

Memorandum

To: Sean Scanlon, Tweed Airport

Date: February 10, 2021

From: Ron Gautreau, FHI

Subject: **Tweed Airport Master Plan Update
Public Meeting #3
Summary of January 7, 2021 meeting**

The third public meeting for the Tweed-New Haven Airport (HVN or the Airport) Airport Master Plan Update (AMPU) was conducted from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm on January 7, 2021. The meeting was held virtually due to COVID-19. The Public Meeting was attended by approximately 98 members of the community along with several members of the project team and HVN staff.

Marcy Miller with Fitzgerald and Halliday (FHI) introduced herself as moderator and welcomed the public. Ms. Miller went over the general organization of the virtual meeting and the agenda for the evening. Sean Scanlon, Executive Director of Tweed-New Haven Airport, welcomed attendees and stated that the goal of this meeting is to update the community on the status of the AMPU since the last meeting in December 2019. Mr. Scanlon stated that nothing has been decided; any decisions that are made will be guided based on 1) safety, 2) the community, and 3) the environment.

Mr. Scanlon introduced New Haven Mayor Justin Elicker who made general comments and addressed the community. Mayor Elicker said he hopes that a balance can be found between a highly productive airport and the concerns of the communities it serves.

Mr. Scanlon introduced East Haven Mayor Joseph Carfora who presented his concerns, which include:

- The United States Supreme Court ruling that allows for the airport runway to extend beyond 5,600 feet,
- The effects of recommended development coming out of the AMPU and their impacts on the Town of East Haven, which will be more than any other abutting or surrounding community,
- The impacts of the Airport to upon the rights of East Haven residents.

Mayor Elicker also made the following recommendations:

- That a union project labor agreement be implemented before any ground is broken,
- That the composition of the HVN Airport Authority Board of Directors be re-evaluated to include more East Haven representation if the plan is to move major Airport components to the East Haven side,
- That an Airport Business Enterprise Zone extend to the Route 80 corridor.

Mr. Scanlon then introduced Jeff Wood, with McFarland Johnson (MJ). Mr. Wood introduced the team members. He and Laura Canham of MJ provided a presentation on the status of the AMPU (the

presentation is attached). The presentation was divided into two parts with questions and answers after each part. The first part of MJ's presentation included reviewing the AMPU process, the schedule, key issues and goals, followed by how COVID-19 has impacted the aviation industry as a whole. Mr. Wood then discussed the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) approved forecasts for HVN. Finally, Mr. Wood provided a discussion of the existing and future design aircraft.

Mr. Scanlon requested that community members only ask questions regarding the slides that had been presented and hold other questions pertaining to the other items until after the second part of the presentation. Questions posed included:

- One resident stated impacts of COVID-19 on AMPU are not reflected in the report. Continuing down the AMPU process seems like a waste of money. The AMPU process should be put on hold due to the pandemic. Mr. Scanlon responded that very conservative projections and revisions were used in the AMPU to account for the impacts of COVID-19. Mr. Wood stated that industry consensus is it will be four to five years for the industry to recover and return to 2019 activity levels. Additionally, Mr. Wood stated that the forecasts were revised in the spring of 2020 to account for the impacts of the pandemic on HVN operations and enplanement numbers. The resident expressed doubt the industry will return to 2019 numbers as fast as predicted.
- One resident stated the data being used is already approved by the FAA and the enplanement numbers are not realistic. The revised AMPU is the same plan as was presented prior to COVID-19. Mr. Scanlon responded that there clearly will be a hit to the industry from COVID-19 and believes that the numbers will rebound.
- One resident had a question regarding the wetlands impact from extending Runway 2 toward the south. They asked where the water will go when wetlands are filled? What airlines are planning on coming into Tweed? Mr. Scanlon requested he hold these questions until these issues are discussed later in the presentation.
- One resident stated they do not believe projections are achievable and asked what will happen if projections are not achieved, specifically what if there are financial losses? Mr. Scanlon responded that he has confidence in the forecast numbers and they are achievable. Mr. Scanlon expressed belief in the future growth of the Airport.

The second half of MJ's presentation covered Facility Requirements and Alternatives. Mr. Wood presented the constrained and unconstrained runway length facility requirements that have been identified. In addition, Mr. Wood highlighted the different alternatives under consideration to meet the facility requirements of the Airport, while understanding that the runway length needs to balance safety, operational reliability, community impacts, and environmental impacts. Mr. Wood presented the various alternatives that the project team had developed for the airfield by identifying existing constraints and areas of the Airport that should be improved upon to meet FAA standards. Mr. Wood emphasized that the optimal runway length of 7,600 feet was not feasible and was not being considered in any alternatives moving forward. Several runway and taxiway alternatives were presented with the goal of accommodating the existing and future design aircraft anticipated to use HVN. The runway alternatives include a 6,635-foot-long runway plus Engineered Materials Arresting System (EMAS) that meets both runway and declared distances of at least 6,000 feet.

Ms. Canham presented three terminal alternatives. Ms. Canham identified issues with the current terminal in its existing location and size, and potential benefits that could be realized by considering alternate terminal locations or configurations. Vehicle access to HVN is constrained and is provided through residential neighborhoods, which is not ideal. Residential areas immediately next to the terminal and Airport is an incompatible land use. An alternative location was proposed on the east side of the Airport, which would alleviate the incompatible land use and improve roadway access.

General aviation (GA) hangars and other ancillary buildings could be constructed and/or expanded to meet future demand and generate revenue opportunities for the Airport. If the terminal were relocated, there could be opportunities to provide wetland mitigation on the west side of the Airport.

The second round of community member questions/comments was conducted. Ms. Miller solicited questions from people who had raised their hands and wished to speak. Ms. Miller and Mr. Scanlon also asked if anyone who called in wished to ask a question.

- One resident raised questions regarding the current use of the long-term and overflow parking lots. Mr. Scanlon responded that both lots are not used very often. The resident requested that the list of top 16 Fortune 500 companies in CT in Chapter 3 of the AMPU be rounded out to show the top 20. Mr. Scanlon deferred to Mr. Wood who said he can provide that information. They asked about the distinction between proposed usage of the Airport by business and leisure travel. Mr. Scanlon responded that they have not been able to fully serve business and leisure travel and one of the goals is to fully serve business and leisure travel. Mr. Wood responded as the economy improves both business and leisure travel will increase.
- The resident asked what the frequency of winds from different directions was because there are two runways, the main runway and closed runway. Ms. Canham responded that the closed runway is not anticipated to reopen. Mr. Scanlon responded that they have no plans to rehabilitate the closed runway. The resident asked if airfield geometry standards require additional paving? Mr. Wood responded affirmatively, but that information has not been quantified yet. They also asked if the terminal is moved to the East Haven side of the Airport property would the access require additional paving? Mr. Wood responded that it is likely traffic improvements would be required.
- A Robinson Aviation representative suggested people keep an open mind when reviewing the document.
- One resident asked if the proposed runway improvements make the facility safer for existing aircraft. Mr. Wood responded that generally, yes. The resident continued that if the expansion happens, regardless of if there is an increase in usage, the Airport will be safer for existing aircraft. Mr. Scanlon responded that safety is the first priority, and that the usage of the Airport is expected to grow if the runway is lengthened.
- One resident asked what happens to the smaller planes if the terminal building is on the East Haven side? Mr. Scanlon responded that they have no intention of moving General Aviation operations. Ms. Canham confirmed that the East Ramp will stay in its current location.
- Can examples of other airport footprints be shown at future meetings? Mr. Wood responded that the point of the other airport comparisons is to show the type of planes that are accommodated by different runway lengths. They raised the question that if bigger planes are accommodated,

they will carry more fuel. Mr. Wood responded that if fuel is required to be dumped, it is typically at an altitude that it evaporates before it hits the ground. The resident stated that safety will not be improved because bigger planes will be used. Mr. Scanlon responded that the bigger planes will still be narrow-body planes in the same family of aircraft that currently use the Airport, but that can travel further. The resident also asked specifically what type of planes are proposed to come in? Mr. Scanlon responded that he cannot contractually and legally share specifics of what airlines and type of planes may be coming in.

- One resident stated Dodge Avenue was moved at great cost and the Airport authority promised that if Dodge Avenue was moved, the runway would not be extended, and the FAA was allowed to override this agreement. He asked if the Airport authority would be required to buy people's houses if the runway were extended. The response was no.
- What percentage of the new airplanes are not commercial? Is Amazon part of the equation? Mr. Scanlon responded that he has had no conversations with Amazon or other companies that move large amounts of cargo. The Airport is not going to take anyone's house by eminent domain. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process will answer a lot of the environmental questions. The Dodge Avenue move was moved due to the safety areas of the existing runway.
- One resident thought the reason to expand the runway was for commercial flights. Mr. Scanlon responded that they would like to appeal to business and leisure travel. There will not be an up or down referendum on the Airport expansion but the proposal will go through standard procedures. Mr. Wood responded that all comments will be part of the record that goes to the FAA. That AMPU runway length facility requirement was based on both the runway length need of commercial and general aviation aircraft.
- State Representative Joseph Zullo asked if there will be impacts to East Haven from the [recommendations of the] AMPU including traffic, noise, and air pollution. What are the economic or tax benefits for the region, specifically, East Haven? Mr. Scanlon responded that a community benefits analysis is being prepared to evaluate those questions.

Ms. Miller read some of the chat messages for the project team to respond to.

- One resident stated they do not agree that the area is in an air travel desert as the Airport suggests. Mr. Scanlon responded that the area is an underserved area in the country and research indicates that there could be more interest if the Airport is expanded.
- One resident asked how do the proposed larger planes compare to the planes that flew out of Tweed in the 1980's? Mr. Wood responded it is hard to compare since the seats are closer together but not that much different, except the newer planes are much quieter.

Mr. Scanlon concluded by providing his cell phone number and email address for anyone with additional questions. The project email address was also displayed on the screen. Mr. Scanlon thanked the audience and stated that this is the beginning, not the end, of a conversation on the Airport expansion and stated another public presentation will be conducted in February or March. Mr. Wood also thanked the audience for participating and asking questions.