

Joshua Young
Air Safety Investigator
AS-ERA

Date: 7/27/2023
Subject: ERA23FA313, Witness Interview
Contact: Dave Ericson, Witness

Mr. Ericson was contacted by phone on July 28, 2023, at 0901 Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) and the call lasted for 8 minutes. Below is a summary of what was discussed.

- About 7 pm he was in the backyard with his dogs.
- He saw the airplane in a steep left bank with the wings perpendicular to the ground.
- He could only see the belly of the airplane.
- He was worried that the airplane was going to hit the house across the street from his house it was so low. When asked if he recalled the landing gear being down or up, he reported that he believes the gear were down.
- He stated that he did not see the airplane for very long it was just a very short visual.
- When asked if the airplane was at a normal altitude for those that normally fly over his home, he stated no it was much lower than anything he had ever seen.

- He stated that when the airplane disappeared from his view, he heard 2 pops that sounded like it may have hit trees, he clarified that it did not sound like pops from an engine.
- He reported hearing the engine and that there was no smoke or anything and that nothing sounded wrong with it.

He was thanked for his time and help with the investigation. The call ended at 0909 EDT.

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Date: 7/27/2023
Subject: ERA23FA313, Witness Interview
Contact: Thomas L. Robrecht, Witness

Mr. Robrecht emailed his contact info to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) reporting that he had been a witness to the accident which occurred on July 25, 2023, in Harford County, MD. He was contacted by NTSB investigators by phone on July 27, 2023, at 0833 Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) and the conversation lasted 24 minutes. Below is a summary of what was discussed.

- He reported going outside to work in his yard just before 7 pm.
- His house is about 1 mile NW from the end of runway 19 and he can not see the airport due to a stand of trees.
- He reported that just after 7 pm, about 7:05 pm he heard an airplane start its takeoff roll without hearing it do a run up. He found this particularly intriguing as he is a student pilot and has been taught the importance of doing a run up before each flight.
- He reported the airport was using runway 1 at the time as there was a light breeze out of the north and he had seen an airplane takeoff earlier using this runway.
- He stated immediately on roll out the engine sounded very loud and he thought it may have been a "warbird" or that it was running particularly rich due to the loud sound it made.

- He reported that normally aircraft that were in the traffic pattern for runway 1 would bank left and pass over his house.
- He reported that the duration of the takeoff roll and climb out sounded normal, and that the engine tone, RPM, and loud volume did not change for the duration of the flight until 3 seconds before impact, to include the steep left turn
- He reported the whole flight lasted only about 45 seconds.
- He reported hearing what sounded like a significant change in direction, as one would expect from the airplane executing a steep left turn to return to the airport.
- He reported that at no time during the flight did the engine sputter or backfire until the final 3 seconds before he heard the sound of the impact, at which time all engine noise abruptly stopped.
- He stated that at approximately 3 seconds before impact, all engine noise went completely silent, from total loud noise to crickets.
- He stated the impact sounded unmistakable as a crash, and was characterized by a brief metallic scraping noise as if the plane was contacting some type of vegetation, as opposed to a loud and sudden explosion.
- He reported that he then drove up his driveway toward his neighbor's house and saw him outside in his yard. He asked if he had seen or heard the airplane, and the neighbor told him that he heard the airplane and saw the airplane's white belly in a steep left bank.
- He and the neighbor immediately went to look for the accident site and when they were unable to find one Mr. Robrecht called 911 at approximately 1920 EDT to report what he thought was possibly a plane crash.
- He reported that the weather was clear and "a perfect evening to fly."
- He reported that there were no other aircraft in the traffic pattern at the time and that this was not an uncommon time for people to be flying.

Mr. Robrecht was thanked for his time and his help with the investigation, and the call ended at 0857 EDT.