



Solano County
Airport Land Use Commission
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Steve Vancil
Chairman

MINUTES OF THE SOLANO COUNTY AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION Meeting of February 13, 2014

The meeting of the Solano County Airport Land Use Commission was held in the Solano County Administration Center, Board Chambers (1st floor), 675 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA 94533.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners Potter, Baldwin, Cavanagh, Baumler, Seiden, DuClair, Randall and Chairman Vancil

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: Jim Leland, Principal Planner, Resource Management; Lee Axelrad, Deputy County Counsel; Kristine Letterman, Administrative Secretary, Resource Management

Item Nos.

1, 2 & 3:

Chairman Vancil called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Item No. 4. Approval of the Agenda

A request was made by staff to add two additional items to the agenda: 1) a report on the C-17 Flight Orientation held at Travis AFB and, 2) an update from the February 4, 2014 Solano County Board of Supervisors meeting. Staff noted that this request was being made because the information became available subsequent to the ALUC agenda being posted.

A motion was made by Commissioner Seiden and seconded by Commissioner Randall to add these discussion items to the agenda under Item 9D. The motion passed unanimously.

Item No. 5. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of December 12, 2013 were approved with an addition to Item 9A on page 2 to include the result of the vote on the motion which was approved 7-0, with one abstention.

Item No. 6. Committee Reports

There were no committee reports.

Item No. 7. Public Comment

There was no one from the public wishing to speak.

Item No. 8. Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

Item No. 9. New Business

- A. **Workshop:** Conduct a **Workshop** to provide guidance to staff on the requirements for aviation uses in Zone C and the controlling Part 77 Surfaces for the Nut Tree Airport.

Jim Leland provided a brief summary of the staff report. He stated that the Jimmy Doolittle Center (JDC) Education Foundation is designing a facility proposed for a site adjacent to the Nut Tree Airport. The JDC development will include an aviation related museum, corporate training center, hotel and restaurant on approximately 25 acres. In order to design a facility that is consistent with the Nut Tree Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP), the JDC is requesting an interpretation from the Commission on the requirements for aviation related uses within Compatibility Zone C as well as a determination as to which Part 77 Surfaces govern at the Nut Tree Airport.

Corbett Smith of Mead & Hunt Incorporated briefly reviewed the letter referenced as Attachment C in staff's written report. He stated that it is the opinion of Mead & Hunt that the Airspace Plan referenced in the 1998 ALUCP is no longer applicable and that the current Airspace Plan dated November 2013 be used for height restriction purposes. He said it is also in their opinion that the second story limitation is specified for the purpose of intensity restriction and control, not for the purpose of height restrictions and airspace protection, as building height is restricted by Part 77.

Chairman Vancil stated that currently the airport land use plan has a precision runway into the Nut Tree Airport, but the latest master plan update eliminated that precision approach, which was found to be compatible with the plan. He said the current non-precision approach into Nut Tree is minimum 1 mile. He further explained why the change was made from the 500 foot offset to 250 feet. He commented that the FAA has redone the FAR airspace because the master plan was updated. Mr. Vancil said that he felt this to be a worthwhile project and was in support of it. He said he was glad to be having this discussion and looking at future impacts on the Nut Tree Airport and the ability to have a lower, better precision approach.

Mr. Smith stated that while it is important to protect Part 77 Surfaces around an airport, the FAA does not necessarily view it as a cut and dry surface. There are instances where trees or buildings penetrate the area and the FAA has ways of dealing with that. It is not necessarily that an obstruction somewhere in the Part 77 Surfaces is going to impact approaches. Mr. Smith commented that there needs to be more detailed studies with TERP Surfaces which are the surfaces associated with the specific approaches. He said the Part 77 Surfaces are typically more conservative and more encompassing than those TERP Surfaces so it is the ideal to strive for.

Mr. Smith stated that the plan talks of two-story office buildings being prohibited and he commented that the multi-story limitation is aimed more toward the two-story being an accumulation of small cubicles which house numerous personnel.

Commissioner Potter asked staff for their interpretation with regard to hangar vs. the description of a two-story building.

Mr. Leland said that it would depend upon the configuration of the specific hangar and how much mezzanine it had in relation to the ground floor of the hangar itself. He said the question is if this project is an office or retail use because those are the uses that are restricted to one-story. Mr. Leland stated that the last time the JDC was before the commission the commission classified the use as aviation related. He said that the use is not specifically called out in the Nut Tree plan so the commission will need to make an interpretation as to where aviation related uses fit within the standards. Mr. Leland said that staff agrees with the consultant that aviation use, especially a hangar with a small mezzanine with activity occurring sporadically, is not the same as retail sales facilities or office buildings with many occupants. He said that those were restricted to one-story to limit the number of people per acre. Staff feels that this hangar is a different kind of a use than an office building and so the Part 77 is adequate guidance on the height of their particular structure because it is not going to have the intensity of use that retail or office would have in terms of number of people during the day.

Commissioner Potter asked if there are any implications for the hotel-restaurant-convention center complex relative to this zone.

Mr. Leland said that there are implications because it is located in Compatibility Zone E and the hotel and convention center was approved by the ALUC at the Nut Tree Ranch hearing. He said this is a reconfiguration of that land use.

Commissioner DuClair said that his concept of a hangar would be the old style type where the shops are located on the first deck and the mezzanine would house supplies. He commented that he did not have an issue with a second floor mezzanine.

Dave Daly, Manager, Nut Tree Airport, stated that he supports what JDC is doing and supports the request with respect to Part 77 in terms of height. He noted that the Part 77 regulations have not changed, but that the master plan for the airport has. He referred to the aerial map saying that the map was prepared for the purpose of identifying the trees penetrating the Part 77 Surface that applies to the runaway as it is today. Mr. Daly said that in applying the correct current Part 77 Surfaces to the airport is narrowing down where those surfaces start. He said that it plays to the type of airport the Nut Tree is and the instrument approaches function for the airport, and in the long term those surfaces are not envisioned as changing or planned to change because of the type of runway. Mr. Daly stated that the runway was limited in the master plan so functionally the surfaces that exist today can operate for the Nut Tree Airport in the long term. He voiced support for the proposal and the application of the Part 77 Surface as it applies to the airport today.

Commissioner Randall stated that his vision of retail would be similar to that of the Nut Tree Center and he was not sure how that would fit with what is being proposed.

Mr. Smith explained that they are not proposing that retail is associated with this project. He said the retail language comes from the plan. The plan states retail, motels, office and financial uses are the uses restricted to one-story within Zone C and so that is why those issues were raised. Mr. Smith said that they do not feel the proposed project falls into any of those categories. He said that it is in fact an aviation use and thus not subject to the multi-story restrictions.

Commissioner Seiden stated that he would presume there would be a plan for the museum to have a gift shop, but that the gift shop would be located within the major

portion of the museum as opposed to the hangar portion hence the concern about retail. Mr. Smith noted that that would be correct.

Commissioner Baldwin inquired about vertical navigation and where the commission is headed in the future with regard to vertical navigation.

Chairman Vancil stated that because the current FAR Part 77 has only 1 mile visibility approach, the Part 77 airspace has been brought in close to the runway to 250 feet to where it currently starts. He said the approach that currently exists is what the FAA will use. He said it is possible at some point in time and at some of the airports where they have GPS approaches that are both horizontal and vertical where the minimums are now lower.

Chairman Vancil said that the immediate question before the commission is if there is agreement with this proposal. If the building goes forward then at that point in time the 1 mile visibility is basically fixed. He said that is the best Nut Tree will ever have for approaches. Mr. Vancil stated that he is supportive of the project and that it is a great plan and a great vision for Nut Tree. He commented that he did wish that sometime in the future the approaches can be lowered.

Lee Axelrad commented that since this item is a workshop it is not necessary to formulate a singular resolution on behalf of the commission. He said the feedback the commission is providing in the discussion should be sufficient and appropriate guidance for staff and for the applicant.

B. Action Item: Conduct a Public Hearing to consider the consistency of the Southtown General Plan Amendment and Rezoning (hereafter, 'Southtown Project') with the Travis Air Force Base Land Use Compatibility Plan: Applicant - City of Vacaville

Christina Corsello, City of Vacaville, provided a brief presentation with the details of the proposed project. The project was originally approved by the City of Vacaville in 2004. A portion of the site was designated Residential Low Density in the City's General Plan and was zoned RL-5 (Residential Low). This would have permitted the construction of 142 single family homes.

The developer of the property is now seeking a general plan amendment to change the designation from Residential Low Density (3.1 to 5.0 units per acre) to Residential Low-Medium (5.1 to 8.0 units per acre). The developer is also seeking a rezoning of the property from RL-5 to RLM-4.5 in order to permit a different set of development standards to be applied to the project. The project will still consist of 142 single family homes but will be able to take advantage of more relaxed development standards permitting different home plans to be built. The site lies entirely within Compatibility Zone D of the Travis Air Force Base Land Use Compatibility Plan.

Mr. Leland stated that staff is recommending that the commission find this project consistent with the city's general plan.

Commissioner DuClair inquired if the use of solar panels on the homes would create a reflecting light pollution problem for Travis Air Force Base.

Mr. Leland stated that Travis' concern focuses on large utility scale projects. He said that in his communications with Travis on these types of projects, they have never raised an issue with regard to residential solar projects because the PV panels that are used are generally non-reflective and are not an issue. Mr. Leland commented that one of the things the commission may want to discuss at a later date is some of the information that staff received from Travis with regard to solar panels.

Since there were no further questions of staff, Chairman Vancil opened the public hearing. There were no speakers either for or against this matter therefore the public hearing was closed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Potter and seconded by Commissioner Randall to adopt the recommended findings and determine that the Southtown Project is consistent with the Travis Air Force Base Land Use Compatibility Plan. The motion passed unanimously. (Resolution No. 14-01)

- C. Action Item:** Conduct a Public Hearing to consider the consistency of the Vanden Meadows General Plan and Specific Plan Amendments and Pre-zoning to RL-6 (hereafter, 'Vanden Meadows Project') with the Travis Air Force Base Land Use Compatibility Plan: Applicant - City of Vacaville

Christina Corsello briefly reviewed the particulars of the project. She stated that the project consists of a General Plan amendment and pre-zoning to permit a 32 lot subdivision on a previously approved apartment site. The project was previously determined to be compatible with the Travis Plan on February 9, 2012. A portion of the site which was previously approved received a designation as "Residential High Density" in the City's general plan. The Residential High Density designation would have resulted in a 192 unit apartment project.

Ms. Corsello stated that the developer is now seeking a new general plan designation for the former apartment site which would permit the construction of 32 single family homes. In addition to the general plan amendment, the developer is also seeking a pre-zoning of the property to RL-6 to permit the single family homes subdivision. The subject site lies entirely within Compatibility Zone D of the Travis Air Force Base Land Use Compatibility Plan.

Mr. Leland stated that staff is recommending that the commission find this project consistent with the city's general plan.

Commissioner Randall inquired about the city's requirement to provide multiple-family units. Ms. Corsello stated that the developer will be finding a new location for the apartments at a later date.

Commissioner Seiden stated that he attended the city council meeting when this item was heard before the council and it was in his recollection that residents from surrounding areas expressed concerns about increased traffic and crime associated with multi-density housing. He believed that a promise was made by the developer to not dispense with the required housing but rather to move it to a different location.

Chairman Vancil opened the public hearing. Since there were no speakers either for or against this matter, the public hearing was closed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Seiden and seconded by Commissioner DuClair to adopt the recommended findings and determine that the Vanden Meadows Project is consistent with the Travis Air Force Base Land Use Compatibility Plan. The motion passed unanimously. (Resolution No. 14-02)

It was noted for the record that Commissioner Baumler had another appointment and was excused by the chairman from the dais.

- D. Discussion Item:** 1) Discussion by the Chairman of the formation of an Executive Committee of the Airport Land Use Commission; 2) a report from staff on the C-17 Flight Orientation held at Travis AFB; 3) an update from staff of the February 4, 2014 Solano County Board of Supervisors meeting.

Mr. Leland stated that several ALUC commissioners and county staff were given an opportunity by Travis Air Force Base representatives to tour the tower and RAPCON Facility at the base. The participants were also taken on a flight in a C-17. Mr. Leland commented that the C-17 went through a series of maneuvers that simulate assault landing zone approaches.

Mr. Leland noted that during their flight there was some discussion on the subject of wind turbines. He stated that it was mentioned by base personnel that due to the various models of turbines, there is no precise way to know how many wind turbines are acceptable in an area. Mr. Leland stated that one issue the county is going to want to address as the Travis update gets underway is how to regulate commercial wind turbines in such a way that it is simple to administer.

Commissioner Baldwin inquired about the number of towers that are proposed by PG&E and SMUD.

Mr. Yankovich stated that SMUD will be putting in another project in the Collinsville area and are proposing 20 to 25 turbines.

Commissioner Seiden commented that there is a replacement project underway to remove older smaller turbines and replace them with larger newer ones. He said that the Air Force was clear that anything over the hill from the Travis radar antenna itself is virtually irrelevant to them. What matters is everything that rises above the horizon that the antenna will see and it is that mass of array of antennas that is creating false targets. Mr. Seiden stated that it was his impression when he was in the cockpit on the flight that the controllers were not confident that everything they were seeing was all they wanted to see. He referred to the 80% that is constantly being referred to as an acceptable level of target acquisition and stated that as a professional pilot, 20% risk is unacceptable.

Commissioner Seiden said that another topic that came up is the development proposal to place solar panels on Ryer Island where virtually the entire island will be covered with panels. He said that is a model that has been put forth to help evaluate the impact of glint and glare of those solar panels in large volume. He voiced his interest in attending any meetings with regard to that project if it is available to the commission.

Mr. Leland stated that another issue that was raised in conversation was when the turbines were originally built they were much smaller in size and energy production. As they are being upgraded they are much taller and powerful, and in the future, even taller.

He stated that one of the issues the commission is going to have to confront in the Travis Plan is the repowering of that area and if a height limit over the wind resource area should be imposed. He commented that the 80% probability of detection is a troublesome way to administer the plan because there is not a guarantee that information from the base will always be accessible. Mr. Leland stated that the county needs something simpler so that it is easy for the county to administer and review a project for consistency.

Commissioner Randall spoke about the lack of focus on safety. He stated that there are existing turbines in the area where it is now being questioned if they were appropriate because of the impacts that are now known. He believed that the area should be preserved for what the Air Force needs to make their mission, and that these types of projects should not be allowed in that area.

Mr. Yankovich stated that these turbines have a life span and it is the future that needs to be focused on. It could be that the commission would consider a maximum height limit or a specific number of turbines and that focus could be generated as a part of the study. Mr. Yankovich commented that he believed the wind turbines to be more of a concern for the base than solar because solar is more of a fixture and can be dealt with more readily.

Commissioner Seiden commented that another factor that was alluded to because of the comments made by base personnel is that the towers are getting taller and may continue to get taller. He stated that the job of the ALUC is to make recommendations to protect the airports. He said it is a critical national interest to keep Travis viable.

Mr. Leland mentioned that Travis Air Force Base is hosting another event which will take place from 1 to 4 p.m. on February 20th at the base. The event will include a similar tour that staff participated in of the RAPCON Facility and tower. He noted that it will not include a flight on a C-17. Commissioners Potter and Vancil voiced interest in attending the tour.

Mr. Leland gave a brief update on the February 4th Board of Supervisors meeting with regard to the approval of the project budget for the Travis Plan update.

Chairman Vancil spoke about the formation of an executive committee for the Travis Plan, also noting that some State funding has become available for the Nut Tree and Rio Vista Plan updates as well. He commented that the main purpose of the ALUC is to prepare airport land use plans and view applications as to whether they are consistent or inconsistent with those plans. The Rio Vista and Nut Tree plans are dated 1988 and the last update of the Travis Plan was in 2002. Mr. Vancil noted that the commission will be very busy in the next year.

Chairman Vancil stated that as part of the update, as commissioners, they need to be engaged with the public and the developers in interest with the updates. He said that this committee would help in keeping with that goal so staff and individuals involved with the update can receive feedback from the commission without having the whole commission meet. He said the process would be very cumbersome if the parties involved have to wait for the regular monthly commission meetings in order to proceed forward. He said that it has been previously discussed that at some point formulating a technical committee which would deal directly with the people involved in the nuts and bolts of the updates, and also a policy committee that would deal with business leaders, elected officials, and more senior people involved in the process. Now that there are three separate plans to update, it needs to be considered if a separate committee for each of them should be formulated

or maybe one technical committee that reviews all of the plans. Mr. Vancil asked the commission for their thoughts on how the commission should set themselves up to help engage the interested parties.

Commissioner Potter spoke of his prior experience with setting up an executive committee and stated that it did not take long for that committee to assume command and to become the authority on the subjects that the full body had not voted on or were not informed about. He said the lessons learned would suggest that when a committee is formed that the commission should set the rules of power of what that committee can and cannot do. Mr. Potter stated that because this process will be set in motion for a year or more that the committee could evolve into a permanent body and would be vested in the information and technical issues.

Chairman Vancil stated that he viewed the executive committee more as a steering committee. He said that between himself and the vice-chair, Commissioner Seiden, they communicate periodically with staff between meetings so in some sense this type of committee already exists. He said that the question would be if the commission may want to augment that so as to add a third commissioner to make sure there is strong representation for all three airports.

Commissioner Cavanagh stated that he sees this not as an executive committee in a sense where votes are taken or the work of the commission is being done, but is a way to make staff aware of the sense of the commission and reduces the length of the commission meetings. He supported the idea.

Commissioner Potter stated that certainly what the chair and vice-chair currently are doing is reflective of the commission's thoughts and feelings, and they could continue to do that without forming any kind of an executive committee. He supported leaving the process as it currently exists.

Commissioner DuClair agreed stating that the full commission is always available to help when needed.

Chairman Vancil was confident that he and Commissioner Seiden could strongly represent all three airports. He stated the commission now needs to think about how they are going to engage in technical and policy committees, and his thought would be to form 1 technical committee and 1 policy committee to handle all three updates.

Mr. Leland commented that the committees that will oversee the Travis update are going to involve multiple jurisdictions and elected officials. He did not believe that the Rio Vista and Nut Tree Airport updates would require either a policy or technical committee in comparison to the Travis Plan update, and if there were a need, he did not believe they would be of the same composition of people.

Chairman Vancil stated that he would agree that the Travis Plan is going to get a lot more political interest than the others because of potential base closure issues and economic issues.

With regard to the Brown Act, Commissioner Potter inquired if it will be possible for the chair or vice-chair in their interfacing and communicating that they can get a straw poll vote from commissioners electronically on issues that arise.

Mr. Axelrad stated that the subject on which they would be limited in their ability to do that would be with respect to placing items on the agenda. He said that they can take a poll with respect to any substantive matter or discussion of anything. For example, if the chair was inclined to put something on the agenda and wanted to alert the commissioners that it was going to be on the agenda well in advance of a regular agenda cycle, something could be sent to the commissioners but it would be a one-way communication; there could not be any substantive discussion in any fashion or feedback from the commissioners.

Chairman Vancil announced that he and the vice-chair will continue working with the staff as they currently do. He stated that in the meantime he would like the other commissioners to think about potentially serving on a policy or technical committee.

E. Action Item: Discussion of alternative days/times for regular meetings during the Travis Plan Update.

Chairman Vancil noted that staff took an administrative poll with the commission regarding a change in day and time of the regular commission meetings with regard to the Travis Plan update process. He shared the results noting that most commissioners preferred day time meetings with the most popular day being Wednesday or Thursday. He himself favored having afternoon meetings.

Commissioner Seiden favored the choice being in deference to those who work fulltime

Commissioner DuClair stated that Mondays and Tuesdays are not good, but he was flexible most other days.

Commissioner Randall questioned the reason for the change.

Chairman Vancil stated that this would save on county expense for employee overtime. He stated that it would also save on expense for consultants and other people under contract who travel to and from the meetings or live out of town and have hotel expenses.

Mr. Leland stated that not only county staff will be attending these meetings, but each city will assign staff members to monitor the process who will quickly run up overtime expenses especially for these type of intense projects that can run for a year or more.

Commissioner Cavanagh stated that while he is sympathetic to overtime and consultant costs, a day time meeting would be money out of his project and so he could not support the proposed change in meeting time.

Chairman Vancil stated that the concern is in the engagement with the public noting that evening meetings allow the public better access.

Mr. Axelrad stated that the commission has bylaws that are required to designate a regular meeting day which is for the purpose of alerting the public in general that there will be meetings held at a certain time. He said that it is possible without changing the bylaws to designate for a certain period of time that the commission would like to have meetings held at alternate times. Those would simply be special meetings.

Commissioner Randall stated that a daytime schedule would be difficult for him because he is not retired.

Chairman Vancil hoped that a compromise could be reached and that maybe the commission could alternate a daytime meeting every other month. He said that he would like to engage as many commissioners and public as possible and would like to make things as efficient as possible.

Mr. Leland stated that the alternate daytime meetings would help in terms of the issue of overtime, but on the other hand it might be confusing to the public. He noted that since there are no meetings scheduled in the near future the commission may want to defer this discussion to allow more time to give it some thought.

Commissioner Cavanagh asked staff if they have considered simplifying the process by consolidating the three plan updates.

Commissioner Leland stated that the bias on the part of the people the county serves is to make the project contain a lot of public outreach, and to have the participation of officials and staff from other agencies. He said that if the county desires the local municipalities to be on board with supporting the plans, they need to involve the cities, both their politicians and their staff, so that they feel some ownership to the plan. Mr. Leland noted that staff does try to minimize the number of meetings.

Commissioner Cavanagh stated that the people the county is reaching out to, the public, the volunteers, and the people they want wrapped into the process, are probably the most appreciative of a simplified process. He said that he understood that the bureaucracy may not necessarily value that but he believed a warmer reception might be received to a more streamlined process than originally thought. Mr. Cavanagh said that he would like to see this concept given some consideration.

Commissioner Randall congratulated Mr. Leland on receiving a Commanders Coin for his extraordinary work with the ALUC.

Item No. 10. Adjournment

Since there was no further business the meeting was adjourned.