

Airport Advisory Committee Meeting  
St. Mary's County Regional Airport  
January 22, 2007

***Approved Minutes***

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Bill McNamara, Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. Other members present were: Korey Smith, Erin Lesko, Skip Shepherd and Joe Mitchell. Ned Clarke was excused on travel. Recognizing that a quorum was present, Mr. McNamara noted that official business could be conducted. Others in attendance are reflected on the Sign-In Sheet.

**II. MINUTES**

The Committee reviewed the draft December minutes. Bill McNamara moved and Korey Smith seconded a motion to approve the December minutes as drafted. The motion passed with a vote of 4-0. The approved minutes for October are posted to the County website.

**III. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Mr. McNamara began his Chairman's Report by welcoming the newest member of the Airport Advisory Committee, Mr. John (Skip) Shepherd. Mr. Shepherd joins the committee for a three year term through December 31, 2009. Mr. Shepherd formally introduced himself to the rest of the committee and gave a brief explanation of his background and experience with both the community and the airport.

For the benefit of Mr. Shepherd, as well as a reminder to the rest of the committee, Mr. McNamara reviewed the current committee by-laws, dated December 11, 2001, as contained in the handouts for the committee members. Mr. McNamara highlighted Article IV, Duties, to summarize the responsibilities of the committee; 1) preparation and revision of the Airport Master Plan, budgets and operational plans; 2) economic development plans to increase airport revenue; 3) lease development; 4) relationships with federal and state agencies; 5) relationships with airport tenants and users; and 6) relationships with Patuxent River Naval Air Station.

As another administrative matter, Mr. McNamara reminded the committee that elections must be held at the beginning of the year, per Article III, Membership, paragraph 4. The committee will hold the elections for calendar year 2007 at the February meeting. Mr. McNamara encouraged all members to consider serving, and suggested that nominations be considered before the February meeting.

Mr. McNamara advised the rest of the committee about the Army Corps of Engineers Public Notice issued on December 18, 2006 for the wetlands mitigation required for the airport expansion. The Public Notice was issued after the last meeting of the committee on December 11, 2006, and was sent to all adjacent property owners. The comment period closes on January 25, 2007, after a 15 calendar-day extension at the request of concerned adjacent property owners. Mr. Whipple will provide further information during the Public Works and Transportation Department report.

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

The committee raised questions regarding the proximity of the Wildewood Elementary School project to the airport. The Board of Appeals approved Conditional Use for the use of the property (CUAP #05-132-049) in November 2005, and approved the Concept Site Plan at its January 11, 2007 meeting. The property is approximately 55 acres and located at the end of

Wildewood Parkway. Mr. Korey Smith attended the meeting on behalf of the Committee and believed that the interests of the airport needed to be communicated more directly to the Board of Education and the Board of County Commissioners. The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) submitted a letter to the Board of Appeals, dated January 9, 2007, expressing their concern about safety, noise impacts and encroachment. The committee requested that a similar letter be drafted to the Board of Education expressing their same concerns from a disclosure standpoint to ensure planned airport operations are not adversely affected in the future. The committee is not opposed to the construction of new schools in the County, but wants to ensure that the operating environment of the airport is preserved in this particular case. The committee noted that the Cedar Cove subdivision was required to provide additional sound attenuation measures through the NAS Pax River AICUZ program, and that such a cooperative arrangement could be arranged for the school. Mr. Whipple indicated that the Department would draft and submit such a letter or memorandum to the Board of Education. The committee would also like to familiarize the Planning Director and the new President of the Board of County Commissioners with the airport and its value to the community.

## **V. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS & TRANSPORTATION REPORT**

Mr. Gary Whipple represented the Department. The Army Corps of Engineers Public Notice for the wetlands mitigation work caused concern among several of the adjacent property owners. The exhibit included in the public notice made reference to 'property interest acquisition' with respect to several adjacent private residences, leading several property owners to conclude that the County had plans to acquire their property by either fee simple purchase or through condemnation procedures. Commissioners Mattingly and Raley and Mr. Erichsen met with several of the adjacent property owners on January 15, 2007 to explain the airport expansion plans and the process for obtaining avigation easements. The County explained the purpose of avigation easements (to protect airspace through a cooperative agreement) and ensured the property owners that the County had to negotiate the easements and cannot acquire them by invoking eminent domain. The County provided a copy of a sample avigation easement for reference. (A copy of the subsequent letter sent to the adjacent property owners is part of the January handouts).

Gary Whipple briefed the committee on the research project survey being conducted by one of our local aviation enthusiasts, Mr. Jim McCarthy, as part of his studies with Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. His study is evaluating the effectiveness of instrument approach procedures. Gary Whipple gave Mr. McCarthy the current list of based aircraft operators to assist in the survey. Mr. McCarthy's has promised to share his results with the advisory committee at a later date.

Gary Whipple provided a draft Calendar Year 2006 Annual Report for committee review and comment. Mr. McNamara asked that the committee be provided an electronic version of the report for editing and comments, with input from committee members due back to the Chairman by February 9, 2007. The goal of the committee is to finalize comments at the February meeting and schedule a presentation to the Board of County Commissioners for the spring. Mr. Bildman also requested a copy of the draft report and suggested that the economic impact study be incorporated into the final Annual Report.

Gary Whipple provided a copy of the FAA's Determination of No Hazard to Air Navigation, dated January 12, 2007, for a proposed antenna tower extension along Route 4 near Indian Bridge Road. The proposed antenna extension project was briefed at the December 11, 2006 meeting, and the concerns about impacts to flight operations were forwarded to the FAA and included in the determination. The determination states that the aeronautical study considered and analyzed the impact on existing and proposed arrival, departure, and en route procedures for aircraft operating under both visual and instrument flight rules; and the cumulative impact resulting from the studied structure when combined with the impact of

other existing and proposed structures. The study disclosed that the described structure would have no substantial adverse effect on air navigation. The study also dictated that the extended tower structure be marked and/or lighted in accordance with FAA guidance. Since it was not clear as to what the FAA considered as far as future plans for the airport and possible changes to approach minimums, the committee asked that there be follow-up with the FAA, to be coordinated with the FBO.

Gary Whipple provided an update to the Phase I Wetlands Mitigation Plan. The Mitigation Plan identifies the Metropolitan Commission's St. Clements Shores Treatment Plant as the preferred site for providing wetlands mitigation for the airport expansion. The Department has been working with METCOM and the County Attorney to identify the conservation easement documents necessary to secure these sites and obtain MDE permit approval. Delta Airport Consultants and MDE representatives visited the St. Clements Shores facility on January 17, 2007 to delineate the potential areas for the wetlands mitigation.

Gary Whipple noted that the FAA Notice of Construction for the airfield signage package was forwarded to the FAA on December 27, 2006 for their concurrence with the plan layout and sign construction details.

## **VI. FBO AND LEASEHOLDER REPORTS**

Mr. Bildman reported that the failures of the back gate are mostly due to tampering (90%), and that the gate fails approximately every two weeks. The box protecting the motor has been modified by the County to allow Airtec to access the equipment and service the gate when it fails.

The next hangar to be constructed will be approximately 48-ft by 144-ft and will house four aircraft. This will increase the total capacity to 96 aircraft. The current waiting period for hangar space ranges from one to five years. The construction of additional hangar space is currently constrained by stormwater management restrictions, but the airport expansion project will address this matter.

Mr. Bildman indicated that the Master Lease/Operating Agreement is expected to be endorsed by the County Attorney's Office and submitted the Board of County Commissioners for approval.

Mr. Bildman recommended that the economic impact analysis that was provided to the Maryland Aviation Administration should be included in the annual report for 2006.

## **VII. NEW/OLD BUSINESS**

The committee will prepare the calendar year 2006 Annual Report beginning with the meeting in January 2007.

The committee will plan and prepare an Airport Crash & Rescue Drill with the Emergency Management Agency and the Emergency Operations Center for the summer of 2007. The committee wants to ensure that the Hollywood and Bay District Volunteer Fire Departments are aware of their responsibilities under the Airport Emergency Plan. The subcommittee for this exercise will be Bill McNamara, Ned Clarke, Erin Lesko, and Walter Gillette. Tentative plans to meet with the Hollywood VFD are set for February 13, 2007.

The next meeting is scheduled for 6:00 PM on February 26, 2007 at the County Airport in the Walter F. Duke Terminal Building Conference Room. Mr. LeRoy Mattingly of NAS Pax River Air Operations has agreed to return to further discuss AICUZ issues.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Having heard no additional comments, Mr. McNamara recommended the meeting be adjourned. Korey Smith moved and Joe Mitchell seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting, which passed by a vote of 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved,

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Gary B. Whipple, P.E.  
Recording Secretary

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Bill McNamara  
Chairman