

MEMO

TO: Madhuri Mohan, AICP, Senior Planner, City of Allen

FROM: Greg Taggart, RPLS, Applicant for Texas Legends Gun Range

DATE: October 12, 2017

SUBJECT: *Response to Expressed Concerns*

During the application review process for Texas Legends Gun Range, I met with homeowners of the Ansley Meadows neighborhood to understand their concerns about the zoning change I am proposing. They expressed nine major concerns. I intend to address both through exhibits provided to you and through the direct response below.

1. Noise Levels

The range facility is designed with modern methods and proper insulation applied to 7-1/4" thick reinforced concrete. Range filter machinery and dust collectors have been located by design inside the building to reduce noise. A sound study was conducted of existing range facilities. Built with "old school" methods, the study shows they produce noise levels at a measured 75 feet from the facility of 75 decibels (dB). How is this helpful? In Texas Legends case, the closest approach of any residential structure is substantially more than 100 feet from the building. Sound reduces by the "inverse square law"; noise levels will be significantly lower at 100 feet. Considering the careful modern acoustic design of our range, we will be much quieter than the comparable older facilities. A new study at this site finds existing North Central Expressway rush hour noise readings of 78.3 dB; the proposed Texas Legends building, by functioning as a physical sound block, will potentially even reduce noise levels in the residential areas immediately behind our facility. See the attached acoustic report and sound study.

2. Projectile Leakage-Bullets Leaving the Building

The range areas where firing takes place are essentially a 7-1/4" thick reinforced concrete walled box divided into a series of smaller concrete boxes, the firing bays. At the end of each firing lane is an armor steel AR-400 (or equivalent) bullet trap; it cannot be penetrated by small arms ammunition. Behind the bullet traps at the west side of the building is a 7-1/4" thick reinforced concrete exterior wall. Range side walls on the north and south are constructed of the same material. The range area rear observation wall is constructed of 7-1/4" thick reinforced concrete as well; observation windows are constructed of Underwriters Laboratories (UL) -Level 8 bullet resistant glass. Armor plate steel baffles deflect errant shots down and into the concrete range floor or bullet

trap; in the unlikely event that any slip by the baffles, the range area roof cannot be penetrated. It too, is constructed of reinforced concrete panels. No firing or handling of loaded firearms is permitted outside of the range firing areas.

3. Lead Contamination of Surroundings

Firing ranges are not allowed to contaminate their surroundings with lead particulate emissions. That is a civil and criminal violation of the Clean Air Act of 1970 as well as the Clean Water Act. Texas Legends will filter lead particulates out of all range exhaust air through a two- stage filtration system engineered and constructed by a contractor that has provided clean air filtration systems to various government entities as well as NASA. Air will be filtered to 0.3 microns – by comparison, a human hair is 50 microns in diameter. Air exhausted from the range will be cleaner than intake air. Filter system technical specifications are available for review.

4. Traffic Volumes Generated

According to a traffic engineering analysis performed by Dynamic Traffic Engineers, the proposed range facility will generate traffic volumes on Curtis Lane at a substantially lower rate when compared to “by-right” uses specifically allowed in CC Zone; less than 42% percent according to the report. Weekday trip generation is expected to be 457/day, with a peak of 630/day on Saturday. This compares with a use of a similar size “Shopping Center” generating a traffic count of 2480 trips/3481trips, or a “Discount Store” of 1215 trips/1509 trips respectively. City staff has been supplied with a copy of the engineering report.

5. Criminal Attraction or Activity

A properly run gun range does not attract criminal activity. Shooters as a group are very law-abiding; felons and domestic violence misdemeanants cannot even legally touch a firearm or ammunition without committing a Federal felony offense. Every range visitor is required to provide valid government issued identification and a permanent record of entry is kept. Firearms retail operations and record-keeping are meticulously inspected on an annual basis by the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (BATFE) and they may also conduct surprise inspections at any time as well. Among our expected patrons will be police officers from several local, state and federal agencies, both on and off duty- criminals would prefer to be elsewhere. This is borne out by local experience- Call/Incident Logs from Frisco PD (Frisco Gun Club) and Lewisville PD (Eagle Gun Range) confirm that “criminal activity” is not rampant in the vicinity of a properly functioning gun range facility; a gun range is not a “crime magnet”. In a 4 year period from 8/01/2013 to 8/01/2017, Frisco PD reports 8 calls for service involving the range facility during operating hours and producing an Offense Report. These calls included one “gunshot” and 4 thefts; there were also three auto burglaries on-site. The burglaries were all reported on one day; these obviously did not involve the range. Not generating a report, there were also three unsubstantiated “gunshot” complaints, two “harassment” complaints, and 13 “suspicious person or vehicle” complaints. In the same 4 year period, during operating hours Lewisville PD answered 8 complaint calls to Eagle Gun Range regarding “suspicious persons”, with no report filed. There was 1 theft

complaint, no report filed; and an intentional self-inflicted gunshot wound. Two officers reported taking their lunch break at the gun range. Criminals and criminal acts simply do not propagate around gun ranges.

6. Accidental Discharges by Visitors in Parking Areas

All parking areas will have signage prohibiting handling of uncased or un-holstered firearms and requiring that all firearms brought into the building be encased or holstered; the prohibition will be reiterated in the published range rules. The parking areas will be camera monitored to enforce this rule.

7. Fire Hazards

Texas Legends has been designed to be fire safe. The 7-1/4" thick walled reinforced concrete building is fully equipped with a fire sprinkler system in accord with the Allen Fire Code and industry best practices. A common source of fuel for range fires, namely crumb rubber bullet back stops, has been completely eliminated from our range by the use of armor steel bullet traps. The range firing area is constructed entirely of concrete and steel. There is little to burn, except for targets, soft goods retail stocks and sporting ammunition packaged for retail sale. About sporting ammunition packed for retail sale – according to the video “Sporting Ammunition and the Fire Fighter” prepared by the US Sporting Arms and Ammunition Manufacturers Institute (SAAMI) with the assistance of the International Association of Fire Chiefs, sporting ammunition packed for retail sale does not “... explode, or propagate, and does not pose a hazard substantially different from other common commodities...”.

8. Real Estate Values - Damaged by Proximity to Gun Range?

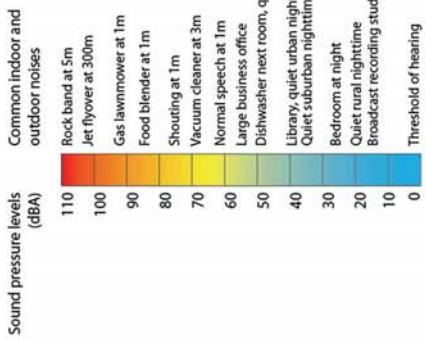
There has been a concern expressed that the mere presence of a modern, environmentally friendly and clean indoor shooting range in an attractive building constructed in a commercial zone and facing North Central Expressway – the busiest freeway in north Texas, will perhaps devalue homes in proximity and make them harder to sell. Is such a fear reasonable? It is suggested that simply driving by the concrete building on Curtis Lane will frighten potential buyers; these same potential buyers will not notice the 135,000 Volt Oncor Electric transmission lines or the massive 100' tall steel towers which support them. An article at homeguides.sfgate.com reports research that found that homes next to power lines lost an average of 6.3% of their value. If the view of the power line is open- “...unobstructed, the price of homes as far away as one-quarter of a mile away can be affected.” According to a 2013 article in Realtor.Com, real home value detractors include proximity to a school (except for families with small children), being next to a busy street, lack of downstairs bedroom, a swimming pool, a small backyard and tile flooring. A similar article in May 2016 by real estate researcher Yuqing Pan found that hospitals depressed home prices in their immediate area by 3.2%. Outdoor shooting ranges, as illustrated in the article, were credited with 3.7% negative effect; but no conclusions were provided for indoor ranges. Since properly designed and operated

indoor ranges are completely contained and do not affect the surrounding environment at all, it is likely that their negative impact is negligible, if any at all. A funeral home, a use permitted by right in CC zone, was reported to depress home prices 6.5%. Examining another modern indoor firing range, the Plano police indoor range is less than 450 feet from a residential subdivision- there is no evidence that the range has damaged home values or sales. Frisco has a new high end mixed residential development featuring luxury town homes and single- family residences on Eldorado Parkway less than 1200 feet from an indoor gun range-Frisco Gun Club. The presence of the range does not seem to deter development.

9. Guns – Morbid Fear of Inanimate Objects.

A large percentage of Texans own guns; according to study by the University of Texas, that number was perhaps as high as 61% in 2013. Even that number may be low; for obvious reasons many people are reluctant to admit to a researcher on the phone that they own a firearm. The current ownership indoor number may be still higher, having likely increased in the past several years as more citizens have made first-time purchases of firearms for recreation; personal security or simply to celebrate a civil right. The Texas DPS reports that new License To Carry a handgun (LTC) applications in Allen totaled **1676** in 2016 ALONE. Expand the circle to a 3 -mile radius of the Texas Legends site and the figure rises to more than 2300 new LTC applications in one year. In that same 3 mile radius, DPS records indicate that there are more than **9900** active LTC 's. It is abundantly clear- Texans own and carry guns. Allen's citizens own, and many carry, guns. They need a place to safely practice, have fun and receive proper firearms operation and safety instruction. Texas Legends is the place. Sadly, some residents find the prospect of a safe, clean, modern, environmentally conscious indoor firearms training facility a threat to their sense of well-being. Their fears prompt them to raise objections about noise, about traffic, about pollution, about crime. They fear that friends will refuse to visit if it requires driving by an indoor range. They even express the fear that visitors to the range will shoot at passing cars or neighborhood houses; ultimately they are simply afraid of guns and must also fear their neighbors who have guns. All of the reports and studies and traffic analyses and statistics and information about the safety, security and operation of the facility are meaningless because some people simply cannot get that far; their fear stumbles on the concept of "GUNS". We at Texas Legends can and will teach, we can and will educate, we can and will inform, but we cannot overcome bald, un- reasoning fear. Believing that the cure for fear is knowledge, we extend an open invitation to anyone who would like to safely learn about firearms and shooting to contact us.

Sincerely,
Greg Taggart, RPLS



**Secondary Noises -
Construction Nailguns &
Flagpole Ropes Hitting Pole**

**Predominant Noise -
Curtis Lane Traffic
Max 74.8 - 83.4 dBA
4 - 6 X per minute**

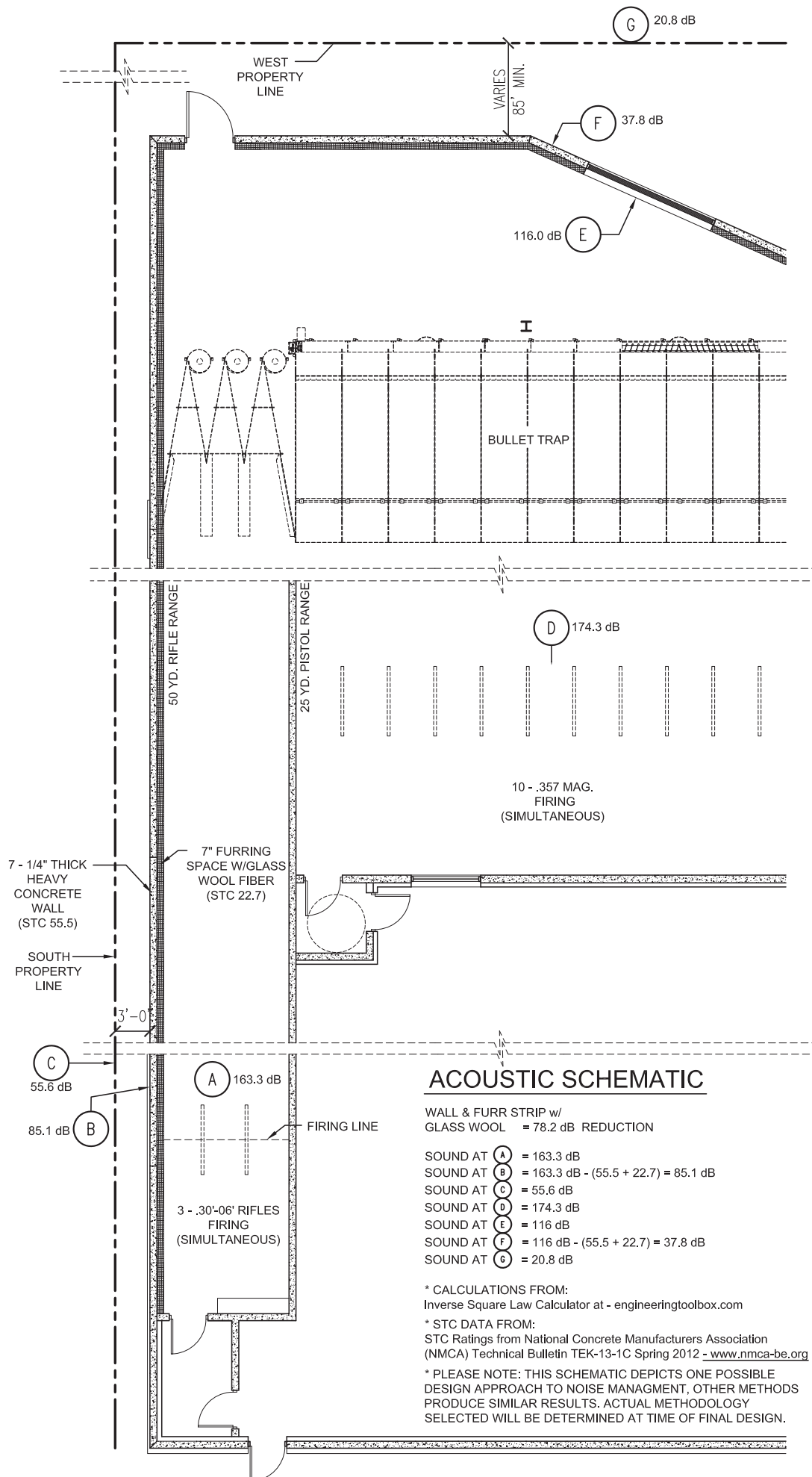
**Predominant Noise -
Freeway & Service Road Traffic**

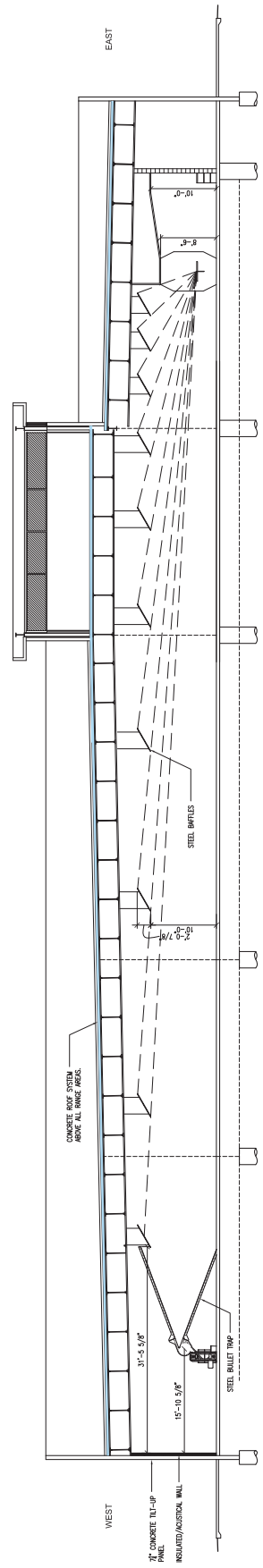
**Brick Wall 8' +
Running SSW
Nearest House 100' +**

Average Maximum sound level readings in decibels. (dBA)

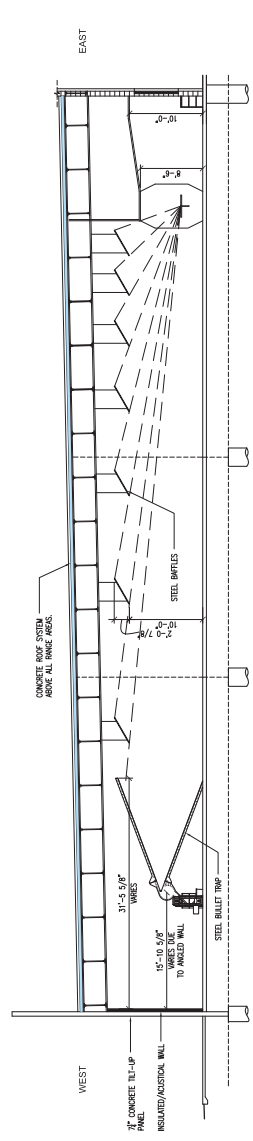
**Readings taken Weds Sept 27th 2017 @ 5 PM
ScanTech Technical Consulting
SW Corner Curtis & I-75 Service Road Allen, TX 75013**

PD CONCEPT PLAN
SUBMITTED JUNE 23, 2017

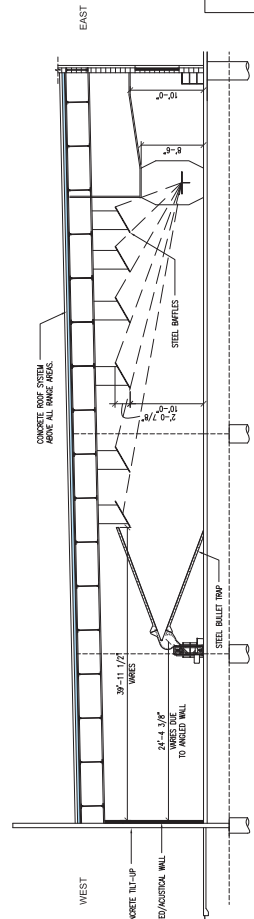




03 RIFLE RANGE WALL SECTION-TYP.
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



02 TACTICAL 'B' RANGE WALL SECTION-TYP.
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"



01 DOWN RANGE WALL SECTION-TYP.
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

PD CONCEPT