

Solano County Airport Land Use Commission



SOLANO COUNTY

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Bruce DuClair
Vice-Chairman

MINUTES OF THE SOLANO COUNTY AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2016

The meeting of the Solano County Airport Land Use Commission was held in the Solano County Administration Center, Board of Supervisors Chambers (1st floor), 675 Texas Street, Fairfield, CA.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioners Baldwin, Baumler, Vancil, Randall, Meyer, Sagun and Chairman DuClair

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner Cavanagh

OTHERS PRESENT: Jim Leland, Resource Management; Lee Axelrad, County Counsel; Diane Gilliland, Resource Management

Call to Order & Roll Call

Chairman DuClair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as prepared.

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of June 9, 2016 were approved as prepared.

Reports from Commissioners and/or Staff

There were no committee reports.

Items from the Public

There was no one from the public wishing to speak.

Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

New Business

1. Public hearing to consider the consistency of ALUC-2016-03, **Suisun City Waterfront Plan**, with the Travis AFB Land Use Compatibility Plan (Travis Plan).

Jim Leland briefly summarized staff's written report. The report indicated that the City of Suisun City is considering the adoption of its Waterfront District Specific Plan. A specific plan is an addition to a general plan which can provide significant additional detail on the types of land uses permitted, the development standards applicable to those land uses, the design standards for the project and any public financing mechanism for improvements required by the specific plan development. The Waterfront District Specific Plan is an implementation of the 2035 General Plan, which was

determined to be consistent with the Travis Plan on January 8, 2015. Staff is recommending the commission find the plan consistent.

Since there were no questions of staff, Chairman DuClair opened the public hearing. There were no speakers either for or against this matter therefore the public hearing was closed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Baumler and seconded by Commissioner Sagun to determine the Waterfront Plan is consistent with the Travis AFB Land Use Compatibility Plan with the addition of the following condition of approval: Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Specific Plan, all development and associated public improvements and environmental mitigations shall be consistent with the Travis Air Force Base Land Use Compatibility Plan Update as adopted on October 8, 2015 (Resolution 15-17). The motion passed unanimously (Resolution No. 16-03)

2. Public hearing to consider the consistency of ALUC-2016-04, **Benicia Zoning Changes** with the Travis AFB Land Use Compatibility Plan (Travis Plan)

Jim Leland gave a brief presentation of staff's written report. The report stated that the City of Benicia is proposing changes to its zoning regulations which modify regulations pertaining to family daycare centers and density bonus provisions for affordable housing projects. The specifics of each set of zoning regulations were described in the staff report. Staff is recommending the commission find the zoning changes consistent with the Travis Plan.

Since there were no questions of staff, Chairman DuClair opened the public. There were no speakers either for or against this matter. The public hearing was closed.

A motion was made by Commissioner Vancil and seconded by Commissioner Meyer to find Application ALUC-2016-04 (Benicia Zoning Changes) is consistent with the Travis AFB Land Use Compatibility Plan (Travis Plan). The motion passed unanimously. (Resolution No. 16-04)

3. Receive an update from staff regarding potential regulation of drones.

Jim Leland informed the commission that staff will bring forward an action item on the subject of drones most likely at the commission's next regular meeting. Staff will ask the commission to constitute a working group to deal with the drone issue. He provided a graphic to give some ideas as to who would be appropriate for the working group and the kinds of issues that will need to be addressed. He provided some detail with regard to FAA regulations.

Commissioner Randall wanted to know what would be considered an airport with regard to drones. Mr. Leland responded by saying that the model for that answer is in how communities have dealt with model airplanes, noting that there are designated model airplane landing fields in existence. He said an airport for a drone can be defined under land use authority so the commission can designate whatever parameters they want for where it can be located. Mr. Leland said there is plenty of support for local communities to create zoning definitions for those launching areas which can be regulated as to how many can be in a community and where they can be located.

Commissioner Vancil inquired if any of our local cities have shown interest in this issue. Mr. Leland noted that there was a recent article published by the League of California Cities showing research is currently being pursued for four communities on the subject of drones; Chicago, Miami, Santa Clara and San Jose.

Chairman DuClair said that he can foresee law enforcement or other municipality using drones for official use and therefore having an abundance of airports for take-offs and landings. Mr. Leland

said law enforcement or other public agency use of drones are regulated differently, and noted that the rules the commission will be discussing are the FAA rules for recreational use.

Commissioner Meyer said that not only is this an airspace issue it is also a safety issue because of the hazard that accessories such as cameras, and the like can pose because they can fall off when the drone is in use. She believed this concern should be a part of the discussion as well.

Commissioner Sagun asked if staff knows how many documented incidents or reports of hazards have been made and what types of problems have been seen so far. Lee Axelrad stated that it is increasing year by year; for example, in 2014, pilots reported 238 interactions with suspected drones and in the first 9 months of the following year, 2015, that number tripled to 780. He said with the increased proliferation of drones since that time he would venture a guess that the number of sightings and incidents have since increased. He said 90% of the sightings described were above 400 feet.

Commissioner Randall noted that there will be the issue of inexperienced drone operators who are not familiar with its operation and could cause damage to property. He wanted to know if this aspect will be included as a part of the review process. Mr. Leland stated that there is currently no certification program for recreational users.

Staff will have further information with regard to the potential regulation of drones at the October meeting.

4. Receive a report from staff regarding the update to the Rio Vista Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan.

Jim Leland informed the commission that the consultants who are working on the update have moved out of the data gathering phase and into the phase where they will be drafting the preliminary plan. He noted that the new information should be available in November of this year and at that time staff will make a presentation before the commission. Staff is hoping to have the plan before the commission and ready for adoption sometime next spring.

5. Receive an update from staff regarding the implementation program for the Travis AFB Land Use Compatibility Plan.

Mr. Leland stated that there is an implementation program in the Travis Plan that calls for the county to look more deeply into two subject matters; wildlife hazards and windfarm repowering. He stated that both the Wildlife Hazards and Windfarm Repowering subcommittees have held several meetings and are about to wrap up their work and bring it before the commission for consideration as early as October. Mr. Leland noted that strides have been made on the wildlife side concerning habitat species and designating the location of habitat within the county. Regarding wind power, the subcommittee is resolved on what they want to do about a policy for the individual replacement of a single tower that suffers a catastrophe loss. They have a workable solution to present to the commission on what the parameters would be to replace one of those turbines. One position where there has been no resolve as of yet pertains to when a windfarm reaches the end of its economic life and the company wants to repower it to new bigger better turbines.

Staff will return with more to report on this item at the October meeting.

Adjournment

Since there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned.