



Solano County
Airport Land Use Commission
675 Texas St., Suite 5500
Fairfield, California 94533-6341
www.solanocounty.com

Planning Services Division
Phone: (707) 784-6765 / Fax: (707) 784-4805

Steve Vancil
Chairman

MINUTES OF THE SOLANO COUNTY AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION Meeting of December 12, 2013

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: Potter, Baumler, Seiden, Randall and Chairman Vancil

MEMBERS ABSENT: Baldwin, Cavanagh, and DuClair

OTHERS PRESENT: Jim Leland, Resource Management; Lee Axelrad, County Counsel; Kristine Letterman, 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

The agenda was approved as prepared.

Item No. 5. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the November 14, 2013 meeting were unanimously approved as prepared.

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. Conduct a public hearing to consider adopting, and adopt by resolution, as its California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA") Implementing Procedures the State CEQA Guidelines found at California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15000 et seq., through incorporation by reference.

Jim Leland briefly reviewed staff's written report. He stated that the California Supreme Court, in the Muzzy Ranch case, decided that the adoption of land use compatibility plans by an airport land use commission is a "project" as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and is therefore subject to CEQA. As a result, many airport land use commissions have been adopting procedures for the conduct of CEQA review. The Solano County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) has not formally adopted procedures, but rather has relied on state statute for guidance. Staff believes that the commission should take the additional step of formally adopting, by reference, the applicable state regulations prior to making any future CEQA determinations.

Mr. Leland stated that another choice the commission would have is to create their own custom tailored local measures. He explained that many cities and counties will chose that option because they are accustomed to making numerous CEQA determinations throughout the course of a year, but since the volume of CEQA transactions before the ALUC body is so infrequent, it serves best to continue using the state guidelines and adopt a resolution to memorialize that decision. Staff recommended that the commission affirmatively adopt by resolution the state prescribed procedures embodied in the CEQA Guidelines.

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 Potter that the Airport Land Use Commission adopt as its CEQA implementing procedures the State CEQA Guidelines found at California Code of Regulations, title 14, section 15000 et seq, through incorporation by reference. The motion passed unanimously. (Resolution No. 13-09)

- B. Conduct a Public Hearing to consider amendments to, and adopt a resolution making findings and amending, the 2002 Travis Air Force Base Land Use Compatibility Plan (TAFB LUCP) by establishing an Assault Landing Zone Training Area (ALZTA) Overlay Zone by:
1. Amending Figure 2A of the TAFB LUCP and related text to modify the mapped Area of Influence to include the entire proposed ALZTA Overlay Zone and to create and map the ALZTA Overlay Zone, as depicted on Exhibit 1 (Proposed Amendment to Figure 2A), and
 2. Amending Table 2A of the TAFB LUCP and related text to prohibit within the ALZTA Overlay Zone structures with a height greater than 200 feet above ground level, as described on Exhibit 2 (Proposed Amendment to Table 2A).

Mr. Leland briefly reviewed staff's written report. He stated that at the regular meeting of September 12, 2013, the ALUC received a presentation from Travis Air Force Base regarding the utilization of the newly constructed and dedicated Assault Landing Zone. The Base has identified a training area for the conduct of low level flight operations. This training area, generally located between the Base and Highway 12, permits low level tactical flight training by the Base. In order to not introduce new obstructions into this area, the maximum height of any structure would not be permitted to exceed 200 feet above ground level in height. The commission directed staff to return with options for updating the 2002 Travis Plan with respect to the ALZTA.

At its November 14, 2013 regular meeting, the ALUC conducted a workshop on methods of amending the 2002 Travis Plan to establish land use policies to protect the ALZTA. The commission directed staff to utilize an "Overlay Zone" as the preferred means of amending the 2002 Plan and directed staff to return with a proposed amendment for consideration and potential adoption. Adoption of the proposed amendment is supported by a clear governmental purpose and need, namely, providing and preserving opportunities for military pilots to train and achieve proficiency in low altitude tactical approaches and departures.

Mr. Leland explained that the proposed amendment depicts the area to be protected and identifies the height restriction as the protection. He said this action is subject to CEQA and the CEQA recommendation by staff is that it is exempt under the common sense exemption.

Mr. Leland stated that the shape of the ALZTA was chosen with the help of information provided by the Base which included diagrams on flight tracks. What is before the commission tonight reflects the effort of an iterative process that staff has gone through with the Base. He stated that staff has had discussions about the fact that there is going to be a comprehensive update to the plan and that will be an opportunity should there be a need, to refine the shape of that area should the Base want to do that after they gain more experience utilizing the area.

Commissioner Potter commented that discussion has taken place with regard to a limitation to the vertical direction of the training area but the impacts that could occur in a horizontal direction have not been discussed. He said if any development of land, either residential or otherwise, by virtue of what is in existence now and even with this amendment, there are still no criteria upon which to judge the noise impact of these operations. He said that currently a residential area could be developed between Highways 12 and 113, noting that a clear example of encroachment is the development of the Trilogy community adjacent to the City of Rio Vista.

Mr. Leland stated that the overlay zone as currently depicted expands the area of influence toward Rio Vista. He said there are several areas near Rio Vista with an overlay zone, but no underlying land use regulations. He noted that the area is located within the unincorporated county and no part of the overlay is within Rio Vista's city limits. Mr. Leland noted that the land is designated agriculture in the county's general plan and is zoned for agriculture. He stated that the purpose of this proposed amendment is to address the immediate encroachment problem that was realized once the ALZTA was dedicated, so that the Base can maintain 500 feet A.G.L. where needed. Mr. Leland explained that the comprehensive update would include updating the noise criteria within the plan to take into account the 2009 Air Installation Compatible Use Zone and the ALZTA if it is in fact introducing any greater noise.

Since there were no further questions or comments, Chairman Vancil opened the public hearing.

Raymond Demos, 179 Ronda Drive, Fairfield, stated that as a military retiree he counts on the Base for many services and encroachment could upset the way of life for many retirees. Mr. Demos asked the commission to do whatever they could to keep the base open and active.

Since there were no further speakers, Chairman Vancil closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Potter spoke with regard to Table 2A and noted that at a prior meeting he suggested an asterisk be replaced with some type of a zone identifier. He referred to staff's suggestion of a designator such as a Zone F and supported that suggestion. He also inquired about a second asterisk that was listed on the table.

Mr. Leland explained that the second asterisk is in the existing plan and refers to a height overlay zone that is between the City of Fairfield and the Nut Tree Airport. It is initially why an asterisk was used for the height area because it seemed consistent. The ALZTA was used because it is the same as on the map legend.

Commissioner Potter stated that as the commission discusses these items it would become easier to refer to the area as Zone F. Mr. Leland commented that the Zones that are labeled alphabetically on the table are different than the height overlay so it might be misleading.

Chairman Vancil commented that although the ALZTA is a long acronym, it does differentiate that it is something unique from the other zones and would be made clearer if labeled this way.

Commissioner Potter complimented staff on their thorough and rigorous coverage of the details of government purpose and also of the history of how the commission arrived at this point with CEQA and with the other provisions due to Muzzy Ranch.

A motion was made by Commissioner Baumler and seconded by Commissioner Potter to adopt a resolution establishing the Assault Landing Zone Training Overlay Zone. The motion passed unanimously. (Resolution No. 13-08)

- C. Conduct a public hearing to consider adopting a scope of work and timeline for a comprehensive update to the TAFB LUCP.

Jim Leland stated that both the ALUC and the Board of Supervisors have taken actions to advance the cause of amending the 2002 TAFB LUCP which will be commencing next year. He explained that under state law, the County of Solano will provide staffing and support to the commission for this update. It is anticipated that a part of the support will be provided by a consultant. In order for the county to secure appropriate professional services and provide adequate staff resources, the county will be required to provide a general scope of work for the Travis Plan update.

Mr. Leland stated that staff has prepared a scope of work that is very general in order to give guidance to the county but leave them room to negotiate details with the consultant. The scope of work includes a set of assumptions regarding the update as well as a series of broadly defined tasks. Mr. Leland briefly reviewed those tasks and assumptions as contained in the staff report. He stated that staff anticipates that completing the entire update process will require approximately 18 months.

Commissioner Potter stated that he recalled, from a prior meeting, the mention of the allocation of funds for this update and asked staff to remind the commission of what that amount was.

Mr. Leland stated that the amount was approximately \$300,000. Staff believes that there may also be some Joint Land Use Study grant monies available, but noted that the Board expressed a desire to move forward with or without that grant money. Staff will be updating the budget to take before the Board which will encompass staffing requirements of the department.

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

Commissioner Potter spoke of the 2002 plan document that sets in place a maximum operations mission. He commented that another document which exists is from the Office of Planning and Research and is an advisory planning handbook for community and military compatibility planning, and it explicitly includes Travis AFB. He said the document also talks explicitly about the maximum mission provision.

Chairman Vancil commented that he is in favor of maintaining the maximum mission approach. He said that it was in the previous plan, and it was reviewed by the California Supreme Court with regard to Muzzy Ranch. Mr. Vancil stated that in the environment we are in today, he believed that the county needs to be proactive in the community to protect Travis AFB. He said that Solano County is in competition with other bases to stay open, and in looking back 20 years ago there were 5 major air force bases in Northern California; three of those are now closed. He commented that naval bases in the Bay Area have also been closed.

Chairman Vancil stated that the commission is not necessarily looking for a resolution at this time. He said that staff is looking for the commission to provide some feedback on how they view the work plan, and if it is a good method to move forward.

Mr. Leland stated that staff is looking for the commission to agree to the work plan as submitted or to provide revisions so that the work plan can communicate to the County of Solano to start procuring a consultant.

Commissioner Seiden stated that he is in favor of the work plan as prepared. He said that it is obvious to most of the commission that one of the greatest threats to the ongoing mission at Travis is the renewable energy sources that are pushing in toward the base, and hence the focus of this process of renewing the plan. Mr. Seiden applauded staff for the work they have done thus far and he looked forward to the county being able to move forward with this endeavor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Potter and seconded by Commissioner Seiden to approve the work plan as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Item No. 10. Adjournment

Since there was no further business the meeting was adjourned.