

The Association recently received a mailing from Harris Miller Miller & Hanson asking our opinion about whether noise barriers are desirable for our community or not. The mailing is located at http://lafayettevillage.org/HOTLanes/HMMH_Letter_to_affected_HOs.pdf. We urge you to read, complete, and return the questionnaire as soon as possible. **Check the line for "Yes," the sound barriers are desirable.** We would also recommend you **write a comment on the questionnaire** similar to this:

I believe that a noise barrier is desirable for our community. However, based on information I have learned from the design public hearings and from my home owners association, I believe that the sound walls as designed will not effectively reduce the impact of Beltway noise on my home. I understand that noise measurements were estimated at the **ground level** for my home, rather than at the **living levels** of my home, namely the second and third levels, where my kitchen, living room and bedrooms are located. I understand that these ground level estimates were used to design the sound walls. Sound walls designed that way will do nothing to reduce Beltway noise at the second and third floors of my home, where I live and sleep. I would like the height of the sound wall to be greatly increased to provide more sound reduction at the second and third stories of my home.

Note that the letter says "VDOT will consider alternatives to the proposed barrier design" so adding a comment like this will encourage VDOT to consider a better, more effective sound barrier.

Background: HMMH is the company that VDOT/Flour-Lane hired to study the noise impact the Beltway HOT Lanes would have on our community and to recommend the design for sound barrier walls to reduce that noise. We learned at the HOT Lanes public hearing and at subsequent VDOT/Fluor meetings that HMMH's study was seriously flawed in many ways. First, HMMH did not actually take any sound measurements in Lafayette Village. Instead, they used computer models based on three noise level readings **outside** our community to model the noise levels **inside** Lafayette Village. Second, the model HMMH used to design the sound barriers aimed to reduce Beltway noise at **ground** level, not at the actual living levels of our homes. If Lafayette Village townhomes had second story decks, like many townhomes do, HMMH's model would have reduced Beltway noise at that second story. And **that** would have led to a design with significantly taller sound barrier walls. Noise levels would be reduced where it matters most – in our living rooms and bedrooms, not in our basements!

What this means: We want sound barrier walls that are tall enough to reduce Beltway noise levels in our living rooms, kitchens and bedrooms. The way HMMH conducted their study **ensured** that the sound barrier walls would not provide the full noise reduction we need and deserve. Including the sample language above in your survey form will ensure that HMMH and VDOT/Fluor know our complete position. **We want sound barrier walls, and we want effective sound barrier walls.** Lafayette Village will benefit only slightly from the HOT Lanes, but we will bear a disproportionate impact from this project in terms of noise and highway pollution. It is only fair we be provided all means necessary to lessen these impacts.

Action: Print the survey, fill it out, indicating YES you want sound barriers, include a comment like the above that you want **effective** sound barriers and mail the survey to:

Harris Miller Miller & Hanson, Inc., Attn: Christopher Menge
77 South Bedford Street
Burlington, MA 01803