

**RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED
IN PUBLIC MEETINGS
ABOUT THE AIRPORT, ITS GOVERNANCE,
AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES**

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(Revised 12/18/12);
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meeting (posted 12/18/12);
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I.

**West Plainfield Advisory Committee on Airport Development
November 1, 2012 Meeting
Response to Questions, Revised 12/18/12**

The following information is provided as a result of questions or comments from the community and from members of the West Plainfield Advisory Committee on Airport Development at their November 2, 2012 meeting.

1. Should there be a new landing fee at the airport?
 - a. Landing fees have been periodically discussed. This would be a major undertaking since it requires on-site monitoring by staff and some form of credit card fee collection system. Most public general aviation airports do not charge a fee. We will seek other ways to increase revenues at the airport.
2. Should there be a new fee imposed on airport tenants to cover emergency response provided by the West Plainfield Fire Department?
 - a. A portion of property tax is provided to the districts to fund its operations. Development impact fees paid by a developer at the time of construction are also an option for the district to explore. It would be difficult to enforce the establishment of an additional fee.
 - b. The airport manager will make contact with the West Plainfield Fire Protection District to discuss a number of issues going forward, including whether there is any way to help the District obtain or get access to a foam trailer or truck.
 - c. As the airport continues to develop, the County will also be working to upgrade the Airport's water system over time to achieve short term fire flow requirements.
3. Runway 16 should be the calm wind runway instead of runway 34.
 - a. This issue will be taken up as part of the February 7, 2013 West Plainfield Advisory meeting, and also at the next Aviation Advisory Committee meeting. Both committees will discuss several possible changes to the Facilities Directory (the published instructions to pilots using our airport). Though the Aviation Advisory Committee, composed primarily of pilots, is the most appropriate committee to advise on such changes, since flight patterns might affect property owners, it should also be discussed at the WPAC. Public comment about potential effects on the surrounding community is welcome at both meetings. The FAA reviews all proposed Facilities Directory changes prior to actual publication.

4. Should the helicopter pattern be the same as fixed wing aircraft instead of across the runway from the West?
 - a. This issue will be included as part of the discussion of several possible changes to the Facilities Directory mentioned in #3 above. We note that Section 91-126 of the FAA's General Operating and Flight Rules states that helicopters operating on or in the vicinity of an airport in Class G airspace must "avoid the flow of fixed-wing aircraft." This is typically done at small airports by designating the center of the runway as the helicopter approach.
5. Please post all West Plainfield and Airport Advisory Committee meeting minutes since 1997.
 - a. We have searched our archives and found 20 such meetings, which are in the process of being posted on the Yolo County Airport Web page. Any more we find will be posted as soon as they can be located and scanned.
6. Please ask FAA to visit and present to a future WPAC meeting.
 - a. We have requested a presentation and are awaiting a response from FAA.
7. The Master Plan EIR states on Page 1-8 that the NEPA environmental work is only for Phase 1, please explain.
 - a. The Master Plan EIR states that the document only covers Federal NEPA review for the first phase of projects on the airport and that FAA would require NEPA review for projects in Phases II and III since these subsequent phases would likely occur after a 5-year period. NEPA review is also required for all individual projects that use federal funding regardless of the phase. The EIR does, however, satisfy CEQA for the entire Airport Master Plan. As long as a proposed project complies with the Airport Master Plan and is ministerial¹, it will not trigger further CEQA review.
8. The noise study in the EIR should be updated before there is any new development. SENEL should be used to study noise levels at the airport.
 - a. The noise analysis completed in 1998 is based on an existing level of 60,000 operations per year (165 per day) and an anticipated level of 101,000 operations (255 per day). The airport is today likely at or below 60,000 operations and it will be many years before the airport approaches 101,000 operations. The noise analysis identifies the extent of the 65 decibel threshold, below which all land uses are deemed compatible, including residences². The

¹ A 'ministerial' application is an application the county is required to approve, so long as the application meets all minimum standards. A ministerial approval requires no public hearing and is issued directly by county staff, after review and approval by other permitting agencies such as Environmental Health and the fire district.

² Yolo County Airport Master Plan EIR, Figure 3-1

65 decibel threshold for 60,000 annual operations is entirely within existing airport boundaries.

- b. The Integrated Noise Model (INM) procedure used in the EIR that defines the 65 dB threshold was the standard FAA methodology in 1998. This methodology quantifies cumulative noise exposure from multiple events, accounts for time of day (nighttime events have greater impact), and correlates well with annoyance. The noise analysis also includes the expectation that a greater percentage of turboprop and jet aircraft will be using the airport over time, as is now occurring. In addition, the FAA is requiring newer aircraft to be quieter over time, so noise from individual takeoffs and landings are more likely to decrease over time rather than increase.
 - c. The noise analysis also anticipates occasional loud noises from jet and helicopter takeoffs that occur for a short duration, causing annoyance, which is directly proportional to the intensity and duration of the noise event. “However, the duration and intensity of existing and proposed aircraft operations at Yolo County Airport are significantly below the threshold levels identified as having any long lasting or harmful effects. Such effects are typically associated with residents living close-in to major air carrier and military airports.”³ The largest jet aircraft likely to use our airport have an actual measured short duration SEL (Sound Exposure Level) of less than 100 dB at 450m from the runway centerline.⁴
 - d. When the county begins its next update to the Airport Master Plan, we will make sure to use the then-approved noise model.
9. The airport drainage study is out of date and should be re-done before any development occurs.
- a. The drainage study was first completed as part of the Airport Master Plan in 1998, and updated in 2005. The update calculates actual runoff from all existing structures, and includes conceptual engineering for drain facilities that will accommodate the added stormwater runoff from an airport with 145 based aircraft and 101,000 operations per year – roughly twice our current level of development. Until that level of development is reached, the existing study will suffice. Though the county can apply to FAA for funding to complete the entire drainage project at one time, an equally likely scenario is to build the drainage project in phases over time. Whenever a development project is proposed that triggers the creation of one or more detention basins or ponds, an updated drainage plan would be engineered as part of that project, using the 2005 study as its basis, and incorporating the latest information such

³ Final Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Report, Yolo County Airport Master Plan, May 2, 1998, Page 3-4.

⁴ From “Relationship between Aircraft Noise Contour Area and Noise Levels at Certification Points”, NASA/TM-2003-212649, by Clemans A. Powell.

as the 2010 FEMA maps. Any required additional CEQA and NEPA environmental review would be conducted at that time.

- b. Any new proposed development project at the airport will be treated just like all other development project in the county. If the use is compatible with existing zoning it will be processed as a ministerial permit provided no other discretionary approvals are required. All ministerial projects undergo site plan review and building permit review at the Planning and Public Works Department. Site plan review includes whether there is adequate access, water and septic (if applicable), and drainage. See also Question #10 below.
 - c. All drainage facilities will be designed with FAA's policies for managing birds and wildlife in and around an airport property.
10. Because drainage is affected for any structure built at the airport, shouldn't all new projects be discretionary?
- a. Drainage is generally covered by the Paster Plan and EIR. Since the AV zoning requires ministerial review of hangers and most aviation related projects at the airport, drainage is reviewed at the time a Site Plan is submitted, using the same criteria as all other ministerial projects throughout the county. These criteria incorporate state and local codes and established county review procedures. A Site Plan review considers drainage, grading, foundations, structures, electrical, ADA and other aspects of the project. The stormwater quality and storm drainage requirements are posted in the County's Improvement Standards at <http://www.yolocounty.org/Index.aspx?page=1434> and include the following requirements:
 - i. Development shall not:
 - 1. Result in any new or additional expense to any person other than the developer or beneficiary for flood protection or for lost environmental stream uses and functions; nor
 - 2. Significantly increase flood elevations or decrease flood conveyance capacity upstream or downstream of the development; nor
 - 3. Pose any new or additional increase in flood velocity or impairment of the hydrologic and hydraulic functions of streams and flood plains unless a watershed benefit is realized; nor
 - 4. Significantly degrade surface or ground water quality.
 - ii. A developer must demonstrate that for all storm events, up to and including the critical duration 100-year event, the grading activity does not:
 - 1. Result in an increase in peak release rate; and,
 - 2. Result in a time decrease associated with the time of concentration; and,

- 3. Contribute to adjacent flood problems; and,
 - 4. Significantly alter the direction of runoff.
- b. Individual development projects that disturb less than an acre of land during construction or that create less than an acre of impervious surface can often meet these requirements without significant detention facilities.

11. Please provide sales tax and property tax receipts generated at the airport;

- a. Eight reporting establishments on the airport generated \$17,400 in sales tax between April 2011 and March 2012. This and all other sales tax generated in Yolo County accrues to the General Fund.
- b. All property tax not allocated to schools or other special funds accrues to the County General Fund, including those generated at the airport. Property tax revenues in 2012 from the airport are \$30,754 from planes based here, and \$5,033 from buildings and other improvements. Other portions of the property tax generated at the airport go to various school districts (\$66,629), the County Library (\$900), the West Plainfield Fire District (\$6,550), and other funds.

12. Please clarify the role of the WPAC and AAC, and when projects will be brought to each of them for consideration.

- a. The West Plainfield Advisory Committee on Airport Development and the Aviation Advisory Committee will each be asked to consider and make recommendations to the BOS on various projects in accordance with the duties designated for them in County Code. The attached table helps clarify the types of project each committee will be provided an opportunity to review.

Regardless of the projects each committee will be asked to review, every citizen of the county may at any time comment on existing policies and activities of the BOS, staff, or other citizens.

**EXAMPLES OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE REVIEWS FOR VARIOUS
AIRPORT RELATED ACTIVITIES**

PROJECTS AND OPERATIONS				
PROJECT	ADVISORY REVIEW		CEQA or NEPA CLEARANCE	COMMENT
	WPAC*	AAC**		
New Hanger development on airport, if consistent with Airport master Plan and ALUP.	No, may be an information item.	No, may be information item.	No	Zoning has pre-approved and CEQA has already been completed for up to 145 hangers on the airport. Project is ministerial. Site plan review and inspections are required.
New private manufacturer, restaurant or other discretionary project on airport requiring a use permit.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Standard county review process with appropriate CEQA document. Zoning Administrator makes decision for minor use permit, Planning Commission for major use permit.
Discretionary project within airport area of influence or within West Plainfield General Plan advisory area.	Yes	No	Yes	Standard county review process with appropriate CEQA document. Zoning Administrator makes decision for minor use permit, Planning Commission for major use permit.
Updates to Airport Capital Improvement Program and its projects	Yes	Yes	FAA requires NEPA clearance for each project	FAA requires all projects to be in the existing approved Airport Master Plan and Airport Layout Plan. Appropriate NEPA and CEQA clearance required for each project. Includes runway, drainage and other airport facility upgrades.
Revision to Facilities Directory – pilot instructions	Yes	Yes	No	Airport manager’s responsibility to keep up to date. If major revision to flight pattern, both committees will be consulted.

POLICIES AND PLANNING				
PROJECT	ADVISORY REVIEW		CEQA or NEPA CLEARANCE	COMMENT
	WPAC*	AAC**		
Revision to Airport Master Plan or Airport expansion beyond that envisioned in Master Plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Will require environmental review. Multiple comment opportunities, and ultimate BOS action.
Revision to Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Will require environmental review. Multiple comment opportunities before finalization by BOS. Submittal to SACOG required for ratification.
Revision to General Plan.	Yes	Yes	Yes	

*In general, the WPAC will be consulted for projects and policies outside the airport, and for policy matters on the airport.

**In general, the AAC will be consulted for projects and policies within the airport boundaries.

Each committee will send a representative to the other's meetings. Public comment is always included during committee deliberations.

II. RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS ASKED BY TRENT AND DEANA MEYER AT DECEMBER 11, 2012 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING, AGENDA ITEM #9

1. The Airport Master Plan and EIR must be updated before proceeding with any development.
 - a. The Master Plan and EIR stays in effect until revised or superseded, and may extend beyond its 2015 study time frame. As long as a new project is consistent with and within the development limits envisioned in the current Master Plan, it may proceed. See also response to Question #9 from November 1.
2. All infrastructure, including drainage, fencing and noise, should be in place before spending money on a 3-year contract.
 - a. Mead and Hunt will provide the necessary engineering and planning work necessary to complete necessary infrastructure.
3. All infrastructure, including drainage, fencing and noise, must be addressed before building any new hangars.
 - a. New hangars must be supported by adequate infrastructure and drainage facilities before being built. The plan check will ensure that new hangars will not increase effluent from the airport site – see also response to Question #10 from November 1;
4. Is the West Plainfield Fire Station scheduled for moving from its current location?
 - a. The Fire station is not scheduled to be moved. We will be considering it only if the airport's Reference Code changes from BII to CII – years into the future -- or if the FAA tells us we must move it to keep our certification;
5. The \$471,000 "cushion" for possible future projects is too large and amounts to a slush fund of excessive spending.
 - a. The three-year contract not to exceed \$1 Million is for planning and engineering services anticipated between now and 2015. It is foreseeable that the county could begin a Master Plan update or noise update and associated environmental studies. If that occurs, we certainly would use up most of that \$471,000 during the contract period. The county is not required to spend the entire \$1 Million.
6. The \$15,000 for construction management of the lighting project has already been spent and is duplicative.
 - a. Though engineering is complete, construction will not be begun until January, and construction management will mostly be performed under the new contract.
7. Mead and Hunt's fees are too high and a waste of taxpayer money.

- a. The contract requires Mead & Hunt to submit a workplan and fee schedule for each discreet project, and to obtain approval of that workplan and costs prior to beginning work. The price of each discreet project will be evaluated for reasonableness by staff before issuing a notice to proceed. Since most work performed under this contract will be funded by FAA and/or Caltrans, most Work Plans will also be reviewed by FAA or Caltrans for reasonableness as well. Generally, Mead & Hunt's engineering and planning fees have been about 10% of anticipated construction costs.
- 8. There are no safeguards built into this contract and Mead & Hunt has carte blanche to waste taxpayer dollars.
 - a. The bid process and contracting process followed the County's established procedures, all designed to not waste taxpayer money. See also responses to questions #5 & 7 above.
- 9. \$150,000 is too much for drainage design.
 - a. Agreed. Drainage studies were conducted in 1998 and updated in 2005. At the time the Board Letter was prepared, \$150,000 was the upper limit on cost, and matched the amount in the 2012 Airport Capital Improvement Program. Since then, Mead & Hunt reviewed the 2005 Drainage Update and believes they can do an update for much less. This new update will take the project beyond conceptual engineering to the 25% engineering level, suitable for bidding. We are trying to obtain the modeling data from 2005, and if successful new modeling will likely not be needed, reducing the cost even more. The Board of Supervisors will review the final expected cost on January 15 when they will be asked to approve our Airport Capital Improvement Plan and FAA grant application.

III. FOLLOW-UP TO QUESTIONS ASKED AT THE DECEMBER 12 WEST PLAINFIELD ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. Is the wording on the county's Airport and West Plainfield Advisory Committee web pages that describe the committees in line with the county charter?
 - a. The summaries describing the committees are weak and have been changed.
2. The ditches along Road 95 need maintaining.
 - a. We will send the appropriate maintenance personnel.
3. The Facilities Directory needs to be changed.
 - a. Both advisory committees will discuss possible changes at their next meetings.
See also
4. Why is the gun range exempted from the requirement that all tenants be an aviation use?
 - a. The Yolo Sportsmen's Association has had a lease at that location since 1968, and which currently expires in 2029. Have found no information about how this use originated.
5. Why are there still abandoned trailers and other junk around the airport?
 - a. Abandoned vehicles and other debris are being dealt with.