

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: **AIRPORT**

DATE: May 23, 2006

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors Tessier
Girard
O'Connor

Committee Members Absent

Supervisors Stec
Haskell
Barody
Mason

Others Present:

Marshall Stevens, Airport Manager
Representing Stantec Consulting:
Michael L. Churchill, Senior Associate,
Transportation
Randy Christensen, Senior Environmental
Scientist
Joan Sady, Clerk of the Board
D. E. Hess
Debra L. Schreiber, Legislative Office Specialist

Since there was not a quorum present, Mr. Tessier, proceeded with an informal discussion at 2:40 p.m.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Marshall Stevens, Airport Manager, who distributed copies of his agenda packet, a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Commencing with Item 1 of the agenda, Mr. Stevens updated the committee on the Negotiation for Acquisition of Parcels. Relative to the parcel to the north, he apprised Mr. Dusek was currently reviewing the legal description that had been prepared for the easement and anticipated making a formal offer within the next couple weeks. An additional subdivision plan had been submitted to the Town of Queensbury but if Warren County obtained the easement, he noted their interest would be protected. Mr. Stevens stated he had not had the opportunity to negotiate further with Mr. Powers on the parcel to the south.

While Mr. Stevens acknowledged they could not address the resolution request under Item 2, he related that Mr. Schermerhorn had a client that was desirous of office space, water and sewer. Mr. Schermerhorn had investigated various options and had concluded that he would connect to the water/sewer at his own expense and pay the sewer assessment based on his water usage. Mr. Stevens recommended granting an easement to allow Mr. Schermerhorn to commence construction.

Relative to Item 3, Mr. Stevens stated he would prefer to discuss the Minimum Standards Document when they had a quorum of the committee. Currently in the policy, all owners must provide liability insurance in order to act as a commercial operator, he added. Furthermore, he said they now allow a commercial operator to sub-lease space as opposed to leasing directly from Warren County.

Mr. Stevens referred Item 4 to the Chairman, Mr. Tessier, who informed the members of the committee that it was the desire of Joan Grishkot to have a meeting with LARAC (Lower Adirondack Regional Arts Council) and the Adirondack Hot Hair Balloon Festival Committee, but he had not heard from her. Mr. Tessier said he would update the committee at the Board Meeting.

Referring to Item 5 of the agenda, Mr. Stevens advised the maintenance hangar was near

completion. Upon the excavator working at the site, he noted several live wires were discovered. Since there was an allowance in the contract for unforeseen items, Mr. Stevens explained the excavator dug a trench to reroute the wires around the building, waited a couple days for proper FAA notification, and now everything was complete.

Mr. Stevens said the committee requested an estimate to re-side the old main hangar. He indicated the cost to strip the old and install new insulated siding was approximately \$110,000. The contractor recommended installing a new rubber membrane over the top of the existing roof. Mr. Tessier suggested the Department of Public Works (DPW) perform the work.

Continuing on with Item 7, Mr. Stevens indicated they were initiating a legal action to enforce the easement on the Sicard parcel (east of the airport/Runway 30 end); however, Michael Muller, the attorney for Mr. Sicard, advised Mr. Stevens they did not have a problem with the easement but it necessitated being drawn up over the Sicard parcel. He added that VanDusen & Steves Land Surveyors was performing a survey on the property, writing up the legal description and then Warren County would be able to enforce their rights relative to the right-of-way.

Regarding Item 8, Mr. Stevens commented New York State (NYS) forwarded a revised grant schedule for a project that was completed and disbursed last year but requested the schedule be revised to reflect the dollar amount.

Mr. Stevens apprised the sub-lessee of the restaurant ceased operations on Saturday, May 17, 2006 although her lease expired at the end of June. He said he discussed the situation with Mr. Lussier, President of Empire East Aviation, and he stated the cook was currently applying for the necessary licenses and permits. If all else failed, Mr. Stevens advised that Empire East Aviation would take over and hire the cook.

Referring to Item 10 of the Agenda, Mr. Stevens stated due to the deterioration of the curb around the circle in the parking lot, Supervisor Stec suggested repairing the curb. While Mr. Stevens agreed the area was in need of repair, he advised they currently had \$82,000 of unbudgeted expenses and, therefore, recommended it be included in next year's budget. He noted that last year he received an estimate for granite of \$8,000, not including installation; \$4,500 for precast concrete and \$5,000-\$6,000 for poured concrete. After a discussion amongst the members of the committee, the general consensus was to make it a budget item for 2007.

Continuing on with Item 11, Mr. Stevens advised Banknorth had performed an insurance review and noticed Warren County did not have hangarkeeper insurance. He added page 12 of the agenda reflected the quote from Banknorth for liability insurance for County-owned hangars. He said it was his understanding the Insurance Committee selected who Warren County utilized as their insurance carrier and Banknorth was their current provider; therefore, he said this was the only quote he received. Mr. Stevens advised it would be his recommendation the County obtain the \$2,000,000 liability coverage for an annual cost of \$578 per year.

With respect to Item 12, Mr. Stevens explained the Town of Queensbury had been working on a comprehensive land use plan update. They recently came out with a draft which depicted the airport and their highest density residential recommendation south of the airport. In response to the draft, he said he spoke with the Queensbury Planning Department and asked that they reconsider it for a number of reasons. Subsequently, the Town of Queensbury came out with a

second plan which identified some of the changes to the various areas so he was glad he made the recommendations.

Mr. Stevens apprised Item 13 was a resolution request authorizing an agreement with Adirondack Soaring, the organization that would be hosting the glider competition from August 24, 2006 through September 2, 2006. He added they had provided proof of insurance and the airport would remain open during that week. He stated this event of majestic aircraft was new to Warren County and it had generated an extreme amount of excitement. Mr. Stevens informed the committee that Adirondack Soaring was based in Saratoga County but they could not host the competition due to the airport being constrained environmentally and therefore decided to hold it in Warren County.

With respect to Item 14, Mr. Stevens stated Dufresne-Henry was recently purchased by Stantec Consulting Services which necessitated a resolution request for the name change.

Referring to Item 15, Mr. Stevens indicated due to a recent car accident, the fence near Runway 30 had to be repaired. In addition, approximately two weeks ago, he apprised one of the ballasts in the lights had shorted out, thereby melting the plastic around it which set off the fire alarm. He said once the airport was closed and the building locked, in order for the fire department to get in, they would have to break the glass. A potential solution would be a key; however, he said, another alternative would be to expand the software and controller for the gates to include magnetic door locks so when the fire alarm sounded, it would release the locks and allow the doors to open. If the committee was desirous of this solution, he said they could restrict who had the ability to open the doors. Mr. Tessier suggested Mr. Stevens obtain estimates for both alternatives and make his recommendation at the next committee meeting.

Continuing on with Item 16 of the agenda, Mr. Stevens related American Yankee was considering hosting their annual flying event in Warren County in June/July of 2007. He advised they were bringing as many as 120 aircraft to this event and as the County continued to grow, the airport was trying to assist as well.

Mr. Stevens reported Stantec Consulting Services (formerly Dufresne-Henry) had completed the environmental assessment (EA) for the development projects at the airport that had been identified in the Master Plan. He stated the FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) required they hold a public information meeting and at the same time he asked Stantec Consulting Services to give a presentation to the committee on the draft document.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Randy Christensen, Senior Environmental Scientist, who advised he had prepared the Environmental Assessment for the Warren County Airport as a result of the Airport Master Plan update. He noted this Environmental Assessment was actually a supplemental to the Runway 1 Environmental Assessment that had been completed, approved by FAA and the applications were in their hands. As Mr. Stevens noted, he said they were in the 30 day public notice period during which they had the option of providing an opportunity for a public informational meeting. Once the draft period was completed, on or about June 5, 2006, he said they would revise the document based on the comments received from the public, the FAA and the committee. Upon the FAA making their decision, he said they could then proceed with the project.

Mr. Christensen stated the top page was an overview of the project the committee approved last year as well as including alternative locations for each project.

Mr. Christensen stated Figure 2-1 depicted the Runway 12 safety area with 150 feet by 300 feet partially in wetlands. He noted there was approximately one acre of wetland for this project and it represented the largest wetland impact of any of the projects proposed in the Environmental Assessment.

Mr. Christensen noted the Runway 30 end was part of the original environmental assessment; however the FAA had identified some funds that were available for areas that had no environmental impact and this draft presented a safety area project that had no wetland impact or environmental consequences whatsoever. He stated they kept this project in the Environmental Assessment for continuity purposes because it was in the Master Plan; however, the Runway 30 end and Runway Safety Area had already been approved by the FAA, noted Mr. Christensen

With respect to Figure 2-4, Hangar Development - Area "B", Mr. Christensen apprised this area was selected as the preferred development area due to its levelness, protected surfaces, and it allowed for four 8 bay t-hangars plus an extension on the six unit area, as well as increasing apron space.

Mr. Christensen noted Figure 2-5, Hangar Development - Area "C", depicted two areas for additional corporate hangars; however all wetlands were combined and were being addressed in one mitigation area.

Referring to Figure 2-7, Mr. Christensen related the maintenance and storage building was of little environmental concern and was advanced due to the lack of environmental impact. He indicated they were awaiting word from the State relative to the historical archeological investigation.

Regarding Figure 2-8, the Itinerant Apron, Mr. Christensen stated that should be placed as close to the airport as possible which positioned it next to the new terminal apron as well as the helipad. He noted the itinerant expansion was only 10,533 square feet and there was no environmental impact associated with the project.

Mr. Christensen indicated the next page, Figure 2-10a, depicted the obstruction analyses and the proposals associated with removing the obstructions. At the last meeting, he said, the focus of their discussion was how obstruction/vegetation could potentially affect adjacent property owners and the colors represented the obstructions and various methods to remove those obstructions. After approval by the FAA, he said, the use of those obstruction lights would allow for maintenance of some vegetation behind the lights to screen residential buffers along Queensbury Avenue from the activities of Runway 1 end. Mr. Christensen mentioned they had restricted their work to within the transition zone rather than the approach zone.

Mr. Christensen stated in addition to the Runway 1 end, they were installing one additional obstruction light to preclude the need to remove any trees on the Runway 30 end. He said they would install two obstruction lights in the transition zone but keep the approach to the airport clear; therefore, he noted there would be a total of four lights.

Continuing on with Figure 2-10c of the Environmental Assessment, Mr. Christensen advised there would be limited vegetation removal as well as some obstruction removal in the wetland area near Runway 19.

Mr. Christensen indicated the brush area near Runway 12 (Figure 2-10d) would be removed;

however, all the vegetation between the runway end and road would be maintained.

Referring to Figure 2-12, Runway 19 end and Airpark Taxiway, Mr. Christensen said they considered it off the Runway 19 end and again because of the runway utility and type of aircraft that might utilize the airpark, they thought the primary runway would be best for the access. He said this Figure 2-12 depicted an access taxiway directly to the Runway 19 end from the proposed airpark boundary. He emphasized the airpark was not part of the Environmental Assessment but rather the next phase of that development.

With respect to No. 3 of the Environmental Assessment Agenda, Mr. Christensen advised they found very little environmental impact with these improvement projects. He said they noticed at the Runway 12 end, 19 end, as well as the area of new corporate hangars, they were averaging approximately 1.25 acres of wetland impact. They were proposing wetland replication areas on two alternative County-owned sites, but the site to the south was the preferred location, said Mr. Christensen. He indicated this area would be constructed as mitigation for the impact associated with all the improvement projects that had been proposed in the EA.

Mr. Christensen related the obstruction lights were also a mitigation measure. The impact associated with removing a vegetative buffer was being mitigated through the more expensive obstruction lights. Instead of clearing approximately 2,500 per acre of vegetation, he said they proposed saving the vegetation and installing obstruction lighting that cost \$10,000 to \$15,000 per light. Obviously, he said this was a significant mitigation measure in the Environmental Assessment.

Mr. Christensen indicated they had completed an extensive traffic study for the Environmental Assessment to determine the impact on the local roadways associated with any of the projects. He added there would be no impact on the intersections except the full build out of the airpark in the future. Until the airpark was built and planned, he related they would not include any mitigation for traffic in this Environmental Assessment. Mr. Stevens apprised the identification of the airpark came from working closely with Mr. Fosbrook of EDC (Economic Development Corporation) to identify additional areas for business development that would provide revenue to the airport and the area.

In prior discussions relative to obstruction lighting, Mr. Stevens asked Mr. Christensen to provide a cost estimate and his estimate was \$15,000 per solar light. He said solar lighting would save on the construction cost as well as the utility cost. In response to Mr. O'Connor's inquiry about the dependability of solar lighting, Mr. Christensen replied each area required "working out" the little glitches but if the panels were the correct size, they appeared to be fail-safe. He added they were FAA approved.

Mr. Christensen invited anyone in attendance from the public to comment on the Environmental Assessment presentation. Thereafter, he said he would ask the FAA to make their decision on the Environmental Assessment and should they approve all projects, he stated it would be up to the committee and the airport to identify those projects they wish to move forward in order to proceed to the design phase. Mr. Stevens added they were seeking funding for most, if not all, of these projects which required the Environmental Assessment.

Mr. Stevens commented since there was no quorum, they would move the executive session until

the next committee meeting.

There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra L. Schreiber, Legislative Office Specialist