



LAKE ELMO AIRPORT FEDERAL EA / STATE EAW

Community Engagement Panel

Meeting #1 Minutes

Lake Elmo Public Library
February 21, 2017
6:30 P.M.

Panel Attendees

John Renwick
Marlon Gunderson
Keith Bergmann
Mary Vierling
Dave Schultz
Stephen Buckingham
Kent Grandlienard
Ann Pung-Terwedo
Chad Leque
Neil Ralston

Other Attendees

Dana Nelson
Joe Harris
Melissa Scovronski
Brad Juffer
Evan Barrett
Laura Morland
Colleen Bosold

Absent Panel Members

Stephen Wensman
Robin Anthony
Michael Madigan

Representing

Airport Tenant/User
Airport Tenant/User and City of Lake Elmo Resident
City of Lake Elmo Resident
West Lakeland Township Resident
West Lakeland Township Supervisor
Baytown Township Resident
Baytown Township Supervisor
Washington County Public Works Planner
Metropolitan Airports Commission Director of Environment
Metropolitan Airports Commission Airport Planner

Representing

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

Representing

City of Lake Elmo Planning Director
Greater Stillwater Chamber of Commerce
MAC Commissioner District F

(Sign in sheet attached along with presentation and meeting materials distributed)

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:

- Provide background information on the environmental process and the stakeholder engagement plan for proposed airfield improvements at Lake Elmo Airport.
- Prepare community engagement panel (CEP) 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.

Items discussed were as follows:

After introduction of participants, Chad Leqve provided an overview on the MAC's purpose and mission, as well as the primary role of Lake Elmo Airport; Neil Ralston provided a recap of the Lake Elmo Airport Long-Term Comprehensive Plan; Evan Barrett provided an overview of the environmental process; and Chad Leqve concluded with an overview of the stakeholder engagement plan, a discussion of CEP guidelines and general Q&A as described below.

A CEP member asked about airport runway lighting – whether it is generally ground lighting, whether the lights are always on or only while in use, and whether there are any plans to change what currently exists. Chad Leqve answered that the Airport currently has steady-burning lights along the runway edges and strobe runway end identifier lights (REILs). The runway edge lights are pre-set to low intensity, but can be increased in intensity by pilot remote control. The REILs are pre-set to remain off unless activated by pilot remote control. The Airport also has a rotating beacon, which is always on. There are no plans to change the character of the lighting at the Airport as part of the project.

Stephen Buckingham asked about the frequency of the CEP meetings. During his presentation, Chad Leqve stated that the CEP meetings will take place after each of the four public milestone events. Mr. Buckingham asked whether this statement about meeting frequency constituted a change from the project schedule in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, which shows six CEP meetings held bi-monthly starting in May. Evan Barrett confirmed that the CEP meetings will be held once every other month, starting in May, as shown in the project schedule. Four of the CEP meetings will occur after a public milestone event, and two additional CEP meetings will be held that do not occur following public milestone events.

Dave Schultz asked if the Township could put project information and updates on its own website. Melissa Scovronski answered that they could include a link to the MAC project website and possibly a sign-up for the E-news subscription, which will also be available on the project website.

A CEP member asked if City of Lake Elmo officials will be represented on the CEP. Chad Leqve answered yes, but that the City of Lake Elmo Planning Director was unable to make it to tonight's meeting, as were the MAC Commissioner and Greater Stillwater Chamber of Commerce representatives.

Kent Grandlienard offered the Baytown Township community building for future meetings, possibly the public meetings for which a larger space is needed. A CEP member asked when and where the first public meeting will be held. Evan Barrett answered that it is shown in the project schedule for late April or early May. The exact date, time and location have not yet been set, but will be publicized at least three weeks in advance of the meeting.

Mary Vierling commented that the CEP composition seems unbalanced as she represents over 200 constituents who have concerns about the potential safety and community effects of the project. Chad

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Leqve explained the rationale for the CEP's composition and stated the intent of convening the CEP is to bring a cross section of stakeholder voices to the table. He also mentioned that the CEP is advisory and, because there will be no roll call votes conducted by the CEP, proportional representation should not be an issue.

Ann Pung-Terwedo commented that the MAC is going a lot farther with the planned stakeholder engagement process than is required, which is above and beyond what she has ever seen, and praised the MAC for that effort.

Mary Vierling expressed concerns that floodwater is up to the road on both sides of 30th Street North and that because there is no sewer/drainage system there is nowhere for the water to go.

Dave Schultz asked when the Valley Branch Watershed District (VBWD) would be involved in the process. Chad Leqve responded that there was a separate agency scoping meeting held earlier that day which the VBWD representative attended. The project team received some useful information from the agencies and will coordinate evaluation of effects on water resources with relevant regulatory agencies throughout the process.

Kent Grandlienard asked whether there are exemptions for airports with wetlands at the ends of runways, as the proposed alternative would move the runway end closer to an existing wetland. His understanding was that this is undesirable for safety reasons. He asked further questions about waterfowl and wildlife attractants, and stated that the pond in the new development across Manning Avenue is a significant wildlife attractant. Chad Leqve said that a wildlife hazard assessment will be developed and wildlife hazards will be evaluated during the environmental process in accordance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) guidance.

Mary Vierling stated that the Metropolitan Council submitted a comment during the LTCP process mentioning the MAC had 36 acres of wetland on the airport. She asked if it was possible to get an overview of where these wetlands are. Neil Ralston answered that there is a map in the LTCP in Figure 2-10 on Page 2-31 that shows the wetland locations.

A CEP member asked how the environmental review will address affected farmlands. The MAC leases land some of the Airport's land to farmers and could at any time make a business decision to stop leasing that land. Joe Harris replied that the MAC may need to reduce or eliminate some of the agricultural rentals as part of this project.

A CEP member asked about the LTCP showing a re-routing of County Highway 15 (Manning Avenue) for one of the rejected alternatives. This highway is slated for expansion from two lanes to four lanes. Ann Pung-Terwedo said the highway expansion project is currently planned for some time after 2020.

A CEP member asked whether the Manning Avenue expansion issues played into the decision to move the runway. Neil Ralston said that removing Manning Avenue from the Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) is a benefit of relocating the runway, but is not the impetus for the decision. However the expansion of Manning Avenue will likely trigger FAA review if it is not removed from the RPZ.

A CEP member asked if there was a chance the FAA would not require Manning Avenue to be re-routed if the runway were to remain in its existing location. Neil Ralston answered that it is possible, but it is difficult to predict exactly what the FAA's response would be in that scenario.

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Melissa Scovronski asked if she and her team, which will be designing and managing the project website, could use the CEP for feedback on website materials as they are developed. Chad Leqve and the CEP responded that was a great idea and they would be happy to review materials.

Next Steps

Mead & Hunt will finalize the Scope of Work based on feedback received from the CEP and agencies. The CEP will reconvene approximately two weeks after the first public meeting, which will provide an introduction to the environmental process. The MAC intends to schedule these meetings with ample advance notice as described in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 p.m.