

**Special City Council Meeting  
City of Richmond Heights  
March 27, 2008**

Council President, David Roche, called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Roll Call: Alexander, Gambatese, Henry, Keyerleber, Morgan, O'Toole, Roche

**Agenda for Tonight:**

Kevin Delaney, Airport Manager, will speak and introduce consultants on behalf of the Cuyahoga County Airport's Master Plan 20 year update.

Delaney said that the Master Plan will go to the County Commissioners on April 24<sup>th</sup>. He also said that he hopes to address public concerns about noise and safety better in the future.

Delaney introduced Susan Zeller, Charlie McDermot and Matt Denham to help give the presentation on the Master Plan.

McDermot began and gave the agenda for tonight:

- 1) Present findings of Master Plan (runway length, preferred alternative, potential impacts, Master Plan projects and Airport layout Plan)
- 2) Review County's path forward
- 3) Seek input from Council
- 4) Q&A for Audience

McDermot said the Master Plan Objective is to validate existing and establish future aviation demands, correct non-standard runway safety areas and develop a plan to achieve objectives.

McDermot went through the 3 phases of the Master Plan process. He said it is a requirement of the FAA to update the Master Plan and the last update was done in 1977. The concerns of the public are put into the agenda.

The runway safety concerns were addressed, as well as the fact that this Alternative 38 will go across Richmond Road, which is not standard. The runway extension will be 6,000 feet. He spoke on the existing conditions, and showed maps to showcase the runway and where the extension would go.

Susan Zeller spoke on the initial phase, which started in 2003. Data has been updated, and they identified the critical users, which are the business jets. She discussed some factors influencing the runway length needs. 24% of the jet operations are from Flight Options at Richmond Hts. If Flight Options were not there, she said they would still need

the runway extension, which will help with the precipitation and number of jets. The largest airplanes are the Bombardier Global Express and Gulfstream V. She said there are no plans to go to larger planes and they would not be able to accommodate larger planes. They need at least 6,000 ft for takeoff and landings, to reduce the constraint on the existing users and improves all weather access. She said the runway is not planned for aircraft greater than 100,000 lbs and the runway width would remain the same at 100 feet.

McDermot explained the EMAS system, Engineered Materials Arresting System. This is a safety mechanism at the end of each of the runways, put into Alternative 38. It will be at the ends by Richmond Road and Bishop Rd. 500 ft additional is needed on the ends to build this system, which helps to slow down and stop the aircraft.

The Impacts of Alternative 38 include: relocating Richmond and Bishop Roads, easements and partial acquisitions of some homes, costs of \$31.2 million. Some direct economic impacts would be 3,000 employees, \$150 million payroll, 63 tenants and entries, \$2 million in direct annual expenditures.

Delaney said there has been a lot of public participation at this point, since they have started this up in 2003. They have held various meetings with focus groups, have done a runway analysis with public opinions. He said they do not propose land acquisitions, but only easements, and have no intention of bringing in bigger airplanes. The 11pm-7am noise curfew is a voluntary curfew. He said he wants to meet with people to get a better idea on listening to their concerns. Public participation is encouraged and they can always email at: [ccairport@cuyahogacountyus.com](mailto:ccairport@cuyahogacountyus.com) He said that public comments are extended to April 23, and they will be submitting Alternative 38 to the County Commissioners on April 24<sup>th</sup>.

Time Frame: Once the FAA approves of the Plan, which would be in about 6 months, there is still another 8-10 years until construction. So, this is just the beginning of the process. The Environmental Study still needs to be done after the approval.

**He opened the floor to Council for Q&A.**

Mayor Ursu thanked Delaney and his crew for coming to the meeting tonight. He asked them to further their explanation on how safety would be improved and enhanced with this Master Plan.

McDermot said the existing runway does not meet current safety requirements of the FAA. This is a concern that must be addressed.

Ursu asked why the airport would be safer than it is now?

McDermot said with the EMAS system, standards will be increased. Denham went over more safety conditions with EMAS. He said that ideally there are no flat grasses, rocks, bushes, hills, swales and roads near a runway. They said that the EMAS system will stop aircraft before it gets to the roadway, much better than grass.

Ursu asked if the EMAS system will definitely be part of the project.

McDermot said it is currently part of the project and plans, but he can not know that for sure in the future.

Roche asked them to expand on the improved noise procedures.

McDermot said a study was done on how to improve the noise levels. They have looked at a variety of ways to minimize the noise impacts, and will work towards that.

Mayor Ursu said he lives under the flight path and is very concerned about the noise.

McDermot said that without the Master Plan nothing will change. If the Commissioners elect to not adopt it, it may jeopardize their funding. A “hush house” was discussed, as a way to help minimize noise levels. Whether this will be put into effect depends on the funding of the project.

Alexander asked if this plan will go forward intact, as a whole, or could it be chopped apart? McDermot said that many times, due to funding, there will be deviations, things may change, priorities and funding will change. The primary focus is to increase the runway length, as it is a safety issue.

Morgan said she is concerned about the relocation of Richmond Road. This road is very important to us and is the center of Richmond Heights. McDermot said that there have been discussions with ODOT, but no studies done yet to determine for sure. That will be done in the Environmental Phase, which comes after the acceptance of the Plan by the Commissioners.

O’Toole said the quality of life in Richmond Heights will be significantly impacted by this project. If more trees are cut down, the noise will be worse of a problem. He asked about the relationship between the land and the takeoff approaches, as well as the slopes above the homes. How close will the planes be to houses with a longer runway?

McDermot said the approach slope would not change.

O’Toole asked about the types of jets of Flight Options.

A representative from Flight Options was there in the audience. She said the updated jets have very good fuel efficiency and most jets accommodate 7-8 passengers. With updated jets, the noise level will be quieter too, as well as less pollution with lower emissions.

### **The floor was opened to Q&A from the Audience.**

Jim Myers, resident on Bridgeport, commented on the fact he thought there was not a good job being done on the public forum and getting the information to residents, since he had just heard of the meeting recently. He said traffic should be moved to a bigger airport. He worried that his home value will decrease, as well as the pollution and smell of fumes at his home. He says they hear the traffic all day long and night. He also had concern of bigger jets and UPS aircraft.

Roche added that the meetings have been posted for quite some time in all the local newspapers, as well as on the City Bulletin board in front of the old City Hall for the past month.

Ed Krauss, resident on Knollwood, wanted to clarify the runway length issue, since he says it is deceiving. He commented on Burke airport’s length is 6200, Chicago airport is

6500. These are full blown commercial airports, and this little airport wants a 6000 ft runway? The community has voiced its concerns, and nothing is being done. Other airports do have mandatory noise mandates...why doesn't this one? Our #1 concern is the noise. The airport is asking for a huge investment, and the City taxpayers will incur the expense. You do not have to increase the runway size.

Mike Burley, resident on Cary Jay, said he will be living 2400 feet away from the new runway. If this is really a safety issue, why will it take 8-10 years to break ground? This airport used to be for only small, single engine planes. You need to operate within your range. Residents are on hold, not knowing what to do with their properties. Our values are going down, and the funding is coming from where? My home is too close to the runway and I have concerns with the noise levels.

June Endres, resident on Cary Jay, commented that her home is also very close to the runway. When the planes go through the air, she can see the numbers on the plane and waves to the pilots. She said 5 years ago they had a meeting and no one approved the plan, so why do you keep trying to go against public opinion? No one I know is for this plan.

Mark Tamborino, resident on Highland Road since 1966, said this airport started as a recreational airport and now it is a full blown airport with bigger jets. They never asked the community for its approval on this. Planes are already flying way too low. If you kick the runway out more, there will be no restrictions on height. The planes are already too big, too low and too noisy. When we call the airport we get no response.

Jack sofa, resident on Bradford in the Bluffs, brought a document from the airport, dated Dec 2006. He commented on the social impacts and said that Alternative 1 indicates no action, with no extension. With increased traffic, there will be uncontrolled noise. You can not control the noise now, and you will not later. The traffic will be tripled. The cost in 8-10 years will also be heavily increased. He asked Council to look to the future without Flight Options, and to reduce the traffic at the airport, or have no airport at all.

Kathy Schroeder, 445 Cary Jay, said the planes fly too low and the noise will be increased. She said her house is circled on the map...what does this mean? She worried about the wealth of her home and its value.

Susan Zeller indicated that her home was circled due to the DNL (Day Noise Level). The FAA recognized about 8 homes that would be impacted by the noise levels. The impact level is still being determined.

Evelyn Caden, 446 Audrey, asked if in all the years of the airport, has a plane required additional feet for safety? She said she sees no need for this extension.

Denham said that on several occasions, at airports all over, there has been a need. The flight standards have changed, and they often get diverted to other airports to land. It is more frequent in the winter.

Caden said that in Willoughby Hills, at a meeting there, they said it never happened.

Delaney said that Flight Options alone had 60 days last year that they could not operate.

Robert Boyle, Lindsay Lane resident, has attended all the meetings and said that yet no one has promoted this project. You are losing the taxpayers money. There is fictitious information being put out. He said the FAA audit report has failed to answer requests in writing. He encourages the Mayor and Council to oppose this expansion, like the other cities have done. He asked about the EMAS system as well.

McDermot said if the EMAS system is put in on Bishop, the road is still needed to move around. If not on Richmond, may not have to move Richmond Rd.

Denham added that money issues do not get funded by Richmond Hts taxpayers, but by a Trust Fund, paid for by ticket holders and by gas taxes. The remaining share is picked up by state and local taxes.

Carol Krauss, Dundee Drive resident, said that in Willoughby Hills, they commented that there were "only" 350 complaints a year, which is essentially one per day. She also commented on the crash on Bishop Road, which killed 2 people. There have been 3 crashes in the past few years. The EMAS system would not have made any difference there. In 1956, the County Commissioners promised us this would be a recreational airport. They lied to us.

Jennifer Rand, Cary Jay resident, asked about the maps and which houses are affected? She was told to ask privately after the meeting and they would show her.

As far as noise goes, she got new windows with insulation and it does not make any difference. She is also concerned with the safety for the children and elderly in the City with this airport.

Thomas Hall, resident in the Bluffs, asked about the \$80 million/yr for the economy that he had read in the paper. If the airport has contributed this much, where does the money go?

Roche said that Flight Options is close to \$1 million in income tax to the City, which helps the City a lot in taxes and has been a major impact for our City.

Joyce Lazear, resident on Highland Road, said she bought her home because she loved the property and the woods. Now she is experiencing pollution from emissions and noise. As a 50 year resident, this used to be known as a recreational airport. I know Richmond Hts can use the money, but with new developments coming in, how are you going to sell these homes with an airport like this here? I am not planning on moving, but the quality of life is going down here.

Roche said he and Council are aware of the quality of life issues and hopes that Delaney will address those issues as well. He thanked Delaney for offering to take more of a role in listening to residents concerns.

Roy Somich, Willoughby Hills Councilman, said that what is going on here is a proposal to convince people that this is being done for safety in the best interest of the airport and the public. He said the airport is putting together a well thought out sales pitch, but this is not in the best interest of the people. We are elected for the people, by the people and they are not for this. People are speaking out against this, and the airport is trying to use fear to convince you. It is a lie. Alternative 38 is not needed for improvements. The

safety measures and the hush huts are not tied into Alt 38. He asked Delaney where has the communication and concern been all these years? We have tolerated the problems for years and do not need to go any further. He asked Rich Hts Council to not support this and to stop this.

Teresa Jochum, a 25 yr resident at 454 Stevens Blvd, said that Rich Hts is a gorgeous city and loves her safe neighborhood, but she feels she is being told a lot of lies. These presentations done by big corporations use statistics for their own advantage with half truths. Money is always the only reason for corporations to do anything like this. The Willoughby Hills golf course and distinguished people who live there have gotten them out of this mess. The airport is choosing to expand in our direction because they feel we do not have the power to stop them.

Joey Krauss, 294 Knollwood, is a student at St. Paschal's and says his school is 8-10 miles away from the airport, yet they hear the planes coming down often. It is very loud at school and they often have to just stop and wait for the noise to stop, and can not get anything done during that time.

David Fiback, Willoughby Hills Councilman, said he opposed 100% to this expansion. It has reduced the quality of life, and we need your voice and action on this. At 10am on April 24<sup>th</sup>, we will have a bus going downtown to voice our opposition to the County Commissioners. Please join us.

Rose Valentino, from Willoughby Hills, said she called the County Commissioners, who assured her that the runway is perfectly safe and just needs resurfacing done. This makes no sense. Tax payer money for what?? Flight Options has a longer runway at Burke, and she says she is bewildered as to why they need a longer runway here too. Denham added that the safety shortcomings were identified in the presentations, in response to several accidents that have happened.

Bob Wager, Mayor of Willoughby Hills, said he was elected to protect the safety of the people and we need to fight this expansion. This is all about the money for the tenants. He commented on the arrogance presented in the recent Plain Dealer article. The residents are suffering without safety measures. In 1988 a plane hit a house. The EMAS on both ends would not have helped. The noise levels are too high, the jet fuel is causing pollution and emission problems for the people. Represent the people and oppose this.

**Council President, David Roche, adjourned this Special Meeting at 9:40 PM**

---

**BETSY TRABEN, CLERK OF COUNCIL**

---

**DAVID H. ROCHE, COUNCIL PRESIDENT**