



CRYSTAL AIRPORT FEDERAL EA / STATE EAW

Airport Community Panel

Meeting #2 Minutes

Crystal Airport Meeting Room

March 5, 2019

6:30 P.M.

Panel Attendees

Dan Olson
Warren Batzlaff
Gary Schmidt
Neil Ralston

Representing

City of Crystal
Airport Tenant/User
Metropolitan Airports Commission
Metropolitan Airports Commission

Other Attendees

Dana Nelson
Naomi Pesky
Phillip Tiedeman
Evan Barrett
Sarah Emmel
Colleen Bosold

Representing

Metropolitan Airports Commission
Metropolitan Airports Commission
Metropolitan Airports Commission
Mead & Hunt
Mead & Hunt
Mead & Hunt

Public Observers

John Grosen

Representing

Reliever Airports Advisory Council

Absent Panel Members

Jason Gottfried
Cindy Sherman
Ginny McIntosh
Julie Deshler
Kyle Lewis
Katie Clark-Sieben

Representing

Hennepin County
City of Brooklyn Park
City of Brooklyn Center
Local Citizens/Crystal
Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association
MAC Commissioner District C

The attached report represents this writer's interpretation of items discussed during the meeting. Any corrections or additional information should be brought to our attention for clarification.

The purpose of the meeting was to:

- Conduct a debrief of the October 30th public event and get the Airport Community Panel's (ACP's) feedback on what went well and what could be improved for the public hearing.
- Provide an overview of the environmental impacts of the proposed development (preferred alternative) and get feedback from the ACP on the material presented to incorporate into the presentation for the upcoming public hearing.

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- Share with the ACP the next steps in the EA/EAW process.
- Continue to equip ACP members to be the point of contact for information sharing, both to and from the community and MAC, and to respond to inquiries from their constituent groups.

Neil Ralston, MAC Aviation Planner, and Evan Barrett, the consultant team Project Manager from Mead & Hunt, presented and facilitated the meeting. A copy of the meeting presentation can be found at: <https://metroairports.org/General-Aviation/Crystal-Airport-Environmental-Assessment/Documents-and-Links/MIC-ACP-Meeting-2-Slide-Deck-03-05-2019.aspx>

The Panel discussion occurred as follows:

Warren Batzlaff asked if the cities and municipalities surrounding the airport's runway protection zones (RPZs) are cooperating with zoning and land use restrictions, such as having appropriate regulations for building height development, tree heights, etc. Neil explained that part of the plan is to move the RPZs for the primary runway fully onto airport property. For the crosswind runway there are still some portions where the RPZs cross roads or go off-airport. Warren asked whether a process was in place to make sure that the cities involved in those areas have the appropriate regulations. Evan responded that it was the MAC's intent to convene a Joint Airport Zoning Board (JAZB) as part of the project implementation. The JAZB would involve all those jurisdictions. Neil confirmed there is currently a zoning ordinance for both land use and height in place, but it needs to be refreshed. Neil confirmed that through these planning and environmental processes, the MAC is renewing its partnerships with the local municipalities to minimize incompatible uses around its airports. He also noted that, as Crystal is a relatively developed area, there's not much to develop around the Crystal Airport, and that tree growth is the primary issue. Warren clarified, that from a zoning standpoint, his point was that people should know they can't plant trees that will grow to unacceptable heights, so the MAC doesn't have to spend money every 20-30 years to cut down trees and plant appropriate low-growing species.

Warren Batzlaff asked if there was an overall increase in green space and decrease in the amount of total pavement coverage for the proposed project. Evan responded that, while the project will remove a lot of pavement, there is approximately a net acre of increased pavement. He noted this includes the roads, apron, runway and taxiway extensions. Neil clarified MAC will not remove the entire runway that's being closed, it's being narrowed, but extended out to the new ends of the runway.

During the Department of Transportation Section 4(f) portion of the presentation, when Evan stated there were approximately 30 trees in Edgewood Park that would need to be removed, John Grosen asked "out of how many?" Evan replied it was about 30 out of several hundred trees, pointed them out in a photo within the presentation, and said they had not been intentionally planted. He mentioned the team has been working with the City of Brooklyn Park—the owner of the park—to establish a tree replacement plan that should improve the park. He also said the team has worked with the FAA over the last several months to establish a *de minimis* determination. That determination says that, while there are impacts to the park, those impacts will not adversely affect the park. He then handed out a tree fact sheet handout that the team developed in response to several questions about tree removal that came up at the October 30th public meeting. He said the fact sheet will be made available on the project website and distributed at the public hearing. The handout explains the tree impacts associated with the project and outlines what the MAC intends to do to minimize impacts and replace trees. He asked for the panel's feedback on the fact sheet so that any suggested improvements could be considered and addressed prior to distributing the fact sheet at the public hearing and posting it to the project website. Warren suggested considering adding that the tree removal also benefits the safety of the community.

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He also pointed out that silver maples are another non-hardwood tree and that those and cottonwoods (two of the tree species to be removed) are susceptible to storm damage and falling on houses and other property. He pointed out the dual benefit in trying to change the mix a bit. Dan Olson mentioned that the City of Crystal has an approved tree species list on their website with 60-70 trees included—a mix of softwoods and hardwoods—and asked if the MAC was open to having those trees planted as replacement trees. Neil said they would want to screen the list for slow-growing vs. fast-growing trees. Evan asked whether the list identifies the types of trees the City would use when replacing trees. Dan confirmed it was, and Evan said the team would review at the list. Neil reiterated the team knows this is a sensitive topic for many community members. He said the plan as of now is to work with the City of Brooklyn Park to replace the trees that are removed in Edgewood Park with more appropriate, slower-growing trees. For private residential properties, they will negotiate the fair market value of the trees with the homeowners, not just coming in and cutting down the trees without compensation. Evan also mentioned that, as part of the team's coordination with the City of Brooklyn Park, they worked with the Parks Department and their consultant who is developing a natural resource management plan for the park system as a whole to establish specific tree species they'd like to see planted in the park. He noted they're trying to move toward a native species type of plan where there are not as many exotic type species planted in the parks.

During the Historic and Archeological Resources section of the presentation, Gary Schmidt asked if the project team knew that the airport was relocated to its current site in the late 1950s. Evan confirmed that the team was aware of that and noted the detailed report resulting from this analysis would be available as an appendix to the EA/EAW.

During the Zoning section of the presentation, Dan Olson asked if the JAZB would be convened after the EA/EAW process. Evan and Neil confirmed that was correct.

Dan Olson asked if the Environmental Justice analysis was based on census tracts? Evan replied it was based on census block groups using the EJSCREEN tool on the EPA's website. Sarah Emmel confirmed the analysis used the 2016 five-year community survey data from EJSCREEN. John Grosen asked if proportionate or disproportionate was strictly based on geographic area and population? Evan replied that it's somewhat subjective but said the intent is to make sure that any project does not have more of an effect on a minority population than a non-minority population. He noted that the project team's conclusion is that the effects of the project are fairly evenly distributed throughout the affected area and he stated the FAA is likely to concur with that conclusion.

Regarding tree removal on private properties, John Grosen asked if the MAC has the legal authority to just take the trees, and whether it is just a matter of when and how. Neil responded that the MAC is generally able to come to an agreement with homeowners; however, there have been some cases in which the MAC has not been able to come to an agreement with a homeowner. In those situations, the MAC has elected to not take the trees without an agreement in place. He further stated this would be one of the discussions during the zoning process—how the JAZB sets standards on height limitations, spreads the word, and enforces the zoning standards because they haven't been enforced in quite some time. He noted there weren't hundreds and hundreds of trees that would be removed, but about 50 off-airport trees that aren't in the park. Warren added, that if you have a big silver maple or one of those cottonwoods and it comes down on your house, it could cost several thousand dollars to get it out of the yard. Neil concurred, and said the MAC would be compensating homeowners for the fair market value of the tree. Warren noted that any tree replacements would likely be with a slower-growing hardwood tree. Neil clarified that for the residential tree removals, the MAC would be offering fair market value for the tree, and then homeowners could choose to replace it if they wished—he wanted to make it clear that the MAC would not be offering fair market value AND replacing the trees on the private residential

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lots. Warren suggested getting information from the tree companies on estimated costs for removing these trees and sharing that information with the affected homeowners. He shared that he has a neighbor who just bought a house in Crystal and couldn't get insurance until they removed a silver maple overhanging their house. He said he wouldn't fail to mention that it is an advantage to the homeowner in that scenario, because a lot of people aren't trimming their trees because they can't afford it. Neil said it's a process to work through, but something the MAC is familiar with doing and has quite a high success rate. John Grosen added that based on the public comments at the last public meeting, it seems that trees are going to be the MAC's biggest issue. Dan Olson stated he believed those are the same comments the MAC received during the comprehensive planning process. Neil confirmed they were. Naomi Pesky mentioned it will be helpful that the team has the visuals now of what the tree removal impacts will look like.

Neil asked the panel if there was anything else they saw in the presentation that struck them as a potentially sensitive issue. Dan Olson asked about the four properties that are impacted by the noise contours and what the process was for contacting them and doing the analysis. Dana Nelson explained that the MAC would put together a plan for how they would measure noise, based on different FAA guidance documents on the topic. They would then work with the City and FAA to get their approval of that plan. The MAC would then reach out to homeowners and conduct acoustical testing. This involves going into the homes and doing interior as well as exterior noise level testing. They would then analyze the level of sound insulation the home provides to see if it triggers the threshold set by the FAA. She noted the MAC has done this a couple different times in the past—once around MSP and once around Flying Cloud Airport—so they have a good template to use. She then invited Dan or anyone else at the City who was interested to accompany the team when doing the testing. Dan responded that the building official had expressed interest. Dana further explained how they do the testing, using a big speaker and pink noise (on the same frequency level as white noise). She said they only test habitable rooms, such as bedrooms and living rooms. John Grosen said it's surprising that they'd have to do this testing since these homes are already inside that existing 65 DNL. Gary Schmidt said it's required because they are making a change in the runway configuration. Dan said he imagined people would be open to having this done. Dana said she would hope so, and noted that in the past, people have been open to it. MAC needs to request access to the home but can typically be in and out of each home in a couple hours. She said that because it's only four homes, they would test each home. In the past, when it's been a larger area, they've tested a sampling of the homes.

Warren Batzlaff asked what the funding outlook looked like. Evan responded the MAC is doing the EA because it's a requirement in order to get federal funding, so it is the MAC's intent to get a federal grant to do the construction for the project. Neil mentioned it's a high-priority project for the FAA because of the hot-spots. Evan said there are a lot of pieces to the project; the runway and taxiway pieces of the project would be eligible for federal funding and noted those are the lion's share of the cost of the project. He said the perimeter roads, aprons and other project components might not compete as well for federal funding, so it remains to be seen if they'll get significant federal assistance. Warren asked about the timing for construction. Evan responded they're targeting construction starting either late 2020 or early 2021.

Dana Nelson then outlined the next steps in the process. She stated the MAC Commission Planning, Development and Environment (PD&E) Committee would be the hearing officers for the public meeting. One option for the public hearing is to hold it as part of a PD&E Committee meeting, which are held at MSP, beyond security. She noted this option is not very conducive to inviting the public. The other option is to have it at a city hall-type location near the Crystal Airport and invite the PD&E committee members out to the community. She stated the latter is the MAC's preference but wanted to get input

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from the ACP members. Timing is anticipated for late May. Dan Olson said he thought it would be nice to have it in the community. He offered that the Crystal City Hall or Community Center could host it. Evan said the team anticipates publishing the draft EA/EAW for public review on or around April 22nd. It will be available on the Crystal EA/EAW project website, and subscribers to the email list will also get a notification.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:40 p.m.