

TACOMA NARROWS AIRPORT ADVISORY COMMISSION
MEETING NOTES
FEBRUARY 12, 2004

Members Present:

John Howell, Facilitator
Larry Bielstein
Dennis Cunneen
James DePew, PAC member
Mark Hoppen
Terry Lee
Andy Markos, PAC member

Paul McCormick
Catherine Mitchell
Hugh Morgan
Ras Nielsen
Brad Pattison
Marge Pearson
Rob White
Ann Whittaker

Others Present:

Deena Turmo, Tacoma Narrows Airport Manager
Mike Kruger, Pierce County Staff
Chip Vincent, Pierce County Staff
Leslie Rowen, City of Tacoma
Cheryl Carlson, City of Tacoma Attorney
Catharine Hall, City of Tacoma
Jay Derr, Buck & Gordon
Jeff Weber, Buck & Gordon
Cynthia Stewart, ADR Options Consulting, Inc.
Joe Faherty, Interested Citizen

NOTES OF FEBRUARY 12, 2004

The notes of February 7, 2004 were approved as circulated.

MATERIALS BEING PREPARED

John Howell announced that the following items were under preparation for later meetings. Most of the items have not yet been scheduled for specific dates but will be provided prior to the Commission’s deliberations.

- Briefing paper and presentation on noise issues, metrics and regulations. If there is time available following public comments at the February 26 meeting, this is tentatively scheduled. Otherwise, it will be presented at the beginning of the March 6 meeting.
- The consequences if an airport does not comply with grant assurances
- More detail on the Airport operating budget
- Map showing more detail on the west side of the Airport showing developable land (given set back and other constraints)
- Clarification of FAA’s definition of fair market value for land leases
- Clarification from FAA on the runway length criteria

FEBRUARY 26 PUBLIC HEARING

Several ground rules and statements of intent were discussed in preparation for the February 26 public meeting.

- The meeting will be begin at 6:00 p.m., to make it more convenient for the general public; those who can't be present for all of the hearing may use the tape to hear the comments they missed
- The hearing will be held in the Gig Harbor City Council Chambers; the meeting room regularly used is too small.
- Extra time, if any, will be used to discuss the issue of noise.
- Ground rules include the following:
 - ✓ There will be formal public notice
 - ✓ People will speak on a first come, first served basis based on signing in when they arrive
 - ✓ There will be a three- minute time limit
 - ✓ John Howell will facilitate and will open the meeting with a description of the purpose of the meeting
 - ✓ The facilitator has the right to call someone out of order or call a recess if there is any need to do so

It was noted that the staff-generated schedule does not include time at the end of the process for another public hearing. Commission members were asked if they would like to plan a second hearing to receive public comments on the draft Commission recommendations. The purpose of the hearing on February 26 is to get general ideas from the public about what they would like the Commission to work on, within the scope of their official charge. Hearings on recommendations before final adoption are common, although in this case there will be public hearings also at the Planning Commission and at the County Council on TNAAC recommendations. It was noted that by the time an issue is before the County Council, Councilmembers do not want to hear from the public that the process prior to Council action was unfair to the public in any way.

CONSENSUS: Hold another public hearing to get public comments on preliminary recommendations before they are finalized.

PIERCE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Pierce County staff presented information in the Pierce county Comprehensive Plan and the Gig Harbor Community Plan. These documents were provided in advance. Comments made were supplemental to the written documents provided.

Chip Vincent discussed a summary of what Pierce County has done under the State Growth Management Act (GMA) and the framework for the Comprehensive Plan.

PIERCE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- GMA was enacted in 1990.
- Generally speaking, the Gig Harbor Peninsula had a long history of planning since 1975 and developed the first community plan, which is one of the reasons it has developed with a different pattern than other areas of the County.
- Milestones shown on page 2 of the staff packet were described. Focal points included:
 - Countywide Planning policies adopted in June 1992, providing the framework from which the County was to coordinate with its 23 cities;
 - Interim urban growth boundaries (UGA) adopted in October 1993, which were proposed by the Cities and adopted by the County; this is the action that began the debate between the County and the City of Tacoma over the Airport. The County chose not to include the Airport in the UGA. This matter was heard before the Central Puget Sound Growth Management Hearings Board. The board ruled Pierce County had authority to do this based on its legislative authority under the Growth Management Act.
- The Land Use Element uses three overall categories: Urban, Rural and Resource Lands.
- Pierce County is very large, which is why only general policies are included in the County Comprehensive Plan and details are provided in each Community Plan, developed through local community planning processes.
- The Urban Growth Boundary defines the area within which urban areas would grow over a 20-year period. Urban services are to be provided within the Urban Growth Area (UGA) defined by the Boundary. The County is obligated to provide enough land for forecast population growth. The Capital Facilities Plan describes how the County will provide these urban sewer, water and road services.
- In 1995, 45 percent of the residential growth was occurring in the rural area because parcels were still vested with previous regulations. As of this year, residential growth in the rural area is down to 20%, with a corresponding increase in the UGA.
- Gig Harbor has its own unique UGA, with a reserve area that would be used first if the City needed to expand its UGA. This provides some flexibility to the City.
- Rural areas are intended to support a rural lifestyle and not have urban services such as sewer or urban transportation.
- It is considered a better use of resources to focus urban services in urban areas. GMA does not recognize a suburban category because suburban development is land consumptive and costly. Growth Management Hearings Boards have been strict with regard to the distinctions between urban and rural; urban cannot have less than 4 dwellings per acre; rural cannot have more than 1 dwelling per 5 acres.
- Refer to page 17-D of the packet for clarification of industrial and commercial uses allowed in urban and rural designated areas.
- With regard to Essential Public Facilities (EPF), GMA requires each county to have a process by which facilities that are hard to site but needed by a larger

PIERCE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

regional population can be sited. Certain types of facilities are specifically identified in GMA as being examples of EPFs.

- The County Comprehensive Plan recognizes Tacoma Narrows Airport and McNeil Island Correctional Facility as EPFs. EPFs are defined by GMA and recognized, not designated, by the County Comprehensive Plan.
- Under GMA, EPFs can be mitigated but not limited; their right to exist must be protected
- The State of Washington Office of Financial Management maintains a list of EPFs in the State.

Mike Kruger provided background on the Gig Harbor Community Plan. The Community Plan is considered part of the County Comprehensive Plan.

- As previously noted, the Gig Harbor Peninsula was the first area in Pierce County with a Comprehensive Plan. In 1975, the community developed a plan based in part on an environmental systems approach developed by University of Washington faculty members. The plan allowed any land use as long as certain environmental resources were protected and buffers from the impacts were provided. This pattern is still recognizable today; there are a lot of vegetative buffers around developments.
- The most recent Gig Harbor Peninsula Community Plan was initiated by County Council resolution in 1997. The direction given was to capture some of the better elements of the 1975 plan but also achieve consistency with GMA.
- Community members, the Chamber of Commerce, Historical Society, Rotary, real estate developers, and other community organizations were involved through the Peninsula Advisory Committee in developing the Community Plan.
- Core policies were developed to address:
 - Community-wide vision and goals
 - Protection of streams, valleys and shorelines
 - Distinctions between UGA and Rural Areas
 - Open space and parks
 - Economic development
 - Transportation
 - Facilities and services development (assuring the infrastructure was put in the right places)
- The Plan was completed in 2000. That is when the Airport issue arose. A series of eight community meetings were held by Councilmember Biskey (who preceded Councilmember Lee) regarding policies in the Plan between February 2001 and February 2002.
 - FAA and Washington State DOT/Aviation became involved and advised on the basis of what was ultimately adopted as Objective 7, which addresses the Tacoma Narrows Airport.
- The Plan was adopted effective March 2002.
- The structure of the Community Plan is:
 - Objectives – these provide concepts and tone

PIERCE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

- Principles – These provide policies to implement the Objectives
- Standards – These provide more regulatory detail.
- Implementation regulations – Ordinances such as the Zoning Code implement the Objectives, Principles and Standards contained in the Community Plan.
- The structure of Objective 7, dealing with Tacoma Narrows Airport, is:
 - Principle 1 – Design
 - Principle 2 – Growth and aviation uses allowed
 - Principle 3 – Rural Airport Overlay
 - Land within 1000 feet of the Airport is designated as Rural Airport Overlay (except at the north end of the Airport, where the land north of 36th is inside the UGA). It is zoned R10 but the minimum lot size is 5 acres. The neighbors feel they should be protected from the Airport. Lot sizes are more restricted in the Rural Airport Overlay than for other rural designations; the County was concerned about clustering homes. In this area, clusters can't be greater than 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres. Special notice is recorded on the property titles (although this is not required for plats grandfathered prior to March 2002).
 - Principle 4 – PUD permit
 - A map showing all of the activities at the Airport is required for “full disclosure”. A public hearing is required to amend the PUD. The PUD could be based on the Airport Layout Plan but the County wants more specific definitions of categories such as “aviation use”. Hangars, fuel facilities, and similar categories, need to be identified. However, this would not be to the level of detail of building footprints. The County needs to know enough to plan appropriate mitigation.
 - Principle 5 – Mitigation
 - Principle 6 – Development restrictions specific to structures within the Airport Runway Protection Zone and Safety Area
 - The County had understood this as being needed by Washington State DOT/Aviation but has since learned that FAA regulates this area and all of what is contained in Principle 6 is already required. DOT has clarified that their standards are intended to apply off-Airport instead. Thus, Principle 6 may not be needed anymore.
 - Principle 7 – Sequential process for turning over permitting to the City of Tacoma
 - Not all of Principle 7 has occurred in the sequence listed but much of it has been occurring.
 - Principle 8 – TNAAC
- Thun Field was handled differently from Tacoma Narrows because Thun Field is in the UGA.

PIERCE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Mike Kruger also discussed the PUD implementation ordinance, 18A.75.080, which was included in the Commission's packet. The purpose of this requirement and implementation ordinance was to provide predictability. It relates back to the Community Plan, specifies uses allowed (must be aviation related) and prohibited at the Airport. It requires special notification to RAO residents, includes standards for zoning, stormwater management, etc. It also sets forth Hearing Examiner findings required for approval.

Mike Kruger also referenced the Use Tables for the zones defined in the Community Plan.

CITY OF TACOMA COMMENTS ON PIERCE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, GIG HARBOR PENINSULA COMMUNITY PLAN AND PUD ORDINANCE

Jeff Weber reviewed the documents handed out that provided the City of Tacoma's proposed amendments to the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan and Gig Harbor Peninsula Community Plan and the matrix¹ that summarized the issues raised by the City. He noted that the courts and Growth Management Hearings Boards have ruled not only that siting of EPFs is required, but also have ruled on what can and cannot be imposed on EPFs to restrict them. Specifically noted was that on-site package sewage treatment facilities are not deemed to be the same as urban sewer service and may be allowed in the rural areas.

Jay Derr reviewed the matrix handed out that summarized the issues raised by the City related to the PUD ordinance. He emphasized that the City does not oppose a PUD process for the Airport but it needs to be handled like other processes and that the PUD requirements need to be limited to those under the jurisdiction of a local land use authority and not those that are FAA-regulated (i.e. airport operations). Additionally, the binding site plan, which is more commonly used for subdivisions, may not be appropriate in this case. Further, the PUD needs to parallel the Airport Layout Plan and the 20-year life of the Airport Master Plan must be recognized, not limited to a five-year approval. He noted that the County would be the SEPA lead for the PUD process.

There was a Commission request to hear from the County about why the City-proposed amendments were not accepted by the Pierce County Council.

¹ Note: Copies of the matrices referenced here are available upon request.

Draft

NEXT MEETING
The next Commission meeting will be held on February 26, 2004, at 6:00 p.m., at the Gig Harbor Civic Center.

EVALUATION	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good job by staff; all the questions developed in advance reading were answered in the briefing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Caffeine soft drinks are needed