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January 10, 2014

The Honorable Herb J. Wesson, Jr.
President
Los Angeles City Council

c/o Holly L. Wolcott
Interim City Clerk
City Hall Room 360

VAN NUYS FIRE STATION NO. 39 (CF 13-1103) NOISE ANALYSIS

Dear President Wesson and Honorable Members:

We transmit herewith additional information to clarify and amplify the information previously provided about the proposed Van Nuys Fire Station No. 39, and we urge the City Council to move forward with adoption of the Negative Declaration as set forth in the report from the Department of Public Works Bureau of Engineering dated July 22, 2013.

The City is proposing to construct a replacement fire station on two vacant lots located on the corner of Oxnard Street and Vesper Avenue in Van Nuys. The existing Fire Station No. 39, at 14415 Sylvan Street, cannot house the additional resources needed to meet present and future demands for fire protection services. The replacement fire station will include an approximate 18,533-square-foot facility and other associated improvements.

Following the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Bureau of Engineering conducted an Initial Study and determined that the proposed new fire station would not cause a significant environmental impact. A Negative Declaration was prepared and circulated for public review and comment.

Residents near to the proposed new site expressed strong opposition when the Board of Public Works Commissioners considered adoption of the Negative Declaration and again when the matter was considered by the Public Works and Gang Reduction Committee. Noise impacts on adjacent residents is chief among the community's concerns. City staff met with the community several times, and these concerns



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remained prominent. Therefore Councilmember LaBonge asked for a noise study to be done for the project, and asked that a decision regarding the Negative Declaration not be taken until the noise study had been completed.

A formal noise study for the project was conducted by the acoustics firm Veneklasen Associates in November and December of 2013. A report of the study and findings is attached. Acoustical experts measured noise levels produced by fire equipment in simulated and actual emergency responses at the existing fire station and the proposed new site. These measurements were then used to model the increase in community noise exposure levels due to possible future fire station operations at the existing and at the proposed new locations. The analysis indicates that noise impacts at the existing site is substantially higher than it would be at the proposed new site, if the existing site were retrofitted to accommodate the new fire station activity.

This finding amplifies the finding of the City's Initial Study that the impact from construction and operation of the proposed fire station would be less than significant. CEQA Guidelines Section 15073.5 states that recirculation of a Negative Declaration for public comment is not required when new information is added to the negative declaration which merely clarifies, amplifies, or makes insignificant modifications to the negative declaration. City staff has considered the concerns and the comments received to date and determined that recirculation is not required by the Guidelines.

City staff will continue to work with City and community stakeholders throughout the life of this project to produce the best project possible. We urge the City Council to move forward with adoption of the Negative Declaration as set forth in the report from the Department of Public Works Bureau of Engineering dated July 22, 2013.

If you have any questions, please contact Jim Doty at (213) 485-5759.

Sincerely,



Deborah Weintraub, AIA, LEED_{AP}
Interim City Engineer

DJW/JD:cja
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Attachment: Fire Station 39 Acoustical Analysis

cc: Honorable Councilmember Tom LaBonge, Council District 4
Honorable Councilmember Nury Martinez, Council District 6
Kevin James, President, Board of Public Works
Matt Szabo, President Pro-Tem, Board of Public Works
Ted Jordan, Assistant City Attorney
Tim McWilliams, Deputy City Attorney
Jim Doty, Bureau of Engineering
Allan Kawaguchi, Bureau of Engineering
Reza Shahmirzadi, Bureau of Engineering



MEMORANDUM

To: Allan Kawaguchi L.A. City Department of Public Works
From: Steve Martin Veneklasen Associates
Date: January 6, 2013
Subject: Fire Station 39 Acoustical Analysis –Memorandum

INTRODUCTION

Emergency vehicle and siren noise were measured during simulated emergency response events at the existing and at the proposed future site for Fire Station 39. Brüel and Kjær Model 2250 Type 1 sound level meters were used to measure and record these noise levels. We also measured the ambient noise using a Brüel and Kjær Model 2260 Type 1 sound level meter at the proposed site over a three day period and the existing site over a two day period. The objective of these measurements was to model the noise at the existing site and at the proposed future site due to anticipated future daily operations of Fire Station 39.

The future estimated average number of Fire Station 39 emergency vehicle responses is 51 per day, which includes four of these events utilizing a second siren. This is equivalent to 2.125 responses per hour. This is substantially higher than the average incident count in 2012 of 19 per day or 0.8 responses per hour. This study assumes the 51 equivalent daily events; should the actual event count be 19 per day, the modeled noise levels will be 4 dBA lower.

EXISTING SITE

Existing Nearby Land Uses

The existing Fire Station 39 is located adjacent to a two-story office building on the east currently serving as lawyers offices and two one-story offices for bail bonds and home design businesses on the west. The City Hall with its seven conference meeting rooms and the public counter area is across Sylvan Street to the south, as is the Marvin Braude San Fernando Valley Constituent Service Center with multiple offices. To the east of the corner of Sylvan Street and Sylmar Avenue are 40 multi-family residential dwellings on the north side of Sylvan Street, with a Child Development Center and the Los Angeles County Service Center with multiple offices.

Measurements

At this existing site, five simulated events and one actual emergency response were measured on December 11, 2013 at three locations: across the street in front of Van Nuys City Hall, at the adjacent lawyers offices at 14401 Sylvan Street, and in front of the three-story residential structure at the north-east corner of Sylvan Street and Sylmar Avenue. Two of the simulated events and the actual emergency response headed in the western direction; three of the simulated events headed in the eastern direction. The emergency response event noise levels (Leq) ranged between 84 and 89 dBA at the City Hall position, 82 to 103 dBA at the lawyers' offices, and 71 to 90 dBA at the corner of Sylvan and Sylmar, with the average Leq measuring 87.7, 95.6, and 85.8 dBA, respectively. The duration of the events averaged 22 seconds. The ranges of the measured maximum noise level (Lmax) of these events at each location were 93-102 dBA, 91-114 dBA, and 79-100 dBA with Lmax averages of 99.4, 107.4, and 96.3 dBA, respectively.

The long-term measurements at the existing Fire Station 39 were performed on the roof of the existing fire station. An incident log of fire station activities was utilized to exclude the noise from these activities to determine the existing ambient noise level without fire station operations. The measurements and ensuing analysis indicate the ambient hourly average noise levels (Leq) ranged between 53 and 75 dBA and the CNEL ranged between 66 and 68 CNEL, averaging 67 CNEL. The existing Lmax of the measurements during the 10:00 pm and 7:00 am nighttime period ranged between 66 and 87 dBA.

Future Conditions

The average measured simulated/actual event noise levels measured at each position were utilized with the future estimated responses of 2.125 per hour to model the hourly Leq and CNEL noise levels. To maintain consistency with the proposed site analysis, each event was considered to occur for 14 seconds as measured during the proposed site noise measurements (see *PROPOSED SITE Measurements* section). The results of the modeled noise levels existing at the site without Fire Station 39 operations and due to the anticipated future number of emergency responses are summarized in the table below.

Location	Modeled 1-Hour Leq Noise Levels (dBA)			Modeled CNEL (dBA)		
	Without FS-39 Operations	With Future Anticipated FS-39 Operations	Increase	Without FS-39 Operations	With Future Anticipated FS-39 Operations	Increase
City Hall	53 to 75	67 to 75	0 to 14	67	74	7
Lawyers' Offices	53 to 75	75 to 78	3 to 22	67	81	14
Sylvan and Sylmar	53 to 75	65 to 75	0 to 12	67	73	6

FS-39 = Fire Station 39

PROPOSED SITE

Existing Nearby Land Uses

The existing land uses to the north, east and west of the proposed Fire Station 39 site are industrial. Across Oxnard Street to the south of the site is a one-block width area of residential use with industrial properties to the east and west. Eight residential properties are located along the south side of Oxnard Street opposite the proposed site, with another six residential properties further south and within 200 feet of the proposed site.

Measurements

At the proposed future site, six simulated events were measured on November 7, 2013 along the south sidewalk of Oxnard Street, with three heading in the western direction and three heading in the eastern direction. A seventh event measured was an actual emergency response heading in the western direction. These event noise levels (Leq) ranged between 89 and 96 dBA and averaged 92.6 dBA Leq during a typical 14 second event. The maximum noise levels (Lmax) ranged between 98 and 104 dBA and averaged 102.6 dBA Lmax.

The long-term measurements at the proposed future fire station site were performed at the center of the existing parking lot in order to provide a safe location for the measurement equipment. The measured results over the three-day period indicated the ambient hourly average noise level (Leq) ranged between 52 and 65 dBA and the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) ranged between 64 and 66 CNEL, averaging 65 CNEL. The long-term measurements also indicated existing Lmax noise levels during the 10:00 pm to 7:00 am nighttime periods ranged between 67 and 88 dBA. However, because these measurements were performed in the center of the existing parking lot, approximately 140 feet from the center of Oxnard Street, and assuming the measured noise levels are predominately due to traffic noise, the actual CNEL may be as much as 6 dBA higher at the residential property line, a distance of approximately 35 feet from the center of Oxnard Street. An additional factor impacting the ambient noise level on the residential property is the existing five foot wall, which may reduce the noise level on the residential side of the wall as much as 6 dBA. As these factors cancel each other, the measured hourly Leq, Lmax, and 65 CNEL noise levels will be utilized in the modeling analysis.

Future Conditions

Utilizing the average measured 92.6 dBA noise level during the average 14 second event for the future average estimated responses of 2.125 per hour, the modeled hourly Leq noise levels on the three impacted residential properties within 50 feet of the new proposed Fire Station 39 in operation are 65 to 68 dBA, higher than the currently measured 52 to 65 dBA noise levels by 3 to 13 dBA. The model shows a cumulative noise level is 72 CNEL, 7 dBA higher than the currently measured 65 CNEL.

At the five residential properties located up to 100 feet away from the proposed site, the CNEL is modeled to be 5 dBA higher than the existing CNEL, while the six residential properties located 200 feet away are modeled to be 3 dBA higher. This is summarized in the table below.

Location	Modeled 1-Hour Leq Noise Levels (dBA)			Modeled CNEL (dBA)		
	Without FS-39 Operations	With Future Anticipated FS-39 Operations	Increase	Without FS-39 Operations	With Future Anticipated FS-39 Operations	Increase
Residences along Oxnard St.	52 to 65	65 to 68	3 to 13	65	72	7
Residences 100' south	49 to 62	60 to 63	1 to 11	62	67	5
Residences 200' south	46 to 59	54 to 59	0 to 8	59	62	3

FS-39 = Fire Station 39

Comparison of the Modeled Impacts

The model indicates the impact due to 51 daily events at the existing Fire Station 39 is a CNEL increase of 7 dBA at City Hall impacting seven conference meeting rooms and the public counter area and at the San Fernando Valley Constituent Service Center offices, 14 dBA at the lawyers' offices and the three offices on the west side of the fire station, and 6 dBA at the multifamily residential structure and adjacent residential buildings (minimum 15 units) as well as the Child Development Center and the Los Angeles County Service Center. The model for the proposed future site indicates an impact of a CNEL increase of 7 dBA at three residences located closest to the proposed site, 5 dBA at five residences located approximately 100 feet from the emergency response events, and 3 dBA at six residences located approximately 200 feet away.

Conclusion

The model shows a cumulative increase in noise levels due to the anticipated future operations at Fire Station 39 both at the existing site and the proposed site to be an increase of 5 dBA CNEL or more at a number of receptors due to the anticipated number of fire station responses. At the existing location, this increase occurs at the adjacent three office addresses, at a minimum of 15 residential dwellings, at seven conference meeting rooms and the public counter area within the City Hall building, at multiple offices within the San Fernando Valley Constituent Service Center, at the Child Development Center, and at multiple offices within the Los Angeles County Service Center. At the proposed site, the modeling indicates this increase of 5 dBA CNEL to occur at eight residential dwellings. The cumulative noise level increase at the closest receptors for the existing station is a 14 dBA CNEL increase and at the proposed site is 7 dBA CNEL.

The noise modeling impact of the anticipated number of operations for Fire Station 39 is substantially higher at the existing fire station site than the impact at the proposed fire station site.