Here is the most recent information from Ward 13 Council Member Betsy Hodges regarding the proposed changes at MSP airport:

Hello neighbors-

There is an important and fast-moving issue that I have heard from many of you about. In a nutshell, the airport wants to change where they fly planes in a way that will have more of them flying over our homes. They are not seeking sufficient public input on the change or doing appropriate environmental due diligence. Your help is needed to have the City's voice heard. There are more details below.

MSP Airport is working on implementing new navigation techniques. These techniques could expose some people – including some of you – to an even greater intensity of noise. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is trying to push these changes through on an accelerated pace and without sufficient public input.

A rough description of these navigation techniques called "Area Navigation" or "RNAV" is that planes fly much more precise routes and they fly the same routes continually. After planes take off, they take a straight line (as much as possible) to a certain permanent location in the sky. Flying the most direct route possible saves fuel (and money) and it also reduces emissions. However, I'm very concerned about those of us who live beneath these routes.

The City of Minneapolis is frustrated by the path being taken by the MAC and the FAA. When the FAA proposed studying Performance Based Navigation and specifically the Area Navigation (RNAV) procedure, the Noise Oversight Committee (NOC) adopted a list of five criteria to be followed in development of the tracks. One of those criteria was to place the tracks over “noise compatible” areas where practical and reduce the number of sensitive land use overflights. It also called for sufficient community engagement regarding the tracks, so the residents were fully informed of the ramifications. Minneapolis doesn’t feel that these criteria have been followed, but so far, we seem to be the only city objecting to that. Some communities see potential benefits from RNAV because they have less populated areas where they can direct air traffic.

The FAA wants to get the go-ahead from the Metropolitan Airport Commission by the end of November to proceed with the changes.

The FAA seems to believe they don’t need public input on this change and they are not seeking any. The City of Minneapolis is working with Congressman Ellison’s office, Minneapolis Legislators and other policy-makers to fight for a voice in this process.

As I informed everyone who contacted me last week, the MAC hosted an Open House last Thursday that was well attended by concerned residents. If you were not able to attend, you can access the display boards and maps here: PBN Open House Display Boards . I know this is short notice, but t
here is one more open house in Eagan tonight if you are interested in attending:

November 13, 2012

5:30pm to 8:30pm

Eagan Community Center

1501 Central Parkway

Eagan, MN 55121

It does help to let the FAA and the MAC know that you are concerned. Minneapolis wants more information about the environmental (including health) impacts of this proposal and we want a more meaningful engagement process. We are working with State and Federal officials to fight for that.

We think that the plans for expansion of the airport and adoption of RNAV should be evaluated together under the standards of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). That way, both issues get a thorough review. The MAC has offered as their reasoning to authorize the potential expansion of the airport the fact that they anticipate a large increase in the number of flights at the MSP airport. I am very concerned that these two issues combined – more planes plus consolidated tracks- could be a very bad formula.

Many Minneapolis legislators are aware of this issue and are already fighting for you, along with our Federal Delegation, but they still need to hear from you so they understand how important this is to you. I suggest that you contact Congressman Ellison, Senator Franken and Senator Klobuchar to thank them for their efforts and encourage them to keep fighting.

Office of Congressman Keith Ellison

612-522-1212

Office of Senator Amy Klobuchar

612-727-5220

Senator Al Franken

651-221-1016

Metropolitan Airports Commission

6040 28th Avenue South

Minneapolis, MN 55450

publicaffairs@mspmac.org

The Noise Oversight Committee will comment on some aspects of this proposal tomorrow, **November 14,**
and the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) is expected to act on
November 19
. MAC has the ability to conclude that the process thus far has not been adequate and that more should be done. We are working with people who we think can make our case to these bodies.
The best thing that you can do to help is make the recommended calls.

Thanks for your help.

Betsy

Betsy Hodges

Council Member

City of Minneapolis, Ward 13

350 South Fifth Street

Room 307

Minneapolis, MN 55415

e-mail: betsy.hodges@minneapolismn.gov

phone: 612.673.2213