

T. F. Green Airport Master Plan and Environmental Impact Assessment

Study Resource Committee

DRAFT Meeting Summary

April 25, 2002

Introduction

Suzanne Orenstein, Facilitator, opened the meeting by reviewing the purpose of the SRC and the meeting ground rules. Because there were many members of the public present, she explained that the Committee is a *study* committee comprised of volunteers who have contributed considerable time to reviewing the analysis that has been developed regarding the 20-year trends for air traffic at T. F. Green. She noted that while broad public input is important, the purpose of this meeting is to obtain SRC member input on the material they received prior to the meeting. A public meeting on the draft Master Plan will be held when the 20-year plan has been developed, currently expected to be in July.

Mary Soderstrum welcomed committee members and the public, thanking all of the committee members for returning to continue the SRC tasks. She provided an update on several airport activities, as follows:

- Aviation statistics for the past month were still down somewhat from the same period last year, which will create some revenue and budget issues, but Green is doing better than other airports in the region in the return to more normal traffic numbers after September 11.
- Responding to newspaper and other reports about the home acquisition program, Ms. Soderstrum reported that \$10.5 million of RIAC funds/passenger facility charges has been spent in the last two years to acquire houses. There are currently 59 houses under contract. The schedule for completion of the current acquisition program has been slowed a little by the difficulty of finding comparable housing for sale in RI. She anticipates that the program will be completed within 90 days after its original June 30 completion date.
- Sound insulation of homes is on schedule. The RIAC board approved two packages of assistance at its March meeting. Also, FAA has authorized the sound insulation of the Francis and Robertson schools, with construction scheduled to be complete in August. Sound insulation for a third school is under consideration.
- Much has been written about the situation with the crosswind runway (Runway 16-34). Ms. Soderstrum reviewed the facts on this project. The runway is nearing the end of its 20-year life span, with concrete falling apart and perhaps posing a safety hazard. When it is reconstructed, FAA will require that it be brought up to current design standards that require two 1,000-foot by 500-foot

runway safety areas. The current length of the runway is 6,100 feet. If the runway cannot be lengthened, the length of the runway safety areas will reduce the pavement area, and most commercial aircraft that are now accommodated will not be able to use it. The Part 150 study, completed in 2001, recommended consideration of a 7,200-foot length, equal to the main runway, to allow use of the runway in a manner that reduces the number of people in the noise contour. The Master Plan facilities requirement analysis came up with an ultimate 20-year need for a crosswind runway with a length of 7,600 feet. That is not a proposal, however, it is just a theoretical need.

Because RIAC has chosen to conduct the Master Plan process in a very open manner, many options are being discussed, and that may confuse folks who don't understand the planning and decision-making process. From RIAC's point of view, all options are still on the table, including no growth, a new airport somewhere else (which would take 25-30 years to build), and many options in between. Finally, Ms. Soderstrum noted that the RIAC board had adopted the medium growth scenario, and that scenario will be used for planning purposes. That does not mean that RIAC will definitely build to accommodate that growth. It just means that RIAC will have a plan that shows how that growth could be accommodated, should it occur. The process of determining what development should happen is a long process, with lots of regulatory oversight and public involvement. The focus now is on developing the Master Plan. At this meeting, we will begin looking at what some of the options for airport development might be and at what criteria should be used to evaluate those options.

Ms. Orenstein reviewed the format for the meeting and asked if any SRC members would like to make opening remarks. Mark McKenney made a statement on behalf of the citizen representatives who had withdrawn from active participation at the last meeting. In the statement, he noted that the committee members were returning in spite of their belief that the process was fatally flawed and that their input would not be considered. These citizen representatives continue to believe that a quality of life study, including community health studies, is needed before any decisions are made. A copy of this statement is attached to this summary.

Next, Dave Mills, alternate for Jerry Flynn, distributed some comments from Mr. Flynn, who could not attend this meeting due to a scheduling conflict (a copy of these comments is also included). Then, a citizen representative asked that the agenda be changed to allow members of the public to comment at this point, rather than at the end of the meeting, as has been customary. After some discussion, it was agreed that the first presentation, on facility requirements, would go forward, after which there would be a 45-minute public comment period.

Presentation on Facility Requirements Analysis

John van Woensel, from Landrum and Brown, presented the results of the analysis of the facilities that would be required to meet the demand outlined in the medium growth twenty-year forecast. He reviewed the draft facility requirements chapter that was distributed to the committee prior to the meeting. A copy of his presentation slides is on the Master Plan web site at www.pvdairport.com.

Mr. van Woensel reminded everyone that the facilities would not and should not be built unless the demand for them materialized, noting that a rule of thumb for planners is that the planning for new facilities needs to begin when facilities are being utilized at 60 percent of their capacity, and that construction needs to be completed when facilities are at 80 percent of their capacity because delays would become worse exponentially at that point. Already, T. F. Green's terminal use is at the 80 percent capacity trigger and the runway system is at the 60 percent trigger.

Mr. van Woensel described the trigger points for new facilities for various elements of the airport infrastructure, and noted the highlights of the analysis as follows:

- To meet all projected demand at an acceptable level of delay and congestion, two parallel runways with runway lengths of 9,500 feet and 7,600 feet would be needed. In addition, a 7,600-foot crosswind runway would be needed (to meet the FAA standard of 80 percent of the 9,500-foot length for the crosswind runway).
- Taxiway efficiency and air traffic technology improvements are needed now and may delay slightly the point at which a second runway is needed.
- Runway 16-34 needs to be reconstructed as soon as possible.
- Standard length runway safety areas are needed as soon as possible.
- Runway 5L-23R, now a general aviation runway used only during the day in clear weather, should be closed.
- Gates at T. F. Green need to be increased from the 22 gates currently available to 40 gates over the 20-year planning period. Some expansion is needed immediately.
- The terminal will need expansion to 800,000 square feet, from its current 352,000 square feet, over the 20-year planning period. The trigger point for beginning that expansion will be when six million passengers and 24 gates have been exceeded (expected in the next few years).
- Additional parking is needed now for rental cars; additional employee parking will be needed (at six million passengers); and an additional long-term public parking area will be needed (at seven million passengers).

In addition, cargo facilities, surface transportation routes, maintenance facilities, and other support facilities will also require improvements during the planning period.

Several committee members asked questions or made comments about the presentation on facility requirements.

Q. What does the FAA control tower consider the maximum number of operations per hour for this airport?

A. Operations of 57 in instrument landings and 79 for Visual Flight Rules is their estimate of capacity.

Q. Does the 9,500-foot runway length imply that jumbo jets will become part of the fleet mix?

A. Some large aircraft are projected in the fleet mix. However, they can operate on the existing runways. LaGuardia and Reagan National Airports operate with 7,000-foot runways. The effect of the shorter runways is that there can be fewer non-stop flights and there will be more weight restrictions for larger planes.

Q. Would these improvements, including 9,500 feet, increase capacity?

A. The purpose is to reduce delay and congestion. [Please note, the constrained forecast in Chapter II projected that most traffic would come regardless of improvements.]

Comment (from Colby Cameron): Now that we have the picture of where the growth may be, it is time for the SRC and RIAC to work together to discuss the pros and cons of various alternative scenarios. The numbers are still theoretical, but the RIAC board and FAA plan to work with the SRC to develop good ideas, and take them to the next stage of planning, the development of the draft Master Plan.

Comment: We need to remember that the NEPA process requires that impacts be avoided and minimized before mitigation is considered. It is too soon to know if increasing the runway lengths will be approved. We need the EIS first.

Public Comment

Raleigh Jenkins, the former President of CAN, began the public comment process by noting that another CAN representative would replace him on the SRC. He then read a statement about the SRC process, in which he asked that the SRC process be suspended until a more thorough assessment of the airport's negative impacts could be conducted. He also suggested that no funds be expended for planning until the airport had met its responsibilities for past mitigation efforts. Mr. Jenkins' statement is attached.

Derek Anderson commented that the airport is slowly taking over the entire city of Warwick. He asked why the low growth forecast was not adopted. He advocated for no further growth at the airport.

Gloria Duggan commented that the neighborhoods and communities surrounding T. F. Green are at capacity for noise impacts. She wondered if all U.S. residents would accept an aircraft per minute directly over their homes. She advocated no growth of the airport.

Doris Forster asked that there be a reconsideration of the buy-out area to address what she viewed as inequities in the process. She also noted that the air quality impacts from jet fuel needed more study, and there was a need for a buffer for the N. E. Technical School.

State Representative Joseph McNamara discussed recent efforts by him and the Attorney General to obtain information from RIAC concerning the 1998 Noise Monitoring Act. He noted that reports about runway use are mandated by this act and that RIAC has not supplied them. (In response at a later point in the meeting, Mary Soderstrum noted that the company compiling the data did not perform as contracted and that a solution to this problem was being developed.) Representative McNamara further noted that the proposed wetland legislation was not submitted by any of the local representatives, and that they oppose it.

Edmond Vient showed the group a USGS elevation map and suggested that the bay be used more frequently as an air traffic route.

Paul Olson asked that the RIAC board respond to Representative McNamara, and that there be an evaluation of the capacity of the community to live with the airport.

Dan Murphy noted that RIAC has a moral obligation to address existing quality of life issues and to address harm from past practices before planning any expansion.

Stephen Insana spoke about the wetland impacts that reconstruction of Runway 16-34 might create. He noted that the Buckey Brook has a historic herring run that would be impacted, and that should be conserved. He further noted that the Buckey Brook is in the Narragansett Bay watershed and that protection of the Bay is a high priority for funding and land use management activities. He suggested it be conserved as a buffer for airport activities.

Dorothy Hayden spoke about health impacts from the airport. She asked that the Department of Public Health be involved in evaluating airport impacts, and that buyouts beyond the contour be considered. She noted her daughter died of lung cancer at age 34, even though she never smoked. She also asked why her house is not inside the 65+ DNL noise contour even though her glasses and china rattle as aircraft fly over.

State Representative Denise Aiken asked RIAC to keep its promises from past years, going back to 1992 before proceeding with the Master Plan development. Her constituents are in need of the promised mitigation.

Carmine Ginolfi noted that Warwick doesn't need or want airport growth. There have been many promises in the past that were not followed through. He further noted that the SRC should listen to the citizen representatives on the committee, because they speak for the community.

Paul Gibbs commented that the new runway proposed for Boston Logan Airport will be part of the T. F. Green Master Plan, or else the plan will be faulty.

Small Group Discussions of Evaluation Criteria for Alternatives

After a short break, the SRC met in small groups to discuss two questions:

1. What criteria should be used to evaluate alternatives for responding to the projected growth?
2. What options for airport configuration would you propose?

The results of the small group discussions were presented and are summarized below. There was no consensus about any of these suggestions.

Criteria

- Recognize geographic limitations
- No artificial inducements to growth
- Establish "Airport Influence Zone" as suggested by Part 150 study (Measure LU-8)
- The state of the environment around the airport, especially air quality, wetlands, noise
- Safety, especially regarding runway length
- Taxiway geometry
- Availability of financial backing to do proposed expansions and protect quality of life
- Whether RIAC comes up with enough money for buyouts
- Will the alternative help restore public trust, especially regarding buyouts and soundproofing, and health effects
- Social, economic, and health impacts
- Does the solution actually solve the perceived problem
- Doesn't make any condition worse, e.g. footprint of noise contour, measurable increase in air quality
- Fiscal impact

- Balance of growth to economic benefit
- Smart growth, e.g. utilize existing facilities first
- Security
- Is the demand there
- Factor in constraints on ability to mitigate, e.g. moving people is not always possible
- Can we measure current baseline conditions

Options for Configuration

- Establish airport influence zone
- Maintain viability of crosswind runway
- Maximize use of other airports for cargo and general aviation
- Put runways in tunnel under roads, e.g. at Airport Rd. and Main
- Buyout Fieldview Drive area southwest of airport
- Shorten Runway 16-34
- Extend Runway 16-34 to 7,600 feet
- Buy out more homes and establish a good neighbor policy
- Accept physical boundaries and growth boundaries
- Reorient 16-34 to get length
- Warwick and RIAC to plan together to develop coordinated land use plan
- Extend Runway 16-34 northwest
- Improve extension of Route 37
- Keep current runway lengths but bring up to current safety standards
- Create a runway to accommodate non-stop traffic to the west coast
- Establish land use buffer zone around the airport
- Look at Quonset for air freight
- Rezone where appropriate around the airport
- Improve east-west vehicular traffic
- Use technology improvements to reduce need for runways

Closing Remarks

Colby Cameron thanked the citizen representatives for attending and thanked all SRC members for their input. He asked that all remember that four RIAC board members live in Warwick and that they are concerned about the airport's role in the community and will use common sense in their deliberations and decision-making on the Master Plan. He said that he had had informal discussions during the break and was going to pursue joint planning sessions between RIAC and Warwick for the areas around the airport.

One SRC member noted that the date of the next meeting conflicts with an important EIS scoping meeting for the Quonset Port. Another member noted that the July meeting date conflicts with the usual vacation schedule for the mills in the Providence-Warwick area.

Ms. Orenstein closed the meeting by saying the dates for the next two meetings would be reconsidered, and the SRC would be contacted about any changes. She thanked the members for their input and adjourned the meeting.

List of Attendees

SRC Members and Alternate

Robert Blaikie, FedEx
Mark Brewer, RIAC Deputy Executive Director
E. Colby Cameron, RIAC Board
Tom Celona, Post Road Business Association, Thrifty Car Rental
Duane Clinker, Cranston Representative
William DePasquale (*alternate for Mark Carruolo*), City of Warwick Planning Department
Maria Dutra (*alternate for Mark McKenney*), Warwick – Ward 6
John Elsoffer, Warwick – Ward 2
Dave Field, Hertz Corporation
James Flanagan, Warwick – Ward 9
Kevin Flynn, City of Cranston, Planning Department
Charles Gaffney, RIAC Board
Ron Gagnon, Department of Environmental Management
Scott Godfrey, Eastern Regional Office, Air Transport Association of America
Karen Kalunian, Warwick – Ward 1
Karen LaChance (*alternate for Mike Walker*), Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation
Al Lamothe, Rhode Island Pilots Association
Bob Lamoureux, Warwick – Ward 3
Gail Lattrell, Federal Aviation Administration
Janis Loiselle, Office of the Governor
Norma Malachowski (*alternate for C.A.N.*), C.A.N.
Mark McKenney, Warwick – Ward 6
Dave Mills (*alternate for Jerry Flynn*), Rhode Island Statewide Planning
Hope Pilkington, Cranston Representative
Janet Raymond, Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce
Ann Saccoccio, Warwick – Ward 4
Robert Sangster (*alternate for Anthony Longo*), Warwick – Ward 5
Vince Scarano, FAA
Paul Silva (*alternate for Robert Shawver*), Department of Transportation
Walter Slocomb (*alternate for John O'Brien*), Rhode Island Statewide Planning
Mary Soderstrum, RIAC
Joseph Solomon (*alternate for Ann Saccoccio*), Warwick - Ward 4
David Spengler (*alternate for Tom Celona*), Thrifty Car Rental
Sandra Whitehouse, General Assembly Staff

STATEMENT BY COMMUNITY MEMBERS RETURNING
TO ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT IN 20-YEAR SRC PLANNING PROCESS
April 25, 2002

To the members of the SRC:

Tonight, at the request of the Mayors of Warwick and Cranston, we the community representatives to the SRC who felt compelled to withdraw from active participation during the last meeting, attempt to return to our active work with the committee. We are now under no illusions that the Airport Corporation will consider genuine community input, since it has already refused to address the fundamental issues of quality-of-life and the community's capacity to support the airport which we have previously raised. We continue to believe this planning process itself is fatally flawed by its lack of objectivity, and especially by its refusal to really examine the troubling issues we have raised.

Nevertheless, we are intent on doing our public duty. We believe now is the time to return to active involvement even while we continue to disagree with this process and its pre-ordained outcomes.

We know that many SRC members represent different constituencies which are closely involved with the commerce of the airport. Yet we also know that deep down, many of you have the same fears and concerns as we, for we all return to homes at night. We all live in neighborhoods somewhere. Many of us have children. So we suspect that most of us here can identify on some level with our concerns. Deep down we all must know that we cannot forever worship the god of unrestrained growth and not be called on to sacrifice, or at least endanger, the quality of life of all.

Our outrage continues at a process and a Corporation that delays funding for community health studies, refuses funding for real estate impact studies, and at the same time spends money for lobbying to strip local communities of power in controlling development within their own borders. We will continue to expose a planning process that pretends that all things must be bent to the will of increasing market demand for air travel, while at the same time working and spending money to capture an increasing share of that market from Boston. And, we must take note of the Corporation's refusal to sit down and negotiate over the boundaries of this business with the political leaders of our towns.

We return to actively do our best to represent our communities and to expose and to oppose those plans that would further deteriorate the quality of life in Rhode Island. We will try to gather as much information as possible for the public's use. We have no illusions now about being heard in any fundamental way, but we will continue to raise our voices against this fatally flawed process. We will attempt to work with anyone, representing any interest, on this committee who seeks along with us, real planning and real input.

Returning community members of the SRC

April 22, 2002

Mary Soderstrum
Deputy Executive Director, Engineering & Planning
Rhode Island Airport Corporation
2000 Post Road
Warwick, RI 02886

Dear Ms. Soderstrum,

I am writing to inform you that I will be returning to the Study Resource Committee as an active participant. Unfortunately, I will be unable to attend the April 25th SRC meeting because I will be out of the state on business. My alternate, David Mills will be filling in for me.

At the last SRC meeting, the letter that I read on behalf of the citizen representatives stated that if RIAC showed a willingness in the future to truly consider and address all community concerns, that we would be anxious to discuss our return.

In your recent letter, you stated that RIAC has made available, some of the studies and information requested by the citizen representatives. You also stated that you submitted for budget approval, the request for air quality studies. While this is a step in the right direction, it in no way represents the totality of our concerns. However, I am eager to see what other steps you will take in order "to foster a more open, productive dialogue."

Given the significant impacts that the current phase of the Master Planning process could have on the City of Warwick, and in fairness to my elected officials and neighbors within my Ward, I have decided to return to the SRC as an active participant. I have invested a significant amount of time into the SRC process because I am concerned about the current and future adverse effects of the airport on the neighborhoods. If the SRC process cannot assist in my pursuit of a responsible, properly sized neighbor, I will also work outside of the SRC process.

Attached you will find my comments and questions relative to the materials we received for April 25th meeting. I will follow-up with you next week.

Sincerely,

Jerry Flynn
Ward 7 Representative
Concerned Airport Neighbor

April 10, 2002 Feedback to SRC

The fourth point stated that "FAA New England policy does not allow the purchase of residences that have received Federal assistance in sound insulation within the last 10 years."

Mary, just to follow-up on our correspondence of March 22, 2002, have you received the FAA document which states that there must be a 10 year lag between insulating a resident and its acquisition? Also, have you received confirmation on whether this FAA policy is a guideline or law?

Trigger Points

Chapter III indicates that "the timing of the need for the identified improvements is driven by the projections of future aviation activity or 'trigger points,' not years" and that these trigger points are what "lead to the need to expand the airport's facilities."

I would like to recommend that we add Neighborhoods to the 'Landside' category, in Table III.1 Summary of Trigger Points. This would create trigger points for the neighborhoods around the airport. In looking at Table III.1, the neighborhoods would fall under the 'Facility' category and two key 'triggers' would be air quality and noise levels.

The 'trigger point' would be acquiring or insulating homes when the air quality and noise reached unacceptable levels.

By creating trigger points for the neighborhoods, we would ensure that home acquisition and insulation are placed alongside the other 'identified improvements.'

III.1.2 Runway Length Requirements

This section mentioned that "this analysis utilized the individual aircraft manufacturers' manuals." Can I obtain these manuals? In addition to the runway length requirements, I would like to also see a data sheet from the aircraft manufacturers on the types and quantities of chemicals that are emitted from each type of aircraft when idling, landing, and taking off.

III.3.3 Public Parking Facilities

Under the heading Existing Public Parking Facilities, it states that 6,800 public parking spaces are available. Does this 6,800 figure include the parking lot that is between the Noise Barrier and the homes on Strawberry Field Rd, Fieldview Drive, and Murray Street?

I didn't see this lot on the Exhibit III.3.-3. Also, what purpose is this parking lot used for?

III.3.5 Rental Car Facilities

This section states that "RIDOT and RIAC are proceeding with plans to relocate all nine rental car firms to the proposed Warwick Intermodal Station." Given RIAC's limited debt capacity, does RIAC feel that contributing to the proposed Station is an appropriate use of their limited funds? As of today, how much does RIAC intend to spend on the proposed station (issuance of bonds)? How much does RIAC intend to spend on home acquisition and home insulation?

To: The SRC
From: Raleigh Jenkins
RE: Feedback on Offer to Return and Process to Date
Date: April 25, 2002

My name is Raleigh Jenkins and I seem to personify the “trigger point” of “agreeing to disagree”.

I received on Tuesday an offer from the Executive Director of RIAC, Michael Cheston, to return to the SRC process. I appreciate this offer. I personally believe a C.A.N. representative should return to the table. Whether that is myself or my alternate will be decided by the newly formed C.A.N. Council in the very near future.

Regarding feedback on the planning process to date:

My personal opinion is that the SRC process should be indefinitely suspended until a more thorough assessment of the negative effects of the airport’s operations can be performed. I received a phone call this afternoon from a woman who said she was recently literally shaken out of bed by air traffic and had to leave her home and receive medical attention. She lives outside RIAC’s computer generated DNL contour graph. She is not alone among the untallied airport-affected individuals who remain outside the scope of FAA’s and RIAC’s concern as demonstrated by this process to date. The location of T. F. Green airport in the center of a densely residential area requires extreme care and due diligence that has not been demonstrated to date by RIAC or their consultants. FAA’s continued acceptance of this inadequate planning process is now suspect. There is genuine concern that federal tax dollars are being wasted on this planning process. We must all stop and take a long hard look at what we are doing here.

1. It is my understanding that the cross-winds runway has been out of compliance with FAA design standards since 1990. That is before the state chose to ignore Warwick’s genuine concerns and irresponsibly tripled the size of the old terminal with FAA’s approval.
2. The American Lung Association has rated Warwick air quality an “F”. That is a lower rating than Providence or Pawtucket received. It is a call for all of us to become very concerned and to not rush forward.
3. Finally, some of the citizens of Warwick who have been identified by FAA’s own standards as experiencing hardship today must wait up to 15 years for relief. Why should the FAA allow the airport to spend even \$1 of federal taxpayer money on planning before they meet their social responsibilities and stop the documentable abuse and neglect of the citizen residents?

Thank you.