

PPCC Land Use Committee (LUC) Report Re Construction Noise Thresholds Proposal

The PPCC LUC learned in December 2023 about a sudden proposal by the Dept. of City Planning (DCP) to change the City's Construction Noise Thresholds. We have also learned that in November 2023, the Mayor directed DCP to make these changes in order to streamline affordable housing construction. A DCP hearing was held a few days before Christmas. Because many constituents expressed concerns about inadequate notice, the DCP extended the comment deadline (now to February 19); there will be no further hearings before the DCP Director alone decides on the changes (no review or decision by the City Council).

The LUC has now drafted a proposed position letter – to be presented for Board discussion and approval at the PPCC meeting on February 8, 2024. The proposed letter is based on the LUC's review of numerous relevant resources and materials, including:

- DCP Proposal/Report re Construction Noise Thresholds
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Pr-aE37k4KW_HSkVqc-sM1Jyb_Y9z2ZK/view
- DCP Summary of Proposal
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YtEyGT_cTbL1d_1TPBrXgosHbAKsIs8J/view
- Mayor's Executive Directive No. 7:
<https://mayor.lacity.gov/sites/g/files/wph2066/files/2023-11/ED%207%20-%20Streamlining%20and%20Accelerating%20Housing%20Production%20%281%29.pdf>
- Noise Element of the City's General Plan:
https://planning.lacity.gov/odocument/b49a8631-19b2-4477-8c7f-08b48093cddd/Noise_Element.pdf
- LA City Charter (sec. 506) and LAMC noise regulations (LAMC sec. 111, *et seq.*; note: "presumed ambient noise levels" for LA residential zones are 50 dBA daytime and 40 dBA nighttime, sec. 111.03)
https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/los_angeles/latest/lamc/0-0-0-193741
- Pub. Resources Code Sec. 21001(b) (CEQA intent):
<https://law.justia.com/codes/california/2022/code-prc/division-13/chapter-1/section-21001/>
- CEQA Guidelines, Cal. Code Regs. Sec. 15064.7(b):
<https://www.law.cornell.edu/regulations/california/14-CCR-15064.7>
- Opposition letter (Bel Air-Beverly Crest NC President Dr. Travis Longcore, Jan. 9, 2024)
https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/NoiseVibration_BABCNC.pdf (note: letter approved by the BABCNC Board Jan. 24, 2024)

After discussion and review of relevant materials, LUC members concluded that the proposal to change the construction noise thresholds should be opposed, and then developed the draft position letter. The community will have an opportunity to weigh in on the draft letter at the public PPCC Board meeting on February 8, 2024.

Additional information:

CEQA – California Environmental Protection Act.

Noise Element – section of the General Plan for the City of Los Angeles (*see also definitions of General Plan & CEQA in PPCC Glossary: <https://pacpalicc.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Glossary-Phrases-Acronyms-2023.pdf>*).

dBA – "A-weighted" decibel scale readings that have been adjusted to take into account the varying sensitivity of the human ear to different frequencies of sound (DCP proposes a daytime cap of 80 dBA Leq.; *see draft letter*).

Leq – "Equivalent Continuous Average Sound Level"; represents sound level exposure over an elapsed time period.

Those interested in more information may contact LUC Chair Chris Spitz, ppfriends3@hotmail.com.

PPCC LUC: Chair – Chris Spitz; Members – James Alexakis, Richard Blumenberg, Steve Cron, Michael Edlen, Howard Robinson, Joanna Spak, Maryam Zar (*ex officio*/non-voting)