citizen stakeholders

a) Airport Operation Accountability

When Transport Canada delegated the operation of the country's airports to third party incorporated "not for profit" entities in the 1990's, it concurrently leased the federal land upon which the respective airport is situated. These corporations (whether an airport authority (AA), NAV Canada, etc.) proceeded to form boards of directors and operate the respective airport under minimal Transport Canada supervision. Generally a board of directors is accountable to shareholders/members who elect them. As various AA actions have negatively impacted some communities over the years, it became blatantly apparent how little accountability there is to the federal government. As an example, who do the Board of Directors of the Greater Toronto Airports Authority answer to?

When NAV Canada changed some flight routes around Pearson Airport in 2012, it negatively impacted a significant number of residents in the City of Toronto. Most residents knew nothing of the changes; let alone where to go to register their outrage.

More and more, in these transportation noise matters, impacted neighbouring residents have turned to their elected government, and particularly Transport Canada, to voice their concerns and their inadequate response by AA's. The lack of accountability and thus flaws in Canadian air policy in this area are obvious where the public feels it has to go to back to the government for relief as opposed to the entities that were allowed to be created to deal with these matters originally.

b) Informing or Notice To The Public

When the government services impacted by the CTA wish or are required to announce information to the public, they should be required to do so in the major media organs

(e. g. Toronto Star; Globe and Mail; National Post, etc.) to ensure a broad public coverage of the information being shared. This is not to preclude announcements in community media, but these are not the primary information sources used by the public at large, particularly for important federal matters.

Further to the above, the format used for such announcements need to be a minimum of ½ page of the publication selected to ensure the information is easily seen by those impacted. This would help prevent an unpleasant surprise such as the one we experienced almost a decade ago when the air space over our own Markland Wood was appropriated. It was only indirectly that we found out about this government action which affects our community in a most direct way.

Conclusion

It is our hope that our comments above as submitted will help in the review of the CTA and bring about some of the many needed changes to Canadian air policy for the good of the country and its citizens. We are available for consultation at your convenience.

Respectfully yours,

Georgina Balascas, President

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