



Solano County
Airport Land Use Commission
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Steve Vancil
Chairman

MINUTES OF THE SOLANO COUNTY AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION Meeting of December 11, 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, Seiden, DuClair, Randall and Chairman Vancil

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner Baumler

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 13, 2014 meeting were approved as written.

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. Presentation:** Receive a presentation from the City of Suisun City on the City's general plan update. (Affected LUCP's : Rio Vista Airport and the Travis AFB Land Use Compatibility Plans) **Non-Action Item.**

Jim Leland briefly introduced this item. He stated that when a city adopts or amends a general plan, it must first receive a consistency determination from the Airport Land Use Commission. The City of Suisun City has been engaged in a major effort to update its general plan and recently filed an application for a consistency determination with the ALUC. He announced that city staff will make a presentation to the commission on the general plan update as background material for a future consistency determination. Mr. Leland stated that staff intends to schedule the consistency determination for action by the commission at its January 8, 2015 regular meeting. He noted that staff has included, as Exhibit 1 to the staff report, the required tests for consistency for general plan amendments for the commission's reference.

John Kearns, associate planner, City of Suisun City, provided the commission with a brief summary of the update process.

Commissioner Potter spoke with regard to Zone C and inquired if that area will be developed or left as open space. Mr. Kearns stated that the land will be kept as agricultural open space. He noted that it contains a safety easement for Travis east of Peterson Ranch and there is no development being proposed there.

Chairman Vancil inquired about the hazardous cargo area and asked if there has been any coordination with the base on what the requirements are for keeping development away from that area.

Matthew Gerken, consultant, AECOM, stated that they were focused on the safety easement that is related to where munitions are stored on the base and the compatibility zones as they exist today. He spoke to economic development and conservation opportunities that might occur in Suisun in the future and that perhaps there are opportunities near the base for something other than development, but also provides for a viable economic use of that land. Mr. Gerken said that they are examining both sides and the constraints and opportunities, but not with respect to the cargo area specifically. He said that they have a process that occurs in the general plan to encourage dialogue as development moves forward which includes existing uses, compatibility zones, and future missions.

Chairman Vancil stated that in addition to specific storage areas, sometimes an airplane will sit on the hazardous cargo ramp and will have hazardous or even explosive materials so perhaps that is something that needs to be considered. He said that maybe it is something that also needs to be discussed as the Travis plan is updated. He suggested that these discussions take place simultaneously since these two processes are occurring at the same time.

Mr. Gerken said that as far as policy language in the draft general plan, the city is following the county's lead in terms of compatibility, city conditions, and new development.

Chairman Vancil said that he was in agreement with the city's choice of areas set aside for agriculture. He said that he believed this would benefit the base greatly. He noted that the City of Fairfield has a Travis reserve set aside in their general plan as well.

Commissioner DuClair wanted to know if there was any consideration given to the issue of light pollution or glare from wind turbines or solar panels.

Mr. Gerken explained that their general plan refers to height, use restrictions and density restrictions, but not in much detail. He said that they are anticipating the county's land use compatibility plan update and so they did not want to include figures that would change based on that update. He said that with regard to renewable energy generation and conflicts with Travis, the plan does not identify that specifically except with regard to height of structures developed in Suisun City's planning area. He said that it would not matter if it is a billboard, a building, or wind turbine, the height of any structure is addressed in the current draft of the plan.

Commissioner Seiden asked if there would ever be consideration for development in the special planning area that falls within zone B1. Mr. Kearns stated that the environmental challenges alone probably would exclude that area for development.

Chairman Vancil suggested providing the landowner of the Peterson Ranch property with updates from the Technical Advisory Committee so that they feel like a part of the discussion as this process moves forward.

Commissioner Randall requested from city staff a larger version of the maps when this item comes back before the commission.

- B. Action Item:** Conduct a Public Hearing to consider a modification to the Area of Influence as mapped on Figure 2A within the Travis AFB Land Use Compatibility Plan.

Jim Leland gave a brief presentation of the staff report. The report stated that in 2002, the ALUC adopted a comprehensive revision to the Travis Plan. For the most part there is internal consistency between the maps, tables, figures and written policies contained within the plan. However, in one important instance there is an internal inconsistency which causes ambiguity and uncertainty in how the plan may apply to various properties.

Figure 2A depicts an *Area of Influence* which contains four compatibility zones, a Height Overlay Zone and an Assault Landing Zone Overlay. Each of these areas has a set of written policies and land use restrictions described in various sections of the Travis Plan. In Section 2.5 Supporting Criteria: Airspace Protection, there is a policy (2.5.5 (c)) which requires objects taller than 200 feet above ground level to be submitted to the ALUC for review. This policy affects considerable territory outside of the Area of Influence as depicted in Figure 2A. This requirement can be lost on the casual reader who often assumes that the mapped Area of Influence is the extent of the ALUC's jurisdiction.

Commissioner Cavanagh inquired about the origin of the boundary defining the sphere of influence.

Mr. Leland explained that compatibility planning has evolved over time and it used to consider factors such as noise, Part 77 obstruction requirements, and accident records to identify safety zones. These were elements that were generally located near the airport so when this plan was being done that boundary as depicted on the map contained all the zones that dealt with those classic issues of compatibility planning. He said that at the same time, when this plan was being formulated it was questioned if there are any new obstructions being created which would be anything over 200 feet in height, and so there was an interest in knowing where those might be occurring anywhere in the county and having them reviewed. He said that was outside of peoples'

mental framework of what a plan is all about so he believed there was an oversight created by the planners at the time.

Commissioner Cavanagh said that he wanted to know the original rationale for that boundary as depicted on the map and whether that rationale is still valid today from a planning perspective, regardless of what the policy says about height restrictions in the rest of the county.

Mr. Leland confirmed that the rationale is still valid. He said the boundary comes from the Part 77 regulations and that was one consideration of the planners at the time. He said there are some extensions beyond the Part 77 Surfaces, the most recent being the Assault Landing Zone Area that has been added. In each case the geometry is driven by either a noise footprint issue or a safety issue on where aircraft accidents are most likely to occur around an airport. He said the Part 77 as previously mentioned drove the shape of everything within the boundary and those were the factors that were normally considered in airport planning back in the day. A requirement for tall structures was then added outside of that boundary which they were not accustomed to and so that boundary was not expanded.

Commissioner Cavanagh said that his main concern is why we are not changing the policy forcing the height limit back inside the boundary rather than expanding the boundary if all the original criteria for defining the boundary are still valid.

Mr. Leland replied that it is because the requirement to look at obstructions outside of the boundary is still a valid requirement. Commissioner Cavanagh stated that if we can change the boundary why can we not change the requirement and push that restriction back within the existing boundary. Mr. Leland explained that it is because we do not want to let go of the requirement to review potential obstructions.

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

Commissioner DuClair said that he liked this plan because it will bring awareness to the height of wind generators and that wind projects proposed within the entire county will need to come before the commission for review.

Mr. Leland said that nearly all of the wind farm projects in the county are outside of that boundary area and the only reason they came before the commission was because the policy in the plan says, notwithstanding the boundary line, if an object is taller than 200 feet above ground level they have to be reviewed by the commission. He stated that one consequence of the alternative of getting rid of the policy outside the boundary line is that the commission would lose the authority to review these commercial wind turbine projects, which for the most part are going to be outside that existing boundary line.

Chairman Vancil stated that he believed the FAA looks at the FAR Part 77 and an obstacle as a hazard as two different items. He believed that the commission is doing the same thing, and are putting together and clarifying the need to consider both in the county's area of influence. He explained that the FAR Part 77 addresses conical surface around an airport, but when getting away from that conical surface you are now in general airspace and are now looking at anything over 200 feet as being potentially a hazard to navigation. He said that those are two separate issues and he believed by

doing this work it was making it clearer for people as they come forward before the commission.

A motion was made by Commissioner DuClair and seconded by Commissioner Randall to amend Figure 2A of the Travis Plan and related text to modify the mapped Area of Influence to include all of Solano County and amend Table 2A of the Travis Plan and related text to establish a new Compatibility Zone E, requiring review of projects in excess of 200 feet in height. The motion passed 7-1 with Commissioner Cavanagh dissenting. (Resolution No. 14-08)

C. Update: Receive a status report from the Chairman and staff on the update to the Travis Plan

Mr. Leland stated that the consultant is moving from the data collection phase of this project into the preparation of two white papers. A white paper that is a general view of the issues that need to be addressed; and a specialized white paper on renewable energy projects and the issues that are embedded in those kind of projects with respect to the mission of the base. He said that staff expects those to be published sometime in January and shortly after that to distribute the information not only to the commission for review but to the technical advisory committee, renewable energy working group and policy committee. He estimated that the information would return to the commission sometime in late February.

D. Upcoming Meetings: General discussion of work items for upcoming meetings.

Mr. Leland noted that the City of Suisun will be back before the commission in January for a consistency determination on their general plan. At the same meeting the City of Vacaville will come before the commission with a presentation on their general plan amendment and will be looking for a February consistency determination. Mr. Leland reiterated that the Travis plan will probably come before the commission in February.

Mr. Leland informed the commission that the Joint Land Use Study grant is slowly winding its way through the Department of Defense. He noted that it could be funded in the first quarter of 2015 which would start a process of interviewing consultants and kicking off that element of work around Travis. He also noted that staff has finalized the submission of a grant for the Rio Vista Airport update and it could be funded in the first quarter of next year which would start a process of updating that plan.

Item No. 10. Adjournment

Since there was no further business the meeting was adjourned.