

I live off Brink Road in Germantown. The approach path to Airpark Runway 14 is behind my house. Multiple aircraft use this approach, and multiple other aircraft cut across over or close to my house and my neighborhood on their way to the approach path. I've lived here for over 30 years, and have noticed a large increase in piston-engine, turboprop, and private jet traffic since 2020. I've spent 30 years working to make my yard a pleasant place to be and am now driven inside. To reduce the noise I have to keep all my windows shut especially during nice weather when air traffic is heaviest. I use a white noise machine too, but it's not enough to drown out the noise.

I obey the law and pay my taxes like other residents of Montgomery County, and expect the same protections to apply to me as to other residents. Montgomery County has an excellent noise ordinance but Airpark traffic is exempted – they are allowed to create noise on a daily basis that exceeds County regulations as part of their business. If I made that much noise, or any other business in Montgomery County made that much noise, action would be taken by the County to stop it – but the Airpark is free to create as much noise as they wish.

As much of a problem this is for me, my situation is not as bad as that of the thousands of residents who live under the Airpark's training pattern. These residents are subjected to constant flight noise, including takeoffs and landings throughout the day and sometimes the night – every day of the year, since the Airpark never closes.

In addition to noise, piston engine aircraft use leaded fuel and their emissions are toxic, especially to children. The Airpark's training pattern exposes thousands of residents in the developments under the pattern to toxic lead emissions, endangering the health of children and adults living within 1.5 miles of the Airpark – as many as 10,000 people, using the MCRA's own estimation. Other jurisdictions across the country have taken action to address this danger. The County should be addressing this serious health threat but has not taken any action to stop the Airpark from using leaded gas or even to notify the families most at risk. A carefully worded notice has appeared on the MCA website that downplays the danger involved, citing outdated metrics for blood lead levels in children and not mentioning the recent Congressional report on lead emissions, which clearly states that there is NO SAFE LEVEL of lead contamination in children.

The recent aircraft crash in November 2022 has highlighted the safety issues involved when a busy airport is located in the middle of heavily developed neighborhoods. Montgomery County allowed this ill-advised development, and residents are suffering from it. People should not have to fear being injured or having their property damaged by aircraft crashes. In 2014, 6 people died in a terrible jet crash of an Embraer Phenom jet on approach to the Airpark. The crashed jet firebombed a residence, killing a mother, her baby, and her toddler. MCRA used the NTTB verdict of pilot error to absolve the Airpark of blame. Airpark management may not have had anything to do with the pilot error, but the Airpark LOCATION had everything to do with the crash, since the jet crashed while following a path to the Airpark that brought it over a densely developed residential area. The mother and two children would not have died if they did not live close to the Airpark. And concerning the current crash, Montgomery County would not have suffered widespread power outages and an extremely expensive

repair of PEPCO if the pilot had not been trying to fly over dense development and power lines to reach the Airpark.

MCRA argues that crashes are relatively rare, but the potential for deadly crashes is high since there is such congested development affected by increasing Airpark traffic. Is the Airpark willing to guarantee that no resident in the 6 mile complaint radius will be injured or have property damaged by an aircraft crash? How will Airpark and County officials be able to protect citizens from pilot error? Why should residents near the Airpark be forced to live in an increasingly dangerous area due to the Airpark's business goals of increasing traffic, encouraging more flight schools, and trying to draw more private jet traffic to the Airpark? The County owes more to the residents around the Airpark, whose concerns are routinely ignored in favor of Airpark operations. Why should this be the case?

Airpark proponents call the Airpark an economic driver for the County. It's hard to understand how this can be true when MCA operates at a loss and is only able to stay out of the red by getting Federal grants. This puts them under FAA jurisdiction and reduces the ability of the County to protect its citizens. The County and/or State need to legislate to allow more local control of the many safety issues created by the Airpark.

General aviation airports are a nationwide problem. Other local governments across the country have taken action to protect their citizens, and Montgomery County should be doing that as well. Montgomery County, whose motto is "Gardez Bien," is failing in its responsibility to the unfortunate citizens impacted by the operations of Montgomery County Airpark.

Reinstatement of the Airpark Advisory Committee is a critical first step to open communication between MCRA and the community, but it is not enough. The County Council needs to step into the picture as well to provide balanced oversight of Airpark operations and their negative effects on the community.