



Solano County
Airport Land Use Commission
675 Texas St., Suite 5500
Fairfield, California 94533-6341
www.solanocounty.com

Planning Services Division
Phone: (707) 784-6765 / Fax: (707) 784-4805

Steve Vancil
Chairman

SOLANO COUNTY AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF September 12, 2013

The meeting of the Solano County Airport Land Use Commission was held in the Solano County Administration Center, Board Chambers (1st floor), 675 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA 94533.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Vancil, Commissioners Potter, Baumler, Seiden, DuClair and Randall

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioners Stockard, Baldwin and Cavanagh

OTHERS PRESENT: Jim Leland, Resource Management; Lee Axelrad, County Counsel; Diane Gilliland, Resource Management

Items No.

1, 2 & 3: Chairman Vancil called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Item No. 4. Approval of the Agenda
The agenda was approved unanimously

Item No. 5. Approval of the Minutes of the July 11, 2013 meeting
The minutes were approved with a comment by Commissioner Potter.

Item No. 6. Committee Reports – None

Item No. 7. Public Comment
There was no public comment.

Item No. 8. Old Business – None
A. Approval of the Minutes: June 13, 2013
The approval of the June 13, 2013 minutes was continued.

Item No. 9. New Business
A. Action Item: Conduct a Public Hearing to consider the consistency of ALUC-13-07, a freeway sign for the Vaca Valley Travel Center with the Travis AFB and the Nut Tree Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans.

Jim Leland stated that staff was recommending that the Commission find ALUC-13-07, the Policy Plan Amendment, to be consistent with the Travis Air Force Base and Nut Tree Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans. The Policy Plan Amendment is analogous to a Specific Plan Amendment and as such state law requires that it come before the ALUC. The City of Vacaville is considering a Policy Plan Amendment to permit a 65 foot freeway sign near the intersection of Vaca Valley Parkway and Crocker Drive. The property is in Zone D of the Travis AFB LUCP. The applicable review criteria are for airspace review of objects over 200 feet in height and a prohibition of "other hazards to flight". The project also lies within Zone D of the Nut Tree Airport. The height of the proposed sign is 65 feet. The review criteria for Zone D generally favor commercial and office land uses. Development must comply with FAA Part 77 Height Criteria. The consistency review concluded that the policy plan does not create any direct conflicts or modify any of the mechanisms in place that assure compliance with the compatibility criteria in the Travis AFB or the Nut Tree Land Use Compatibility Plans.

Commissioner Potter stated that he noticed that the date of the Negative Declaration was November of 2011 and was a draft. He asked about the current status of the document. Mr. Leland stated that the Negative Declaration was adopted by the City of Vacaville when the Policy Plan was adopted. They are now coming back for a minor amendment and they are using the same Negative Declaration that they used to approve the original project.

Commissioner DuClair asked about the brightness of the new sign and if it would be a distraction for night landings. Mr. Leland deferred the question to the applicant's representative.

Chairman Vancil opened the public hearing and asked if the applicant had any comments.

Tom Philippi, Philippi Engineering, stated that he was representing the applicant (City of Vacaville). He stated that the reason for the two minor changes is that the original location shown on the Policy Plan along with the 35 foot sign height does not allow the sign to be seen before the freeway off ramp. The minor amendment is to move the sign location to the north end of the property and raise the height to 65 feet so that it can be seen by drivers before the freeway off ramp.

Commissioner Seiden referred back to Commissioner DuClair's question about the brightness of the sign being a possible distraction to night landings. He asked if the airport and the City had discussed that issue. Mr. Boatman, JC Graphics, replied that his company designed the sign which has four panels with vinyl graphics placed over the panels which reduces the amount of light coming thru. Also the brightness of the sign is automatically dimmed at night. He stated that its illumination would be no brighter than any of the other signs along the freeway. There being no further comments from the Commissioners or the public Chairman Vancil closed the public hearing.

Chairman Vancil noted that he had a discussion with county staff concerning the height of the sign and noted that it does abide by the height requirements of the FAA Part 77 to include the potential runway extension in the Nut Tree Airport Master Plan. There being no further questions from the Commission Chairman

Vancil asked if there was a motion. Commissioner Potter made a motion to approve the resolution that the ALUC finds the Policy Plan Amendment to be consistent with the Travis AFB and the Nut Tree Airport Land Use Compatibility Plans. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Seiden. The motion passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

- B. Presentation: Receive a presentation from Travis Air Force Base requesting an amendment to the 2009 Travis AFB ACUIZ study to consider specific standards to the Assault Landing Zone.

Mr. Leland stated that staff from Travis AFB was before the Commission to make a presentation to the on an amendment to their 2009 ACUIZ Study that was presented to the Commission last year. He noted that the agenda referred to the 2002 Travis AFB LUCP in error and should have referred to the 2009 ACUIZ Study.

Nate Pyron, Travis AFB Community Planner, gave a brief update of the amendment to the 2009 Air Installations Compatible Use Zones (ACUIZ) Study. He noted that Travis AFB is an economic engine for the county as the total economic impact of the base to the county is 1.6 billion dollars. The ACUIZ was developed to protect the public and the expanded operations of Travis AFB. The criteria studied are the potential for aircraft accidents, noise and hazards to operations such as height of structures and light pollution. The clear zone, accident potential zones and the imaginary surfaces are also reviewed by Travis planners. With the update to the ACUIZ Travis AFB is requesting that the County find the amended description of Travis AFB airspace to be consistent with its Plan. He concluded by noting that, although it is not funded yet, the Joint Land Use Study was a good opportunity to bring all the stakeholders together to look at certain types of uses that may affect the operations at Travis AFB.

Commissioner DuClair thanked Mr. Pyron for mentioning the subject of light pollution as distraction for pilots. Mr. Pyron noted that the subject came up regarding the development of the Fairfield Train Station Plan which will be less than a mile away from the Base.

Gary Gottschall, Operations Group Deputy Commander, Travis AFB, gave an overview of the new assault landing zone (ALZ) at Travis AFB. An assault landing zone is a short runway and are often unprepared surfaces such as dirt, gravel or other types of paved and unpaved surfaces. An ALZ runs between 3000 to 4500 feet long depending on the location. The word assault means that they fly special procedures to allow the safe landing and takeoff on a short runway as the margin for error is much smaller. Currently Travis AFB flight crews are using assault procedures frequently to land on dirt runways and other short fields in Afghanistan. Having an assault landing zone at the Base allows crews to train locally. Travis AFB was selected out of 18 candidate locations for the construction of the Southwest US permanent C17 assault landing zone. The ALZ opened for use at the end of April 2013 and is 3500 feet long and ninety feet wide. It has brought a fundamental change in how the Base intends to train in the airspace around Travis AFB for mission readiness purposes. Previously aircraft had to be flown from Travis AFB up to Washington State for ALZ training at a round trip cost of \$32,000 per flight. The ALZ will pay for itself in fuel savings in about three years. The Travis ALZ is a regional asset as other users are also using the ALZ for training. Before outside units use the ALZ they are

required to review and sign a letter of agreement that they know and understand the procedures in the Tactical Arrival and Departure Guide and are ready to operate on the ALZ.

The Tactical Arrival and Departure Guide was developed to safely operate and train on an assault zone. The ALZ will provide world class training opportunities for day and night landings. It has overt and covert (infrared) lighting. Users are required to use visual flight rules within 12 nautical miles of the field. The guide is established from 500 feet above ground level up to 9500 feet mean sea level. He described PowerPoint slides of maps and graphs showing the airspace over Travis AF, surrounding communities and the Wind Resource Area; Travis AFB Airspace Usage (arrivals/departures/traffic patterns); Travis AFB Flight Restrictions; Spiral Down Rwy 21L/R/Assault patterns; Spiral Down Rwy 03L/R/Assault patterns; South Beam Rwy 21L/R/Assault patterns and Curvilinear Rwy 21L/R/Assault patterns. Mr. Gottschall concluded by noting the importance of the tactical approaches because they save lives by making aircraft more difficult to target and the Travis ALZ will allow more pilots to practice tactical approaches by serving the entire southwest region.

Commissioner Potter asked for a description of the assault landing airstrip. Mr. Gottschall answered that it was located off the northeast end of the northern most runway. It is not an extension but is offset of the existing runway and has a concrete surface. Chairman Vancil asked if the 500 foot limit went out to the edge of class D. Mr. Gottschall answered that it did. Commissioner Potter asked about tactical departures. Mr. Gottschall stated that with tactical departures "you take off, build up air speed at a very low altitude and you either trade the airspeed for altitude very rapidly to get up above the small arms envelope or you stay low and fast and you get out quickly. This depends on the type of terrain." Commissioner Potter asked how they handled the noise envelope for residential areas around Travis AFB. Mr. Gottschall said that most of the departures will turn out to the east and away from developed areas. Commissioner Randall asked about flight patterns for inflight emergencies. Mr. Gottschall stated that for the most part they would fly in a radar pattern which is a rectangular, box pattern to get back in for a landing. Chairman Vancil asked what types of aircraft were using the ALZ. Mr. Gottschall noted that only the C17 will use it. The C5s would practice short spot landings on one of the main runways.

Annie Mudge, of Cox, Castle and Nicholson of behalf of EDF, stated that EDF supports the work that Travis AFB is doing and wishes to maintain their close working relationship. They want to be part of the discussions of land use compatibility in the vicinity of the ALZ particularly as it relates to wind energy development north of Highway 12. She noted that the Solano County General Plan currently allows for wind energy development north of Highway 12 and that the General Plan currently has regulations in place to protect the Travis mission. She also stated that they hoped that the update of the Travis ACUIZ takes into consideration Department of Defense instructions for updating ACUIZs with respect to renewable energy. She concluded by stating that they believe limited wind energy development north of Highway 12 is compatible with the Travis ALZ.

Mark Tholke, EDF, stated that the Wind Resource Area in Solano County ranks as a very significant source of wind energy. He also stated that EDF would like to be included in the discussions regarding land uses as they relate to wind

energy in the area north the Highway 12. He believed that wind projects were compatible with the Travis ALZ and hoped to work with Travis AFB toward that end. He also noted that EDF was formerly known as enXco and were the developers of Shilo I which has been sold to another developer. They also developed and own Shilo II, III and IV.

James Wallace, Benicia, stated that he is a managing partner of a ranch in Elmira and is interested in developing a wind energy project with 12 wind turbines on land approximately 2 miles southeast of a runway at Travis AFB. He asked if other areas could be considered as wind resource areas once the Montezuma Hills wind resource area is built out. He is interested in working with the County and Travis AFB to develop his project.

Commissioner Seiden asked Mr. Wallace if he could provide the Commission with a map showing the site location of the proposed project. Mr. Wallace stated that he would provide the Commission with a map. Commissioner Seiden noted that any project that came before the ALUC would be scrutinized on many levels particularly regarding the cumulative effects of wind turbines on the radar capabilities of the ASR11 for Travis AFB.

- C. Action Item: Direct staff to develop a strategy and work plan for addressing the Assault Landing Zone issue to be brought back to the ALUC for consideration at an upcoming meeting.

Mr. Leland stated that staff is recommending that the Commission direct staff to develop a strategy and work plan to address the Assault Landing Zone issue which will be brought back to the ALUC for consideration at an upcoming meeting. Travis AFB is establishing a specific area where assault land flight operations occur. They have declared a minimum flight altitude of 500 feet for conducting training and flight operations and have requested a buffer of 300 feet between the flight altitude and any structure. Mr. Leland stated that this requires an analysis of whether there should be a height limit of 200 feet in the defined area that they have mapped. These are some of the issues we would like to wrestle with as we bring the report back to the Commission perhaps at the next hearing. Another issue is the timing of how soon an amendment might need to be implemented in order to safe guard the Base properly. And traded off with that is the extent of public participation in any action the Commission might take that affects the Travis Plan and the land uses that are permitted thereunder. Whether this is going to be an in-house effort or require consultants could mean that a funding request is needed to be made to the Board of Supervisors. Staff needs to do some analysis of the CEQA steps that might be required to amend the 2002 Travis Plan. It looks like from a cursory review of their map that this only affects unincorporated lands but a closer look is needed to make sure the Cities are involved in the process if their lands are affected. The land use implications of what is being requested also need to be considered. This is not so much as a wind turbine issue so much as it is a height issue. There are wind turbine issues that have been alluded to with radar. Most the wind developers that have developed in the county have participated under a CREADA or a in other ways with Travis AFB to resolve those issues in the past. This issue that is being raised by the Base at this meeting is an obstruction free zone for the tactical flight training. Staff would like some time to research the issues involved in preparing an amendment which implements the request of Travis AFB; to formulate a budget for the proposed work effort and to amend the work plan and

requests that the Commission refer the matter to staff for the additional analysis. Commissioner Potter asked if staff's assessment would also take into account the potential for additional noise that might change the configuration of the existing noise boundaries. Mr. Leland answered yes and that staff would try to develop some information on that issue. He did not think that the noise footprint that Travis AFB presented to the ALUC last year included the ALZ activity. Staff would ask the Base if they could assist in developing information on noise from that specific set of operations.

Mr. Leland noted some current items regarding the current 2002 Plan. It was a maximum mission plan and under state law the ALUC can consider not only the mission that is described by a base but also what might be the maximum missions possible at that base and protect for that in the land use plan. The 2002 Plan identified that there was a future assault landing zone that was to be planned for in the Plan. The choices that will come back to the Commission will fall into two camps. One is to add this as a topic for discussion and study in a proposed joint land use study that the Base was nominated for and in which the County is considering participating. It would be a comprehensive update as was done in 2002 and consider a wide variety of issues, with a lot of public outreach and participation. The process could take two years to complete. The second alternative is to amend the 2002 Plan with a surgical amendment that just addresses the issue presented at this meeting by Travis AFB. Both options will be analyzed in the proposed work plan presented at the October meeting.

Chairman Vancil summarized that the Commission has an application for a joint land use study that was initiated by Travis AFB that may or may not happen when it is expected to and has not been funded. However there are projects that lie in the area under discussion at this meeting that may want clarification sooner than two years. He thought there was some merit in proceeding forward independently with the Travis request with the hope that it could at some point be rolled into a comprehensive plan update. Chairman Vancil noted that he was considering a subcommittee to look at updates to the Travis Plan. He asked if any Commissioners would be interested in a subcommittee or if they wished to wait for staff to present a report at the October meeting. Commissioner Potter thought that staff should present a report. Commissioner Potter made a motion that the County staff proceed to develop a strategy and work plan for addressing the Assault Landing Zone to be brought back to the ALUC for consideration at the next meeting. Chairman Vancil opened the hearing to public comments; hearing none he asked if there was a second to the motion. Commissioner DuClair seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously by a roll call vote.

- D. Action Item: Direct staff to inform the Solano County Board of Supervisors of the ALUC's intent to initiate an amendment to the 2002 Travis Plan and include any funding request as determined by the final scope of work.

Mr. Leland stated that staff was requesting that the ALUC send a communication to the Board of Supervisors to let them know of the Commission's potential intent to amend the 2002 Travis Plan and to direct staff to put together some cost estimates as determined by the final scope of work. Commissioner Potter stated that he thought that it was premature to send a letter to the Board until the Commission gets a report back from staff at the next meeting. Mr. Leland noted that the item could be deferred to the next meeting.

Commissioner Randall asked if this item was to fund a Joint Use Study. Mr. Leland stated that the item was about sending a courtesy letter to the Board that the ALUC was contemplating a change to the 2002 Travis Plan. Commissioner DuClair made a motion that the Commission send a letter to the Board of Supervisors of the ALUCs intent to begin an amendment to the 2002 Travis AFB Plan and to include any funding request as determined by the final scope of work. Commissioner Seiden seconded the motion. Commissioner Seiden stated that he did not think it was premature in that all the Commission is attempting to do is give the Board a heads up that, without any specifics, the Commission may decide to proceed with an update of the 2002 Travis Plan. Chairman Vancil opened the hearing to public comment. Hearing none he called for a roll call vote. The motion carried with 5 yes votes and 1 no vote.

Commissioner Potter stated that according to the bylaws there should be correspondence sending notification of absenteeism to the jurisdiction that nominated the Commissioner who has been missing meetings. Chairman Vancil stated that he would check on the status of the letter.

Chairman Vancil noted that air traffic control is set up in different sectors and the high altitude sectors for this area is controlled by the Oakland center. Below that our area is controlled by NorCal approaches which is based near Sacramento. They are looking at potentially doing an update on the four busiest airports which are Sacramento, San Jose, Oakland and San Francisco. They would be looking at modifying the departures and arrivals at those airports. Those airports are on the perimeter of Solano County so they won't have much impact on our airspace. He noted that it potentially could have some impact on Travis AFB approach and departure procedures.

Item No. 10. There being no further discussion the meeting was adjourned.

<p>The next regular meeting of the Solano County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) will be held on October 10, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the Solano County Administration Center, Board Chambers (First Floor), 675 Texas St., Fairfield, CA 94533.</p>
--

The County of Solano, in compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990, will provide accommodations for persons with disabilities who attend public meetings and/or participate in County sponsored programs, services, and activities. If you have the need for an accommodation, such as, interpreters or materials in alternative format, please contact Diane Gilliland, Department of Resource Management, 675 Texas St., #5500, Fairfield, CA 94533, (707) 784-6765.