

## DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

### **Minutes of the September 23, 2002 Meeting of the Regional Aviation Committee**

<b>Attendee</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
Rob Betz	PennDOT Bureau of Aviation
Lawrence B. Capraro	JSA, Inc.
Teresa Castronuovo	Urban Engineers, Inc.
Michael S. D'Aires	Pottstown-Limerick Airport
Rich Delello	BRRAM
Everitt B. DuPont	New Garden Airport
Jim Fels	Federal Aviation Administration
Dawn Fithian	Sterling/Penn's Landing Heliport
Richard Horstmann	Edwards & Kelcey
Charlie Hostetter	McFarland-Johnson, Inc.
Paul Krupp	BRRAM
Matt Kundrot	Delta Airport Consultants, Inc.
Norman Lamar	PennDOT, Bureau of Aviation
Kelly LeMunyon	Sterling Helicopter/Penn's Landing Heliport
John P. Luce	AOPA
Roger Moog	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Steve Najarian	Aero Club of Pennsylvania
David Nelson	Brandywine Airport
Bryan Oscarson	DMJM Aviation
Reiner Pelzer	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Robert D. Powell	Cecil County Airport
Dan Rusk	Reinhart & Rusk
Harry Scarlett	Bucks County Airport Authority
Rocco Tomanelli	DRBA
Tom Tomczyk	PennDOT Bureau Of Aviation
Thabet Zakaria	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

- 1) Introduction and Welcome - Roger Moog of DVRPC introduced Fred Pourki of PHL, a committee member who has agreed to sit in as chair for Justin Edwards, who could not attend due to a visit by President Bush to Trenton Mercer Airport.
- 2) Minutes of the June 20, 2002 Regional Aviation Committee (RAC) Meeting - Minutes were approved as written and mailed to all RAC members.
- 3) Status of Regional Aviation Systems Plan (RASP) Aviation Facilities - Mr. Pourki asked all attendees to introduce themselves and, if desired, briefly describe

activities at their airport or other aviation issues.

Everitt duPont - New Garden is working on completion of its Master Plan update with the help of L. Robert Kimball and Associates.

Robert Powell - Cecil County airport continues hangar and ramp construction and runway tree clearing.

Dan Rusk - His firm, Reinhart & Rusk are working with South Jersey Regional to erect more hangars.

Rocco Tomanelli - The DRBA has been active in airport development; runway 14/22 is being repaved at New Castle County airport; Millville has a new 40,000 sq. ft. hangar; the Delaware Airpark Master Plan is in its final phase; and a NASCAR weekend is scheduled for Dover Air Force Base.

Jim Fels - Jim is the newly relocated FAA planner assigned to the Harrisburg ADO.

Dave Nelson - Brandywine's Master Plan update is being developed by McFarland Johnson. No runway extension is contemplated, but a widening, VASI, and other improvements are being recommended.

Harry Scarlett - Doylestown is acquiring land around the airport. Pilots, there are assisting in crack sealing. At Quakertown, bog turtles have been shown not to be a road block to expansion and a possible 600 ft. runway extension is in the works.

Fred Pourki - US Airways bankruptcy has not hurt PHL. Terminal 1 construction, under US Airways supervision, will proceed since the project is bonded. PennDOT completed new access ramps to terminal 1 from I-95. New car parking facilities will have direct access from Terminal F and E. The hammerhead gates construction at Terminal D is almost complete.

Dawn Fithian - Sterling Heliport is conducting pavement repair and examining extension of the pier to its original length, according to Matt Kundrott.

4) Continuing Planning Activities

A. Issues Regarding Federal Eligibility and Local Potential for Development of a Heliport Serving Center City Philadelphia

Roger Moog summarized a study, done by DVRPC and included in the mailing for the meeting, which reviews issues relating to heliport funding by FAA, site selection in Philadelphia, suitability of Sterling as a sponsor and

suitability of the Sterling site from an expansion, noise and access perspective. Matt Kundrott of Delta Engineers who works with Sterling said their emphasis is to bring the heliport up to design standards and to accommodate helicopters of various types who want to use the facility, Mr. Pourki asked about the cost to implement improvement plans, which is approximately \$10 million. According to Mr. Kundrott, the Army Corp. Of Engineers must support the pier build out and they give preference to maritime uses. It was agreed that the City and local businesses must support and push for these heliport improvements. Norm Lamarr of PennDOT noted that there are five public use heliports in the DVRPC region. The conclusion of the DVRPC study is that Sterling, vs another underdeveloped site, is the optimal location for a FAA supported public use heliport serving Center City. Further study of noise and other impacts must occur, however.

B. DVRPC Study of the merger of PA and FAA airport funding programs, resulting from the Block Grant -

Reiner Pelzer distributed a memo detailing the activities of DVRPC regarding the streamlining for PennDOT airport funding process so that more block grant funds are drawn down quicker by more eligible airports, without lapsing of funds. DVRPC has worked this year with New Garden and Pottstown Limerick to organize their 12 year programs and 4 year ACIP in a manner that could improve processing time by PennDOT. This fall DVRPC will also consult with Brandywine on their master plan and ACIP development. Several questions were raised. Harry Scarlett asked about the life span of a Block Grant, which is currently 3 or 4 years depending on PennDOT or FAA perspective. He noted that a storm water control project at Doylestown did lapse recently. Mike D'Aries asked who controls Block Grants, the state or feds? He said two grants lapsed at his airport, Pottstown Limerick. Jim Fels added that five airports around the state, PNE, Queen City, CAP City, Allegheny Co. and one other have decided to drop out of the block grant program and apply directly to FAA for grants. It appears that airports have difficulty getting their project paperwork "bid ready." Fred Pourki asked Jim what impacts the exclusion of block grant airports had on the funds PennDOT receives each year from FAA. Jim Fels said no impact, since the projects at the five former block grant airports will be handled through discretionary grants. Tom Tomczyk of PennDOT Bureau of Aviation said his office is now at full staff complement and will process paperwork at an increased rate. He emphasized that airports should concentrate on developing a realistic 12 year plan in two phases, 1) environmental and design, 2) construction appraisal and negotiation. One of DVRPC recommendations, electronic draw down of funds, was supported by Charlie Hostetter. A full report by DVRPC will be presented at a subsequent meeting after review by PennDOT and FAA. Electronic draw

down is a recommendation also of the PA Joint Legislative Budget and Finance Committee PennDOT Performance Audit. Also included were the need for penalties for zoning non-compliance and preapplication elimination.

C. PennDOT Proposed Modifications to Aviation Regulations

Mr. Moog introduced the above topic and said that regulation changes have been circulated to airports and a lot of feedback has been presented. Major issues are; airports want to keep grandfathering and waivers if they don't impact safety, when ownership changes; design standards can not be applied in a blanket fashion, "one size does not fit all"; the funding process is too long and creates too much cost for small privately owned airports. John Luce said AOPA is responding to PennDOT. The PA Aviation Council held a special meeting at which thirty airports raised the above objections. Norm Lamarr noted that PennDOT's concern is safety, and obstructions often grow into hazardous situations which must be controlled. He said that after ownership change new owners can apply for similar waivers as were in affect before. Mr. Pourki asked how general aviation security was reflected in the regs. Mr. Lamarr said airports must work with townships to get compromises to allow addressing of dangerous situations like power lines, short runways, shorter safety areas, etc. Final draft reg. changes have not yet been submitted to the IRRC for public advertisement.

D. Proposed Aviation Legislation in New Jersey

John Luce of AOPA summarized the SB432 introduced in the State Senate. It would put the burden for security checks of flight school applicants on the flight schools. This would be financially and staff time-wise costly to operators. He feels it will hurt new commercial pilot availability and hurt business in New Jersey. Michigan has also introduced such state laws which are being fought in court by AOPA. AOPA is looking for a standardized approach to airport security and pilot licensing. Bob Powell said state laws of this type cannot supercede FAA control of pilot licensing and will be overturned in courts. Rocco Tomanelli asked how state laws will be enforced. There is no mechanism in these laws regarding enforcement, and the RAC feels these efforts are knee-jerk reactions of state legislators who want to be perceived by the public as "doing something about terrorism." Mr. Tomanelli said the Transportation Security Administration will focus more deliberately on GA security after commercial airport security is fully heightened. Mr. Luce feels airports themselves must be proactive to avoid being forced into ineffective actions by the feds. Mr. Pourki asked about flight school and or pilot cost, which is not as onerous as the time to administer the additional security functions.

**E. PA and NJ State Systems Plans**

Tom Tomczyk reported that the PA State Aviation System Plan is nearly complete with the sensitivity analysis, where recommendations may change with changing circumstances, is well underway. Tom mentioned that Willow Grove NAS is a significant resource if it would allow civilian general aviation or even limited commercial service. Mr. Hostetter asked about the PennDOT position on Pottstown Limerick, where the ALP is awaiting approval with the runway extension included, but the EA grant has lapsed without completion of the analysis or public hearings on airport development. The ALP has been with PennDOT for over a year, and some level of conditional approval will allow the sponsor to continue its strategic planning concerning the property.

**F. Recent FAA/TRB Workshop on Future Aviation Activity Projections**

Mr. Moog reported on the workshop, which provides input to FAA to finalize, biannually, its policy projections of future aviation demand to be used for funding and programmatic requests to Congress. Final projections will be released in March 2003. Initial estimates include a current 10% loss in domestic traffic due to 9/11/01, which will return to pre-9/11 levels by 2004. International traffic down 8% and returning to pre 9/11 levels by 2003. RJ and corporate traffic higher than pre 9/11. Growth rates expected preliminarily, 2.5% per year for next 10 years in commercial demand and 1.9% per year for general aviation assuming no catastrophic new terrorist events.

**G. Airports in Transition**

Mr. Moog reported on specific airports in the area. South Jersey Regional; the New Jersey Commissioner has continued the position of the previous administration, saying the runway will not be extended. Some plans are being pursued to publicly acquire the airport from its private owners. Marlboro airport has been sold and will be developed for non-aviation purposes. Solberg will be publicly acquired without runway extension. Albion continues to be for sale. Trenton-Mercer has added two USAirways flights per day to Pittsburgh, which then offers 50 new destinations to Trenton-Mercer passengers.

**5) Capital Programming Status**

Jim Fels of the Harrisburg ADO reported on the FAA's emphasis on closing out older grants. He said that dropping five airports from the block grant may actually increase aviation investment in Pennsylvania since the block grant allocation to

PennDOT will not be diminished, and discretionary grants may go to these large relievers. Jim added that Lori Lederbaum is the other planner from the ADO and will also participate in future meetings. Regarding the FY 2003 AIP, this is the last year of the current authorization with a funding level of \$3.1 billion to \$3.3 billion. During FY 2003, Congress must reauthorize the AIP program as well as the much larger surface transportation programs and security department, if approved. These costs will come at a time of reduced revenues.

6) Old Business

DVRPC Operations Counting Programs

Reiner Pelzer previewed the results for 2001-2002, including the impact of 9/11/01 on GA traffic. Jim Fels noted a range of operations/based aircraft of 200-450 ops/year depending on the airport. This seems possible since some airports base aircraft that are only flown recreationally or are collectors aircraft, while other airports cater to business and active flight schools. Jim was asked about fuel sales, specifically Jet-A., to which he responded fuel sales are up for Jet A. Reiner Pelzer noted the growth of operations at Cecil County, which is now totally paved and has three times the based aircraft than before that investment.

7) New Business

- PennDOT/PA Aviation Council Annual Conference is scheduled for Allentown, PA, October 2-4, 2002.
- The next meeting of the DVRPC Regional Aviation Committee is scheduled for December 19, 2002 at DVRPC offices.
- Public comment. Paul Krupp, a Yardley resident opposed to improvements proposed at Trenton-Mercer noted that the Sierra Club has challenged the validity of the findings of the environmental assessment, funded by FAA. Some neighbors are calling for a full EIS.