



LAFCO reviews Development vs. Airport & Pilot Safety

March 1, 2006

The Watsonville Pilots Association (WPA) made their presentation to LAFCO this morning. The presentation's purpose was educational, to acquaint the LAFCO members with the need for objective land use planning at and around Watsonville Airport. WPA will respond to a Buena Vista Specific Plan when it comes before LAFCO in possibly 18 months.

Mary Doherty arranged the PowerPoint program and she also contributed in editing scripts. John Cowan led off with talking about the value of the Airport to the region and intergovernmental functions and powers. Hal Zamora followed with the guts of the presentation. He spoke about the Instrument of Transfer, state laws, FAA grant obligations and the state recommendations regarding protection zones around airports. He also showed the development density in those zones, the basis of zones being accident plots and noise footprints. The presentation included all zones 1 through 6, densities, appropriate development in zones (called "Basic Compatibility Qualities"), and the City's current unsafe plans as reflected in the General Plan 2030 draft and draft EIR. Dan Chauvet summarized with background on planning (or lack of it) by Action Pajaro Valley, the intent of Measure, and the State Dept of Aeronautics statement in their draft EIR response regarding not creating new safety and noise problems. We recommended to LAFCO that they reject the Buena Vista annexation because of no legitimate land use planning.

LAFCO members showed a great deal of interest. They asked a number of questions ranging from: control towers, an ILS installation, the number of operations (and percentage) on the east-west runway 8-26, how long exactly is runway 8-26 and zone size. There were also questions on how many jets were based on the airport, the economic value of the Airport to the area, weather or not the Airport is addressed in the General Plan, and is airport protection addressed in the General Plan. Commissioner Judy Doering-Nielsen noted that this was not addressed adequately. A representative from AMBAG said that they had made an economic study. Commissioner Judy D-N talked out the large economic value of the Airport. The head commissioner said it would be a difficult problem for LAFCO, protecting the Airport vs. the need for housing (in reference to our request to deny annexation). Our presentation was approximately 30 minutes long, and questions and answers took another 30 minutes.

Interested persons in the audience included City Planning Director, John Doughty and Action Pajaro Valley Executive Director, Lisa Dobbins.

Dan Chauvet, WPA Member

Track IFR Flight Operations for Free

If only it was so easy to track our children!

There's a great new service that allows you to monitor the progress of most IFR flights. And best of all, it's free. I was surprised when I first tried the service at www.flightaware.com to see just how robust the service is.

You can get flight information in several ways. You can enter a tail number, an airline flight number, or an airport code.

If you enter an airport code, you can see lists of all IFR arrivals, departures, scheduled departures and planes currently en route to the airport.

For example, I just typed in KLVK for Livermore, CA, and I see details on 8 aircraft that arrived IFR today and 9 that have departed. Two aircraft are en route to Livermore and a third, a Gulfstream V, scheduled to leave from Long Beach is "delayed." Two other flights are scheduled for departure later today, including the G5, which is going to Aspen next (hope they get there before dark).

Best of all, you can actually get a map that shows the ground track for individual flights. In January, I knew a friend would be flying in a Cirrus from KLVK to the Las Vegas area. It was fairly easy to find his flight going to the Henderson, NV airport. We'd talked about whether to take the direct route (over Mt. Whitney) or to take the longer, lower altitude route that curves around Edwards AFB. It was easy to see that he chose the latter route (which is my preferred way to go).

You can also find lots of other maps and graphs on the site. A fun one shows a movie of all aircraft activity across the U.S. in a 24-hour period. It's easy to see that most air traffic is concentrated in the east. During the night, most activity is gone except for a few red eye and cargo flights, and in the morning activity picks up again starting in the East. This is a fun site, and I recommend that you try it.

by Max Trescott

Position and Hold

Our Favorite Aviation Agency (FAA) is eliminating the "Position and Hold" instruction starting March 20. After that, planes can hold short, but then need to wait until the runway is clear before they can be cleared for takeoff. Many airports are scrambling to get a waiver, and the FAA will probably grant many of these, and hopefully not just at big airports. The Palo Alto, CA airport is an excellent example of where it's needed. Around 200,000 operations a year feed a single runway with simultaneous left and right traffic patterns. The pros that run the tower have gone over 2 million ops without an error. A lot of smart people think this will dramatically slow the number of ops per hour and increase risk. Stay tuned.

General Plan 2030--February 2006 draft

March 20, 2006

Watsonville City's February 2006 draft of the General Plan 2030 came out this week. Again in contains high-density development plans for the Buena Vista area, just west of the Airport.

This planning is predicated on faulty information, deliberate deceptive misrepresentations. The City planners have proclaimed east-west runway 8-26 a "low use runway" which is defined by the State as less than 2000 operations per year. Estimated actual use is 3000 operations per year on runway 8 and 10,000 operations on runway 26. Along with most objective people, the State Department of Aeronautics and Aries Consultants LTD count traffic going both directions in their assessment of land use planning. This is common sense. We all know that engine failures can occur after takeoff when the engine is using takeoff or climb power. We all know that noise footprints should reflect noise from climbing aircraft.

And by using the "low activity runway" status for runway 8, the City planning department has rigged the draft General Plan content regarding safety and noise to ignore legitimate airport land use planning. They have excluded Zone 3, the turning zone west of the Airport. They have chosen to disregard density criteria prevent creating noise and safety problems in Zones 2 and 4. They disregard consideration of existing houses. Here responsible density would be one dwelling unit per 20 acres in Zone 2 and one dwelling unit per 5 acres in Zone 4. Existing development now exceeds this density for gross acreage in Zones 1, 2, 3, and 4, off the west end of runway 8-26. On April 12, 2005 the planning department succeeded in eliminating the "Basic Compatibility Qualities" language from the Airport Master Plan. Eliminated was specific description of what is safe and unsafe development in zones around an Airport. Why, to setup developer land use planning.

According to internal City memos developers are paying \$500,000 for planning. It looks like they are getting what they paid for--from the City's development director and City Manager.

Since there is no use in writing to City Council people, the best chance for accomplishing anything positive is: write to your County Supervisor.

Dan Chauvet

Contact information for Santa Cruz County Supervisors

**Santa Cruz Board of Supervisors
701 Ocean Street
Santa Cruz, CA 95060**

Supervisor Jan Beautz, District 1 (Live Oak, Capitola)

Supervisor Ellen Pirie, District 2 (Soquel, Aptos)

Supervisor Mardi Wormhoudt, District 3 (City of Santa Cruz, North Coast)

Supervisor Tony Campos, District 4 (Watsonville, South County)

Supervisor Mark Stone, District 5 (Scotts Valley, San Lorenzo Valley)

WPA meeting minutes of February 2006

John Cowan called the meeting to order at 7:11 PM

General Announcements

- ◆ There is a need for content on our WPA web site. Anyone that has or would like to add information that would be of interest to our WPA members please contact Richard Lippi.

Minutes

- ◆ The January meeting minutes were accepted as published in the February newsletter.

Treasures Report

- ◆ Sarah Chauvet reported that funds are sufficient for business. There have been six new members since the first of the year. Existing members are continuing to renew their yearly dues. If you have not renewed your membership yet, please send it in to Sarah. Thank you very much for your support.

New Business

- ◆ There was a suggestion from Erika Carter that the striping on the runways could use a fresh coat of paint. This is particularly noticeable when doing night landings. It was noted that the taxiways are scheduled for upgrade soon.

Old Business

- ◆ There was no old business at this time.

Security

- ◆ There will be a change in the airport security service to First Alarm. Hours of coverage will remain about the same as the current service.
- ◆ The last 6 weeks has seen two hanger break-ins. A motorcycle was stolen along with some non-aviation items.

LAFCO Dress Rehearsal

There was a dress rehearsal presented to the WPA attendees in preparation for the upcoming LAFCO meeting of March 1, 2006. Marty Doherty presented the Power Point program. Speakers included John Cowan, Hal Zamora and Dan Chauvet. Highlights included:

- ◆ The History of the Watsonville Airport.
- ◆ 250,000 people use the Watsonville Airport each year.
- ◆ The City owns the Watsonville Airport but holds it in trust for the people of Santa Cruz County.
- ◆ Benefits from the flight schools located here, the Young Eagles Program and revenue from the Watsonville Fly-In should not be ignored.
- ◆ The WPA wants the "Airport Master Plan honored.

- ◆ Pilots need options for safety. Please leave us options.
- ◆ The Watsonville City Council accepted 1.6 million dollars in airport money from the Federal government in 2004. The agreements that they made were broken eight months later when they got their money.
- ◆ The Airport and General Plan 2050 put urban sprawl right where it should not be. This causes a:
 - 1) Safety Problem.
 - 2) Noise Problem.

A video on the T6 Texan followed the presentation.

Minutes by **Chris Olmsted**

Fuel Island Prices

At the WVI Fuel Island, 100LL is **\$3.50**, 80/87 OCT is **\$3.50** and Jet A is **\$3.01** (03/20/2006)

Local Events

March 29, -- WPA regular Wed. night meeting begins at 7 PM.

April 6, -- EAA Chapter 119's regular Tuesday night meeting starts at 7:30 PM. Regular meeting place: the WAEC Building, 60 Aviation Way, Watsonville Airport

April 9, - Northern CA Aerobatics Club IAC38 Chapter meeting 2-4 PM at the Livermore Airport.

April 19, -- Monterey Bay 99s Chapter Meeting starts at 7pm at the EAA Hanger, Watsonville.

April 22, -- Day in the Sky, Terminal Building, Watsonville, 9AM -5PM

April 30, -- Pacific Coast Dream Machines, Half Moon Bay

May 6, -- Young Eagles Rally

Civil Air Patrol Squadron 13 -- meet in the National Guard Armory at Watsonville Airport every Tuesday evening, beginning at 6:30 PM

WPA Airport Legal Fund

Please Help WVI with Your Tax Deductible Contributions. Checks should be made to "WPA" or "Watsonville Pilots Association". On the memo line note: "legal fund". Send your contribution to: 137 Falmouth CT., Aptos, CA 95003
Thanks for Your Support

WPA Officers

Mike McIntyre,	Vice President
408-353-5969	
Charlene McIntyre,	Secretary
408-353-5969	
Sarah Chauvet,	Treasurer
831-724-8296	

Committee Heads

Dan Chauvet,	WAAG
Richard Lippi,	Web Site
Randy Pesce,	Field Security
Bob Olmsted	Newsletter Editor
Chris Olmsted	News Ed./Sec.rep
Rayvon Williams,	AOPA/WINGS
John Cowan,	Public Relations
Brian Moffet,	Video & Media

Airport Manager: Don French

Feedback: rolmstud@yahoo.com

WPA Newsletter
PO Box 135
Brookdale, CA 95007-0135

Next Meeting

7:00 PM, Wednesday, **March 29**
at the EAA-WAEC Building
60 Aviation Way, Watsonville Airport