

PROPOSED NOISE ORDINANCE FACT SHEET

Town Meeting will be held on August 29, 2021, at 2:00pm in the parking lot of the New Fairfield Senior Center to approve the proposed Noise Ordinance for New Fairfield.

The proposed ordinance has been under consideration for over a year and was brought forward to respond to the hundreds of complaints received by the First Selectman. The Board of Selectmen have held a Public Hearing and a Technical Workshop open to the public to review the need for an ordinance and how best to draft it. The draft has also been discussed at several Board of Selectmen meetings. Significant modifications were made to narrow the quiet hours and to make sure that desirable and necessary activities are not prohibited.

The proposed ordinance governs excessive noise in all parts of New Fairfield – both in neighborhoods and on Candlewood Lake and sets common sense limitations. It is designed to be enforceable and

- prohibits excessive noise between the hours of 10pm-6am Monday-Saturday and from 10pm-8am on Sundays and holidays;
- prohibits noise that is “plainly audible” at specified distances from specific nuisance sources, such as loudspeakers on land or the lake, motor vehicles that exceed state limits, ATVs, dogs barking for more than 15 minutes at a time;
- makes common sense exemptions such as emergency sirens and vehicles, emergency generators, snow removal equipment (including ATVs used for such purpose), activities sponsored by the Town or Schools, and utility maintenance;
- provides for variances, if justified;
- provides enforcement and penalties, to be administered by the Chief of Police or their designee or DEEP or their designee.

The proposed ordinance addresses loud, persistent noise. It does not prohibit:

- enjoying music at a local restaurant;
- wind chimes in your yard;
- listening to music inside or outside your home at a reasonable volume during daytime hours;
- your kids from making noise in your yard during daytime hours;
- “rolling thunder” moving down Route 39 on a spring day;
- the occasional outdoor party or celebration, or anything similar.

State statute requires approval of local noise ordinances by the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. DEEP gave our proposal preliminary approval on August 11, 2021, allowing us to schedule to Town Meeting to approve the proposed ordinance. DEEP has specifically told the Town that the “plainly audible” standard is enforceable.

Voting will be outdoors at the Senior Center, using paper ballots. Masks are required.