

#1

**Leza Mikhail**

---

**From:** R MUCHA [patnbob1@cox.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 12, 2008 5:13 PM  
**To:** lezam@rpv.com  
**Cc:** Hungerford Grant  
**Subject:** St. John Fisher Conditions of Approval Number 59

Leza Mikail,  
Please accept the following comments.  
Respectfully submitted.  
Robert Mucha

### **Exhibit "B" Conditions of Approval**

#### **Bell Schedule – Conditions 53 – 59**

##### **Premise**

Given the restraints of Condition 59

Based on a report that "...will be presented to the Planning Commission."

"...the Planning Commission may add, delete or modify any of the respective conditions of approval or may prohibit the use of bells if the Commission determines that the imposed conditions are not effective in **minimizing sound effects to neighbors.**"

##### **Conclusion**

**Measuring the decibel rating of the carillon bells and preparing a report (by a Consultant) will not determine the minimum sound effects to neighbors.**

##### **Recommendation**

**Adjusting the volume of the carillon bells to achieve a designated decibel rating at designated neighborhood sites will eliminate the subjective "...effects to neighbors."**

**NOTE: Both the designated decibel rating and designated neighborhood sites must be specified by the City of Rancho Palos Verdes.**

10/13/2008

#1

**Leza Mikhail**

---

**From:** Joel Rojas [joelr@rpv.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 14, 2008 5:20 PM  
**To:** 'Leza Mikhail'  
**Subject:** FW: St John Fisher Carillons - Oct. 14, 2008 Agenda

---

**From:** L. Bilski [mailto:ldb910@juno.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 14, 2008 3:28 PM  
**To:** pc@rpv.com  
**Cc:** ldb910@juno.com  
**Subject:** St John Fisher Carillons - Oct. 14, 2008 Agenda

Oct. 14, 2008

Dear Commissioners,

It was a shock to see that since the September hearing, the Conditions on St. John Fisher had almost doubled, imcreased from 44 to 74 in number! Many are issues that were never duscussed much less recommended by you the members of the Planning Commission. I consider this unfair and unreasonable.

The objections to the Carillons come from a few neighbors who seem to believe their lives will be significantly adversely impacted by their use, and therefore they have created a lot of noise about eliminating them altogether or restricting them as stated in Conditions 53, 54, 58,59. This is ridiculous and the conditions proposed should be eliminated as they are unnecessary.

Below is an attempt to explain the decibel levels in an understandable manner which debunks the nonsense of the complaints.

The two main concepts that the Commission needs to understand are that decibel levels are logarithmic and that the sound intensity diminishes as one over the square of the distance from the source.

The definition of decibels is given by a logarithmic formula which must be used to calculate decibel levels that can then be related to various familiar sounds. This formula is given below and the quietest and the loudest levels that the human ear can accommodate are listed.

The sources of the data about decibel levels are quite authoritative. The powers associated with the various levels are also given as multiples of the *threshold of hearing* (TOH) level. You can see that the human ear deals with an extremely large range of power levels.

The next paragraph explains how you combine sources of different decibel levels to arrive at the decibel level of the combination. Because of the logarithmic nature of the intensity, a 50 dB source combined with a 70 dB source does not result in a 120 dB level combination. As the example shows, it results in a 70.04 dB combination.

The last paragraph shows that people several multiples of the distance from the carillon source

10/14/2008

to the property line will be lucky if they even hear it when cars go by, since we're talking about a sound level of a light rain or that of a library.

Aside from providing the calculations and references below, may I again draw your attention to the fact that RPV has development standards which permit sounds of 65dBA measured at the property line. So there is a city standard, that standard is 65decibels, and the carillons are hardly audible at the surrounding homes - that's outdoor measurements. Consistent with the City's Institutional Code sounds lower than 65 decibels at the property line are permitted. Therefore, no further restrictions should be imposed. The proposed Conditions (#53,54,58,59) subjects this applicant, a Catholic Church,unfairly to restrictions not applied to others.

Sincerely,  
Lenée Bilski

### MAKING SENSE OF THE CARILLON DECIBEL LEVELS

There are two fundamental relationships to take into account.

**The decibel level is logarithmic, not linear.**

**The intensity of sound varies inversely as the square of the distance from the source**

#### Decibel Level is Logarithmic

The decibel level is defined as  $10 \cdot \log_{10}(P/P_{ref})$ , and measures the intensity level of the sound. The symbol \* indicates multiplication, and  $\log_{10}$  denotes the logarithm to the base 10. The symbol P denotes the magnitude of the power of the sound (which depends on the air pressure) and  $P_{ref}$  denotes the reference power, which is at the threshold of hearing (TOH). At TOH,  $P = P_{ref}$ , so the decibel level =  $10 \cdot \log_{10}(1) = 0$  dB. (The threshold of pain occurs at 130 decibels, or  $10 \cdot \log_{10}(10^{13}/10) = 130$  dB, when the power is 10 trillion times that of TOH. Perforated eardrums occur at 10 quadrillion times TOH [ $10 \cdot \log_{10}(10^{16}/10) = 160$  dB].)

To provide some illustrative levels for environments that are familiar, the *American Speech-Language-Hearing Association* and the *Glenbrook Physics Classroom Tutorial on Sound Properties and Their Perception* web sites were accessed. Here are data from those sources which are relevant to our situation:

**Some typical sounds, their associated dB levels and their power:**

**Whisper 20 dB 100 times TOH**

**Library or Quiet Room 40 dB 10,000 " "**

**Moderate Rainfall 50 dB 100,000 " "**

**Conversation 60 dB 1 million " "**

**Busy Traffic 70 dB 10 million " "**

**Vacuum Cleaner 80 dB 100 million " "**

**The baseline setting for the church carillons is 50 dB at the property line. For anyone to suggest that a superposition of a sound of 50 dB on a 70dB background sound (traffic) is noticeable cannot be serious.** A simple calculation illustrates the weakness of that argument. A 70 dB sound source ( $\log_{10} = 7$ ) has a power equal to 10 million times TOH. A 50 dB sound source ( $\log_{10} = 5$ ) has a power equal to 100,000 times TOH. Adding the two powers together gives us a total of 10 million plus 100,000 times TOH, an increase of one percent! The logarithm of that combined power is 7.004. Thus the addition of a 50 dB source to a 70 dB source results in a combined decibel level of 70.04 dB. To argue that a listener can routinely discern the difference between 70 and 70.04 (70 and four one-hundredths) decibels is foolish, even if he were to devote 24 hours daily to that task alone.

#### **Decibel Level Varies Inversely as the Square of the Distance**

The intensity of the sound is equal to the power of the sound wave divided by the ground area over which the wave travels. So the power, which radiates in all directions, varies inversely as the square of the distance from the source. The planned carillon setting is 50 dB (power = 100,000 TOH), with intensity level equivalent to moderate rainfall, at the property line. Thus, a listener twice as far from the source as the property line will experience a power equal to  $\frac{1}{4}$ th (25,000 times TOH) of that at the property line, or 44.0 decibels ( $\log_{10} = 4.398$ ), which will be like a gentle rain. A listener three times as far from the source will be exposed to a power  $\frac{1}{9}$ th (11,111 times TOH) of that at the property line, or 40.5 decibels ( $\log_{10} = 4.046$ ).

**Noting that the sound level in a library or quiet room is 40 decibels, the claim that the carillon sound will be bothersome is absurd on its face.**

**As illustrated above, the superposition of the carillon sound level on background traffic sound only further illustrates the absurdity of the complaint, which borders on the hysterical and should be rejected out of hand.**

---

[Are you Catholic and single? Click Here.](#)

RPV Planning Commission and  
City of Rancho Palos Verdes  
Mr. Joel Rojas and Ms. Leza Michail  
Director of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement  
30940 Hawthorne Blvd.  
Rancho Palos Verdes, California 90274  
Attn: Director of Planning and Zoning and Ms. Leza Michail

Dear RPV Planning Commission, Mr. Joel Rojas, and Ms. Leza Michail,

We thank the RPV Planning Commission and the RPV Planning Staff for your listening ears and all your late nights that you have put into this project.

There are a few minor changes that we would like to incorporate into the conditions regarding the applicant's permit. They are as follows:

**1) Landscaping – Do Not Remove Existing Mature Trees**

**Retain all existing mature trees on the Northeast corner of Crest and Crenshaw as well as along Crenshaw Boulevard.**

Hence, the first sentence under condition # 48 should be changed as follows to "The applicant shall retain all of the existing mature trees located along the west street side property line along Crenshaw Boulevard and on the Northeast corner of Crest and Crenshaw Boulevard."

**2) Landscaping - Newly Planted Trees Must Mature Within 5 Years**

**Newly planted trees to substantially screen the new sanctuary from neighboring properties on Crenshaw Boulevard and the Northeast corner of Crest and Crenshaw should initially be old enough and large enough so that they mature in height and size within five years to provide adequate screening.**

Please modify conditions 47, 49,50, and 52 to include this.

**3) Stairs and Ramp – Minimal in Size, Use for Fire Emergencies Only and NOT on the Corner of Crest and Crenshaw**

**If stairs and a ramp are installed, they should be of minimal size and width as required by the California Building Code or the Fire department and should be used for fire emergency purposes only. Do not build the stairs and ramp on the corner of Crest and Crenshaw. Build the stairs and ramp on Crest with the necessary fire hydrant requirements.**

Please modify condition # 68 to include this.

Thank you,

Gary Long

## **October 14, 2008 Planning Commission Meeting Comments**

Good evening, Planning Commissioners and City Staff.

First, I would like to thank the staff for their diligence in developing the conditions that have been presented tonight. We and our neighbors all support the church's desire to improve their facilities. We feel that the conditions go a long way toward mitigating many of the concerns that we and our neighbors have regarding the proposed project.

We especially appreciate the cooperative spirit and professionalism of Leza Mikhail throughout the process, while trying to balance the interests and rights of both the applicant and the neighbors. The process has been a difficult one, which she has handled with professionalism, poise and grace.

To address the specific conditions, we agree with condition #3, which allows a 6-month review period for lighting, parking, and other issues the commissioners and neighbors may raise – especially lighting, to facilitate evaluation over a broad spectrum of weather conditions, such as fog, that can significantly impact the lighting effects.

We support the parking conditions because when viewed in their totality, they assure that adequate off-street parking will be provided as required by our General Plan and Development Code. In particular, we support condition #31 that says that the applicant will manage its operations in such a manner so as not to create simultaneous demand for parking that exceeds available space. We understand this to be an on-going obligation to provide adequate off-street parking, regardless of future changes in mass schedules or other church operations. We believe that this on-going responsibility is especially important in light of the conditions that are found every weekend on Crestridge. Somewhere along the way, adequate off-street parking must not have been provided for or changes in conditions were not adequately anticipated, as cars now are parked bumper-to-bumper on both sides of Crestridge every Sunday morning. Perhaps that is acceptable in a large area that is all zoned institutional, but not at a property that is bordered on 3 sides by residential areas.

In addition, we support condition #32 which requires a special use permit when an event will occupy a portion of the required parking spaces or when more than 331 spaces will be required.

We also support condition #40 that says that adequate parking be maintained during the construction period, so that Crenshaw Blvd. and Crest Rd. do not become the church's primary parking lots during that period.

We support condition #45 that requires a 5-year limit on the beginning of phase 2 – as conditions do change over time and any development after that time should be subject to a new review.

We support the landscaping conditions that are intended to mitigate the bulk & mass concerns of the neighbors. We strongly support non-deciduous landscaping to "substantially screen" the new sanctuary to mitigate the impact of the bulk & mass of the sanctuary on a year-round basis. Gary Long will address the landscaping further in subsequent comments.

We agree that bell ringing should be limited to 60 seconds and that a 2-month period to review the effectiveness of the conditions is appropriate. Bells will be heard by neighbors 30 times per week, 1500 times per year. Neighbors should have concerns heard and addressed through an open process. We appreciate that the Planning Commission may require additional reviews to assure that the neighborhood peace and quiet is maintained throughout the seasons.

With regard to conditions #61 and #62 (indemnifications), as city residents, we agree that the city should not be held responsible for injuries that occur during the development process and are caused by the applicant or its representatives. Nor should city funds be spent to defend approval of this project. The applicant is the sole beneficiary of this project and should be accountable for any costs necessary to achieve those benefits.

We support condition #68 that allows the installation of the stairs and ramp at the corner only if, and to the extent, it is required by the California Building Code or Fire Department. Gary Long will expand on this subject.

We appreciate that the speakers currently used to transmit the services into the parking lot and into surrounding neighborhoods will be removed before issuance of a building permit or grading permit.

We support the various lighting conditions – including turning off the lighting at 10 pm and assuring no spillover onto adjacent properties. We note that the MND's Mitigation Monitoring Program requires all lighting fixtures to be hooded so that all lighting is directed downward. We understand that that requirement would be a condition of the CUP, even though it is not listed in Exhibit B.

Finally, we appreciate the limit on the use of the parish activity center by leagues not affiliated with the church as well as the limit on usage of Barrett Hall and the Parish Activity Center to 9 pm on weekdays and 10 pm on Friday and Saturday nights. The time limits will mitigate the impact of the sound that will result from use of the buildings.

Again, we really want to thank the city staff for listening to the neighbors' concerns and addressing them through the conditions.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kathy & Al Edgerton

FACSIMILE  
FROM  
ROGER E. and CHRISTA HAWKINS  
37 CREST ROAD WEST  
ROLLING HILLS, CALIFORNIA 90274

**RECEIVED**

OCT 15 2008

PLANNING, BUILDING AND  
CODE ENFORCEMENT

TO: City of Rancho Palos Verdes  
Planning, Building & Code Enforcement

FAX NO.: (310) 544-5293

PHONE: (310) 265-7800

FAX NO.: (310) 377-6718

PHONE: (310) 377-6002

DATE: October 13, 2008

---

MESSAGE

My wife and I just learned of the proposed modifications to St. John Fisher Church. As nearby neighbors of the Church -- living approximately 1000' from the Church grounds -- we have a keen interest in certain aspects of the development.

First and foremost, we are strongly opposed to the inclusion of any bell tower, including the proposed carillon bell, which we understand is planned to be rung somewhere between 1600 and 2000 times per year. The Church has managed to attend to its parishioners for the 24-years that we have lived "next to" the Church, without the "need" of belling them to service(s). And, in the two decades or so that I have worked in the area -- near St. John Fisher Church -- no bell has ever been installed. The Church has managed to serve its parishioners for a half-century or more without a bell, thus not creating a nuisance/disturbance to those living in the adjoining residential areas. Therefore, we ask that the bell tower, with any sort of bell -- including the proposed carillon bell -- NOT be permitted.

Second, we additionally oppose the installation of a loudspeaker on the premises. We understand the loudspeaker is designed to enhance the bell's noise -- not to mention other uses to which the loudspeaker may be used -- all to the disturbance of persons residing in the adjoining residential neighborhoods outside the 500-Notification parameters.



Third, we suggest that the Church can accommodate its parishioners with the installation of a "soft" chiming bell, INSIDE THE CHURCH. The parishioners know where the Church is located. With a low decibel bell inside the Church, the Church will be sensitive to those persons residing in the adjoining residential neighborhoods, who do not want their peace and quiet disturbed with bells ringing several times daily, all year long.

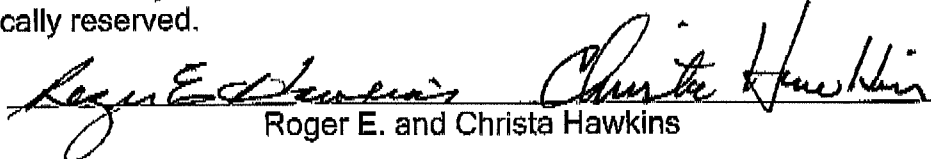
Fourth, we understand that the current design of the bell tower and lighting poses a serious threat to wildlife -- notably birds -- who migrate through the area and will be unnecessarily attracted to the tower and light. One knowledgeable person informs me that countless birds will be tragically injured or killed as a result of the proposed bell tower and lighting. Were being a good neighbor by eliminating the noise pollution that the proposed bell would cause not a good enough reason to eliminate the bell and the lights and the loudspeakers, surely the Church should not condone the senseless slaughter of countless, innocent birds (God's creatures) -- who migrate through the area -- for the sake of installing bells and lights that have never "graced" this place of worship since its construction. Had the founding fathers of the facility felt the need for the "bells and whistles" that are now proposed, surely they would have been incorporated into the early construction. Doing so is as sacrilegious as killing the swallows at San Juan Capistrano for the sake of "improving" the mission.

Finally, we understand that there are many parishioners who are likewise opposed to the installation of the bell tower, the bells, the lighting and the loudspeakers.

Given the absence of any compelling need for the bells or the lights or the loudspeakers, and given the disturbance such bells and lighting and loudspeakers will visit on our otherwise relatively tranquil community, one can only wonder "who thinks of such things" and "why"?

We hope that the City imposes its good judgment and prevents the belling and the lighting and the "loudspeaking" (sic) of St. John Fisher Church, for the bad judgment of those who propose these changes.

Kindly advise of the Planning Commission's Final Action since, if approved, as adversely affected persons and to the extent legally permissible, we will file an appeal. As for any other "nuisance" related legal remedies, all such remedies are specifically reserved.

  
Roger E. and Christa Hawkins