

MUNICIPAL AIRPORTS AVIATION ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday, March 3 2016  
Anchorage Fire Training Center  
1140 Airport Heights Road, Building "A" Room 3  
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

ATTENDANCE

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Sharon Chamard, Vice Chair  
Jamie Patterson-Simes  
Terry Pena  
Greg Pearce

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Jim Powell, Chair \*  
Jim Cieplak  
Don DeVoe \*

ORGANIZATION REPRESENTATIVES

MRI Air Traffic Control Tower, Clarissa Conley  
Civil Air Patrol, Randy Smith  
Elmendorf Airfield Operations, Major Andy Shicks

AIRPORT STAFF PRESENT

Paul Bowers, Airport Manager  
Jessica Michou, Service Administrator  
Darlene Sivyer, Commission Secretary (343-6303)

1. CALL TO ORDER  
Due to the absence of Commission Chair Jim Powell, Vice Chair Sharon Chamard called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.
2. SELF INTRODUCTIONS  
Sharon asked all attendees to introduce themselves.
3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING  
Minutes of the January 14, 2016 meeting were unanimously approved as submitted.
4. AIRPORT MANAGER'S REPORT  
Airport Manager Paul Bowers provided a report on the following topics.
  - A. Noise  
Paul noted that overall the number of MRI noise complaints is down due to the winter season. However, a new operator is flying a Bell 206 helicopter low, 600MSL, in the downtown vicinity and over the Cook Inlet near residences of the South Anchorage community, which has generated many noise complaints. The MOA, MRI and operator Egli Air are working to address this problem. Egli Air is not based at Merrill Field; the helicopter tours are departing from the Loft Hotel roof.
  - B. Vehicle/Pedestrian Deviations (VPD)  
There were no VPDs this year until two days ago when a driver from Sleetmute entered onto Taxiway Alpha.

C. Leasing Update

- Construction of the Chaz Aircraft Painting facility, located between the ATCT and Wings of Freedom hangar, has been ongoing through the winter. The steel infrastructure is up and siding is being installed.
- Materials for the new hangar to be built on the JayHawk lot are on site. Lessee Tim Karlovich had delayed 2015 construction to 2016.
- A new hangar facility is underway on the Alaska Aircraft Engines lease lot. The foundation is in and winter-suspended construction will resume in spring.
- North Edge has completed water line connections for its planned hangar expansion adjacent to Hudson Circle. The new hangar facility will triple the size of the current building, with construction expected to resume in 2016.
- D & D Airpark (former Aero Tech site) has also expressed interest in construction of their planned hangar development this summer.
- No new news regarding Kontor Development planning.

D. Project Updates

Alcan Electrical and Engineering is the contractor for the **Security & Lighting Upgrade Phase 3 Project**. The project will include installing a MRI-parochial fiber optic cable; modifying the existing vertical stake fencing along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue; installing security cameras on the Air Traffic Control Tower; reducing the width of Taxiway Kilo on the north side of Runway 7-25 (to effectively mirror the south side); and installing new gate operators and ingress/egress procedures on all MRI vehicle gates. The project also includes additional conduit for future cabling installation. Winter-suspended work will resume this spring.

The **Taxiway Q Dynamic Compaction Phase 5 Project** is designed and now being bid. This project area will include compaction of the landfill underlayment of portions of TWY Q and Golf apron, continuing eastward from where the Phase 4 project finished in 2015. The bid opening is scheduled for March 17 and is expected to well exceed \$4M.

The **Taxiway Bravo Paving Project** will include construction of the missing segments between Taxiways Mike and Quebec to complete the northern half of the taxiway. TWY B will remain uncontrolled; likely timing for construction is June, 2016.

The **Merrill Field Airport Master Plan Phase 2 Project** is progressing. Consultant HDR is working on the Alternatives chapter. One of the alternatives being considered is development of a medical office leasehold in concert with relocation of the 'Sitka Street Park' area located south of 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue and west of Sitka Street. 'Sitka Street Park' is not actually a park but is designated as a 'public use area' within the Runway 34 approach corridor greenbelt. A prerequisite to future development in this area would be to relocate the existing 'sledding hill recreation area' within the greenbelt space.

Future projects include **Runway 5/23 Lighting**, which is slated to be completed this summer and **Security & Lighting Upgrade Phase 4 Project** which will add cameras and updated gate systems to the west side of the field.

Randy Smith, CAP, asked and Paul confirmed the fiber optic cable installation included in the Security project will be located on the airport side of the fence that runs along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

E. User Group Meeting

The next MRI User Group meeting is planned for Wednesday, April 6, 2016, 3:00PM – 5:00PM in the Airport Manager's Office conference room, 800 Merrill Field Drive. These quarterly meetings are held the first Wednesday of January, April, July and October.

- F. Ongoing Bird Control  
Seasonal bird control continues. Airport maintenance hazes ravens from airport areas as frequently as needed.

5. ORGANIZATION REPORTS

- A. MRI Air Traffic Control Tower  
Tower Manager Clarissa Conley reported FAA is working with Egli Air to eliminate the helicopter noise complaints generated by his downtown flight operations. She also added that ATCT employees are receiving a lot of internal training. One controller will be transferring to Anchorage ATCT and MRI will gain a controller transferring from TRACON.
- B. UAA Aviation Technology Division  
No report per se. Jamie asked UAA Chief Flight Instructor Greg Stoddard if recruiting has begun for the Aviation Technology Division Director position currently held by retiring Rocky Capozzi. Greg responded that Rocky will be retiring in June, and he is unaware of the recruitment process specifics.
- C. Civil Air Patrol  
Randy Smith reported that the CAP recently assisted in searching for a missing hiker; otherwise, all is quiet.
- D. Elmendorf Airfield Operations  
Adam Shicks, Maj. USAF, noted the biennial Arctic Thunder Open House will be held July 30 and 31, 2016; aerial demonstration groups including the Navy Blue Angels will be arriving the week of July 24. Civil and military coordination meetings will start this spring, and officials are currently working with FAA on NOTAMS and TFRs. TFRs will be issued for demonstration practice times, performances during 'Special Needs Day' and aerial demonstration times on July 30 and 31.  
  
Discussion ensued about NOTAMS and TFRs that effect MRI businesses and users. Maj. Shicks responded that they are looking for balance in building the TFRs and show schedules. The show director will be working closely with MRI ATCT. In closing, Adam added that any rescues or life flights will take precedence over TFRs. Specific TFR dates/times that impact MRI are to be determined.
- E. Lake Hood Seaplane Base  
No Report.
- F. Bryant Army Airfield  
No report.

6. SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

7. OLD BUSINESS AND UNFINISHED ACTION

None.

8. NEW BUSINESS

None.

9. PUBLIC COMMENTS REGARDING AVIATION

Multiple Community Council members wanted to discuss the Land Use Alternatives being considered in the Airport Master Plan (AMP). Paul reiterated information previously provided regarding the conceptual development of the MRI property south of 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue for a future revenue generating office leasehold in concert with relocation of the existing a 'Sitka Street Park' and the snow storage area. He explained the difference between the former being called a 'park' and the actual designation as a 'public use area' and how that fits into 'airport purpose' land. He also explained that no specific development plans have been determined and this is purely a conceptual plan for future revenue development to support airfield use.

Barbara Karl, Airport Heights Community Council (AHCC), asked if the wooded area in the 'park' vicinity will be developed. Paul replied that it is not part of the concept for this area.

S.J. Cline, Fairview Community Council (FVCC), stated that he is aware of the AMP draft alternatives and noted that this long-range plan will impact the quality of life of neighbors adjacent to the airport. He also stated that the heavily used Sitka Park has interesting topography and is currently located at the preferred site. S.J. went on to explain that this area is Class A wetlands and development will impact area flooding. He asked if MRI has requested a floodplain study as the greater city could be impacted.

Sharon Chamard surmised that the FVCC would like Sitka Street 'Park' to remain at its current location as FVCC considers this to be the best use for this lot.

Alan Kemplan, introduced himself as a Fairview resident, former MAAAC member, former Alaska legislator, FVCC executive board member and AMP Advisory Committee member. Alan noted that he can appreciate modifications made to the AMP Land Use Alternatives, however, he has concerns about these changes. The plan is problematic in that the statement made about the land alternatives being in concert with the Anchorage 2020 plan is not accurate; likewise, the current proposal is in conflict with the Wetlands Plan. Alan went on to explain how wetlands preservation addresses water migration and how this development will create problems with the natural flow of water.

Alan further expressed his opinion that on the surface the AMP Land Alternatives looks great, but the development details would make it problematic. He expressed his support of S.J. Cline's comments that the area remain as it is due to the fact that Fairview has insufficient amount of open space. He also stated that the Fairview neighborhood is trying to be a good neighbor to the airport, and the community wants Merrill Field to be a good neighbor as well, observing that conflict never ends well. Lastly, Alan spoke on the development of airport properties on Orca Street and asked that commercial buildings not have industrial facades as they are next to residential areas.

Barbara asked about the AMP timeline. HDR Master Plan Consultant Carl Siebe answered that the AMP will be completed this summer. Paul Bowers added that there is a process and the land alternatives/development being discussed will not happen if it is not in the AMP. Barbara Karl asked if the current AMP addresses the proposed development; Paul responded that the year 2000 completed plan does not.

Discussion followed about whether or not the MOA Planning Department has made a decision on this issue, and it was asked to put this topic on the May MAAAC meeting agenda. Sharon Chamard proposed that the Commission weigh in on the AMP Land Use Alternatives.

10. COMMISSION COMMENTS

None.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:07 p.m.