

DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes of the June 17, 2004 Meeting of the Regional Aviation Committee

Attendee	Affiliation
Martine Belanger	Philadelphia City Planning Commission
Rick Childs	L. Robert Kimball & Associates
Skip Coon	DVRPC
Rich Delello	BRRAM
Chris Fales	McFarland Johnson
Tricia Faust	DELDOT
Jim Fels	FAA Harrisburg ADO
Mark Hinczynski	Trenton-Mercer Airport
Richard Horstmann	Urban Engineers
Matt Kundrot	Penn's Landing/Sterling Helicopter
Sgt. Steve Lawrence	Delaware State Police
Lloyd Massey	Delaware State Police Aviation
Roger Moog	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Steve Najarian	Aero Club of Pennsylvania
Curt Noe	Camden County Engineering
Reiner Pelzer	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Fred Pourkay	Philadelphia International Airport
Ronald Price	QED
Kathy Reynolds	Chester County Planning Commission
Brad Shelton	Montgomery County Planning Commission
Fran Strouse	L. Robert Kimball
Tom Tomczyk	PennDOT Bureau Of Aviation
Raymond Wallace	G5 Technologies, Inc.
Thabet Zakaria	DVRPC

- 1) Introduction - Chair, Justin Edwards of Trenton Mercer Airport introduced himself and asked attendees to do the same. Roger Moog announced that Harry Van Den Heuvel, the Delaware Department of Transportation Aviation Director has retired. Also, Bruce Mundie of the Maryland Aviation Department has retired, both after many years of service to the aviation community and public.
- 2) Minutes of the March 18, 2004 Regional Aviation Committee (RAC)
Minutes were accepted as sent out.

3) Status of Regional Aviation Systems Plan (RASP) Facilities

Philadelphia International - Fred Pourkay said current projects include taxiway J. repaving, cargo city apron improvements, and maintenance support building construction. Terminal E is expanding with four additional gates and joint operation with terminal D. Four hundred fifty homes in Tinicum Township are included in the FY 04 noise reduction program.

Philadelphia Northeast - Taxiways D and E will be extended, and the old firehouse is being converted to a maintenance building.

Doylestown - Fran Strouse of Kimball said current efforts are focusing on stormwater management.

Quakertown - More T-hangars and connecting taxiways are being built.

Trenton Mercer - Justin Edwards said volunteer curfew violators tail members are being published in the Trenton Times. Shuttle American stopped operations at TTN, but Boston-Maine Airlines continues to serve the airport and its enplanements are growing. Bids are out for runway 16/34 rehab and needed snow removal equipment. The airport will host a full scale disaster drill. Heidi Kahme, a nearby citizen who has been critical of TTN master planning and environmental analysis, has been appointed to the NJ General Aviation Review Commission.

South Jersey Regional - This airport has been sold to the state. The price is not now known, however, the current FBO will continue to operate this major reliever airport for PHL. Since it is in public hands now it will pay no taxes to Lumberton Township. Citations and King Airs are the airport, and a growing helicopter training business is based there.

Summit - Jim Fels of Harrisburg FAA said Summits master plan and ALP drawing are being reviewed by the ADO. They are getting appraisals for an RPZ acquisition, and a parallel taxiway is in the works.

Wings - Fran Strouse said recent inspection for obstruction removal has been completed. Neighbors are cooperating with tree removal. The needed itinerant apron was denied by the Whitpain Township, but the airport is pursuing the issue in court. A new FBO is operating at the airport.

New Garden - Mr. Strouse commented that the public acquisition by New Garden Township is moving forward, and sponsor assurances issues being reviewed with FAA. Significant private investment at the airport is also anticipated. The annual airshow is the weekend of June 19-20.

Brandywine - Chris Fales of McFarland Johnson said an AWOS and PAPIS are

being installed and the taxiway extension is under design.

Pennridge - Mr. Fales reports that the Township has approved apron construction and a private developer will build 20 T-hangars. PENNDOT has awarded a tentative allocation for the apron work.

Spitfire - The airport is in negotiation with NJDOT for purchase of its development rights, for \$357,000 preserving and potentially expanding the airports capacity, \$1.3 million of taxiway and lighting improvements are anticipated.

Harrisburg International - Jim Fels noted problems between the airport and Amtrak regarding the train service and station for the airport.

4. Continuing Planning Activities

Penn's Landing Heliport - Mr. Moog referred to the White Paper in the mailing for today's meeting, produced by DVRPC at the request of FAA. The document summarized the status of regional efforts to get FAA funding for an EA/feasibility study of expansion of Sterling Heliport on the existing pier. Demand has exceeded capacity and helicopter design features have changed impacting heliport layout. Noise, environmental, airspace and aquatic life impacts as well as site selection, business and cost issues of the expanded heliport must be examined in the EA before the local sponsor Penn's Landing Corp., FAA and PENNDOT can decide whether to proceed at all and at this site. The White Paper presented the history of the facility and planning, and impact categories and issues. Numerous attendees commented on the situation. Tricia Faust of DELDOT said if wetlands or endangered species aren't harmed the expansion could probably proceed. Matt Kundrott of Delta Consultants, the heliport planner said emergency applications as well as business use make the heliport advantageous but the city must support the expansion. An eligible sponsor acceptable to FAA, needs to be designated. Penn's Landing has indicated its willingness to sponsor the study and that must now be verified. In the alternative, the PHL Division of Aviation or DVRPC may be acceptable sponsors for the EA study. Jim Fels noted that DVRPC has spent \$34,000 as part of its CASP XIX grant preparing documentation about the studies eligibility for AIP grants and presenting the case before the DVRPC RAC, UWAG and in meetings with the sponsor and funding agencies. His big questions are 1) is there an eligible sponsor? 2) can pier extension permit be attained? 3) will there be more residents in the 65 LDN contour in the future? 4) what about safety of approaches in NJ and can a precision approach be achieved? Mr. Fels points out that with a potential \$10 million cost to the region in AIP funds, the economic benefit better be big. Also ships in the shipping channel of the Delaware River may impact approaches given the 8 to 1 slope of approach. Mr. Fels will check this out and report back. Rick Childs noted the first heliport site study in the city was done by

McCormick Taylor for PIDC and they realized the business importance. Also, the EA will require a benefit/cost look at the project. Mr. Fels continued that the site must be identified in the NPIAS and the sponsor designated specifically for FAA to award the study grant. Mr. Fels asked if the RAC endorsed continuing to pursue EA funding for this site to answer environmental, noise, operational and economic questions necessary before a construction commitment could be made from the AIP. The committee responded in the affirmative. Mr. Fels reminded the group that if Sterling was federally funded for construction of an expanded facility, the operator may have to compete with other FBO's. At Mr. Fels' suggestion, Mr. Moog will present the conclusions of the Sterling EA debate to the DVRPC Board at its June meeting. The Board representing Philadelphia, PENNDOT and surrounding counties can, if it chooses, endorse specifically the study and initiative to improve the center city heliport, and amend the region's ACIP submittal to PENNDOT/FAA accordingly. Roger Moog will report back on that presentation and the status of sponsorship qualifications.

Regional General Aviation Security Study - Mr. Moog reported that this consultant study has been completed by CTI Corp. and a draft report has been distributed to NJDOT, PENNDOT and DELDOT. All 23 GA airports in the region and Capital City in the Harrisburg area were assessed for security deficiencies, potential risk, and to design mitigating strategies. Although terrorist related risks to our airports are low, potential risks from airports to other targets are significant in some cases. Risk assessments at airports were rated A through D or highest to lowest. Three airports rated highest or A, three rated B, twelve rated C and four rated D for lowest risk. Counter-measures were recommended depending on risk category, with the fewest measures prescribed for D category airports increasing in number and expense to A category. Security awareness will be raised and countermeasures standardized among all airports in proportion to established risk. This regional analysis will be used by state DOTs in conjunction with TSA recommendations to establish statewide security programs and policies.

PA Jet Fuel Tax Increase Proposal - Mr. Moog reports that both the BOA and PA Aviation Council are recommending an increase in the jet fuel tax to fund future anticipated shortfalls in the PA Aviation Restricted Account which funds Bureau of Aviation services, the state flight department and airport grant programs. The tax has not been increased since 1984, although costs and worthy projects have increased dramatically. Also, jet fuel sales have been down due to 9/11/01 and economic slowdown impacts. The Governors Aviation Advisory Committee will produce a policy paper to recommend action to the state legislature and administration. The jet fuel initiative will occur this fall in the legislature at the same time as officials debate a gas tax increase to make up for highway revenue losses resulting from reductions in payouts to PA from federal programs. A tax increase will benefit all airports but hurt big buyers of jet fuel like the commercial airlines.

Federal Airport Grant Obligations Discussions - Mr. Fels reports that FAA headquarters and the ADO are reviewing AIP grant assurances and limitations to determine the FAA response to New Garden airport's private owners and New Garden Township regarding the public acquisition of the airport by the township. Different ADO offices in Eastern Region of FAA have taken different positions with regard to public acquisition of privately owned public use airports. These divergent positions should be reconciled to ensure equal treatment of owners and maximize the states and region's ability to preserve aviation infrastructure.

5. Capital Programming

PENNDOT Funding Programs - Tom Tomczyk said PENNDOT is working to streamline the 12 year plan process and put it on-line. PENNDOT will use DVRPC staff to prepare the region ACIP with project selections and proposed funding priorities and schedules for the 05 budget year.

Regional ACIP Preparation - Reiner Pelzer who is coordinating the regional ACIP preparation for the PA portion of the region said DVRPC is aiming to complete ACIP preparation for DVRPC Board Approval in January 05 for submittal to PENNDOT for incorporation into the statewide program in February 05. Mr. Tomczyk suggested DVRPC staff meet, this fall, with its airport operators and engineers to expand and clarify the ACIP scope at individual facilities.

6. Old Business

Regional Air Service Study - Mr. Moog said that DVRPC with its partners, Port Authority of NY and NJ, and NYSDOT have selected a consultant to do the nine airport - three region study. Work program and budget negotiations are under way. Study airport's passenger markets will be defined and forecasts made of future traffic. Ultimately, strategies for redividing demand from busier airports to those with available capacity will be identified.

7. New Business

DVRPC Newsletter - The new edition of the DVRPC Aviation Newsletter is available and will be distributed widely in the region.

NJ General Aviation Study Commission - Rick Childs noted nine bills introduced in the New Jersey legislature, harmful to aviation and airport operations. These should be reviewed by the Commission and dealt with objectively. DVRPC staff will try to locate enabling legislation for our review.

Lunch - Lunch after the RAC meeting will be provided by Urban Engineers at 1530 Walnut Street, along with a presentation on airport planning and design technical

innovations.

NY/NJ ADO - Some new personnel have been assigned there and should be invited to the next Regional Aviation Committee Meeting.

PA Capital Budget Program - As part of the Harrisburg assistance program to SEPTA and DOT, airports throughout the Commonwealth are anticipating a one time grant program totaling up to \$40 million for identified capital projects.

Next Meeting - The next meeting of the DVRPC RAC will be Thursday, September 16, 2004. Fran Strouse has offered the use of Wings airport as the location. DVRPC staff will formalize these arrangements and inform the RAC members of details in the mailing for the 9/16/04 meeting.

Public Comments - None.