



Vizcaya  
2020 Restated Declaration of Condominium  
Article V 5.1(i)  
Proposed Changes Flooring Second Level

**DISCUSSION:**

Siebein Associates Inc., Consultants in Architectural and Environmental Acoustics from Gainesville, FL did sound testing at Vizcaya in 2012. As a result, the DRC contacted them again to ask about improvements in materials for underlayment and if the same tests were performed today, could Vizcaya expect better results.

The answer was that the same Apparent Impact Insulation Class (AIIC) tests would have to be performed again with the new materials. This testing would require the cooperation of the first-floor neighbor. For a test to be conducted, the flooring and underlayment used for the testing would have to be fully installed before testing can begin. The test result in 2012, with carpeting on the second floor, had an AIIC rating of 69. Thus, the new results would have to meet an AIIC rating of 69 or higher and be conducted by a professional architectural company with suitable national acoustical credentials that comply with ASTM (formerly the American Society for Testing and Materials) standards.

This leaves several issues. Assuming that all costs would be paid by the homeowner, expenses will involve the cost for the acoustical testing, installation of the new hard surface flooring and possibly removal of the hard surface flooring and installation of new carpeting if the testing does not produce an AIIC rating of 69 or higher. The idea behind removal of the hard surface flooring is not to make things worse for the first-floor owners. For Vizcaya, there is one other possible cost, the need to have a contract between the Association and the homeowner that defines the agreement, especially the hard-surface floor removal if required.

Key points that the consultant made were: 1.) The flooring system must be fully installed for testing, a small sample will not work as the full floor/ceiling assembly must be included to determine accurate AIIC measurements, 2.) The testing cost of \$4,000-\$5,000 is a reasonable planning estimate, 3.) They did not try to estimate the cost of materials, installation and possibly removal of the hard surface flooring and more carpeting, 4.) They thought an AIIC rating of 69 would be very difficult to achieve and possibly not achievable. They agreed that there are many new underlayments on the market, but that is only one variable in the overall equation. More specifically, testing at Vizcaya ten years ago, produced an AIIC rating of 69 on carpet. Given that the assembly has not changed, then it was their belief that any hard surface flooring would not be better than the prior carpeting AIIC measurement and likely to be in the low 50s.

A second option would be for Vizcaya to conduct a test on two units and share the results on a generalized basis for other second floor owners. However, per Siebein, each type of hard surface flooring and underlayment would require a separate test. Again, costs are a major consideration for the Association and Unit owners.

**DRC Position:** Given the very expensive costs to the unit owner(s) and/or Vizcaya, and the negligible chance of reducing the noise level, and a high probability of increasing the noise level, *the DRC does not recommend that this issue be pursued.*

9-14-2023