

TED STEVENS ANCHORAGE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT MEETING

JULY 15, 2022

At the invitation of Craig Campbell, acting TSAIA Director, during a recent TCC meeting, Anna Brawley (TCC president), Cathy Gleason (TCC Vice president and co-lead TCC Land Use Committee) and Jon Isaacs (co-lead TCC Land Use Committee) met with Craig, Teri Lindseth (Planning Manager), and Tim Coons (Manager of Lake Hood Operations) at the TSAIA office. Craig has a background in airport planning, including an earlier version of the TSAIA Master Plan.

We let Craig know that we appreciated the invitation to have this meeting, the opportunity to discuss some concerns and suggestions, and look at it as an opportunity for more regular communication and recommend that we schedule some follow-on meetings.

TCC prepared an agenda focusing on three items:

1. Heavy Truck Traffic on West Northern Lights Blvd. (WNL)

We reviewed the traffic history and focused on the issues related to increasing amounts of heavy truck traffic from TSAIA lease holders using WNL, the issues associated with truck traffic, including noise, vibrations, exhaust, and safety, and concern that current and future development would increase heavy truck traffic on WNL. We mentioned that the previous director indicated he could not put conditions on airport leases for restrictions on truck traffic, but that he sent a letter to leaseholders asking that they not use traffic WNL for heavy truck traffic (we shared the letter with Craig). Craig asked if we know which truck operators were using WNL, and we shared our 2019 TCC PowerPoint presentation that listed truck companies that we were aware of that time. We also shared that we plan to request a meeting with the Muni Traffic Engineer (Brad Coy) and others at the Muni as appropriate, to discuss what can be done by the city, in coordination with TSAIA or independently.

Action Items - Craig committed to drafting a letter requesting that airport leaseholders use International Airport Road instead of WNL for heavy truck traffic and will investigate what might be appropriate for including in lease conditions. A follow-on meeting to further discuss traffic and solutions would be helpful. TCC will invite Craig/TSAIA staff to participate in a future meeting with the Muni as well.

2. Charlie General Aviation Tie-Down Parking Relocation

Construction of the new airport control tower will require the relocation of 39 general aviation (GA) lease spaces from the Charlie tie-down area. The initial airport proposal was to relocate the GA tie-downs to an undeveloped area east of the Lake Hood gravel airstrip. Craig indicated that he believed in considering all alternatives, and upon reviewing the proposal after his appointment, made the decision to change the preferred location to an area northeast of the Echo GA tie-down. We expressed our appreciation of that decision but have other concerns and suggestions regarding the relocation. Among those concerns were the fill of additional Class Wetlands of Turnagain Bog and whether all 39 spaces were needed. Craig responded that the existing spaces were needed by current lease holders and would be replaced with spaces elsewhere, and no additional general aviation parking was going to be developed at Lake Hood as part of this project. Cathy indicated that based on a drive-through of the area, there might be other areas where the 39 spaces could be incrementally located rather than putting them all by the Echo GA tie-down area.

Action Item - Craig committed to a tour of the Lake Hood area with TCC representative to look at potential relocation areas for the GA tie-downs. Meeting took place Thursday 7/28, with Craig Campbell, Tim Koons, John Johansen, Cathy Gleason, and Jon Isaacs participating.

Update after this meeting: Craig sent 2 alternative locations for this parking for comments, TCC to follow up. He clarified DOT Central region is doing the Echo apron design, and requested TCC feedback.

We also asked about the process of FAA preparing an Environmental Assessment associated with approving the project, and whether we could get involved early with issues and potential alternatives to be considered. Craig indicated that preparation of the EA is underway, and we asked if he had any problems with TCC contacting FAA. FAA is doing the EA for the control tower relocation, including the new GA apron at Echo parking. FAA contact: Wilson Platt (Wilson.Platt@faa.gov).

Action item (internal) – TCC contact FAA staff (Platt) about the forthcoming EA. TCC provide feedback to TSAIA about proposed GA tie-down location.

3. Neighborhood Development from Continued Airport Development

TCC said that as airport continues to development incrementally, surrounding neighborhoods experience an increase in airport noise (particularly ground noise), fumes, wetlands fill and potential groundwater contamination, and traffic on WNL. TCC finds our neighborhood in a reactive position to respond to individual development and leases proposed and would like to receive a briefing on all of the activities currently being considered. We also mentioned that the general public does not have a good idea of existing and potential measures the airport can take to avoid or minimize these impacts. Cathy used the vegetative berm constructed along Postmark Drive as an example to reduce noise, and whether it could be required as a condition of issuing leases, or land reserved by the airport to construct the berms themselves.

Jon asked if EAs would be prepared for the Fed-Ex expansion and proposed Alaska Air Cargo developments along Postmark Drive. Craig said that NEPA compliance was required and would determine if they required an EA or a Categorical Exclusion. Jon also mentioned that we also need a better understanding of proposed wetlands fills, what credits the airport may still have from the Klatt Bog purchase, and status of wetlands management agreements. This was suggested as a topic of a future meeting.

At this point in the conversation, Craig mentioned that TSAIA is about to update the TSAIA Master Plan. TCC indicated that we would like to be involved at an early stage of developing the plan. Tim Coons mentioned that the airport has a lease application for the development of a hanger adjacent to the Lake Hood gravel airstrip.

Action Items (internal to TCC) – we should develop a list of topics for focused follow-on meetings with TSAIA based on discussions above, and we should reach out to Central Region Staff that are preparing EAs for airport development.

At the end of the meeting, all attendees expressed their appreciation for having the discussion, and Craig reiterated that he supports continued communication with TCC.