

RE: PROPOSED NORTH AIRFIELD DEVELOPMENT AT HANSCOM FIELD

The Moving Parts: The Properties, Players, Land Swap and Taxiway Romeo

The Properties

The proposed development would be sited on two adjacent properties near Hartwell Road, Bedford:

- North Airfield, owned by the state agency Massport, and
- the former Navy hangar parcel, privately owned by Runway Realty Ventures, LLC.¹

Property Overview

	Property	Owner	Developer	Acres*	Hangars
1	North Airfield	Massport Massport plans to lease this land to RRV for the proposed RRV North Airfield facility	North Airfield Ventures, LLC (NAV) Top principals: Michael Argiros and Jeffrey Leerink	28.1	21 new
2	Former Navy Parcel, privately owned	Runway Realty Ventures, LLC (RRV) – private owner	Runway Realty Ventures, LLC (RRV) Top principals: Michael Argiros and Jeffrey Leerink	21.3	5 new; 6 total, with renovated Navy hangar

* Acres after Land Swap (see below)

Source: ENF

The Players

- The former Navy hangar parcel was bought by Charles Patsios, a principal with Runway Realty, LLC, at a government auction in 2019 for \$9,040,000.
- Massport hired developer North Airfield Ventures, LLC for the proposed project on its land.
- Runway Realty Ventures, LLC (RRV) and North Airfield Ventures, LLC (NAV) filed a joint ENF (Environmental Notification Form) to MEPA (Office of MA Environmental Policy Act) on 1/17/23.
- The top two principals of RRV and NAV are the same people: Jeffrey Leerink and Michael Argiros. They have hired former Massport CEO Thomas Kinton as a consultant to the project (Kinton Aviation).

¹ See Project Site Map in ENF, Figure 1.3:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/h9q7vh5gy2bh5cd/Hanscom%20North%20Airfield_ENF-011723.pdf?dl=0;

- Jeffrey Leerink was in the news in March 2023 in connection with the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB), a subsidiary of SVB Financial Group. At the time of this writing, Leerink is CEO of SVB Securities. How the SVB shake-up will or will not impact the proposed North Airfield plans has yet to be determined.

Land Swap and Access Agreement

A major piece to the nearly 50-acre proposed development is a Land Swap and Access Agreement between Massport and Runway Realty Ventures, LLC (RRV).

The Land Swap would transfer:

- two parcels of land totaling about 5.2 acres from Massport to RRV*
- about 2.6 acres of land from RRV to Massport ²

Side bar: Two old Air Force (AF) burn pits are located on, or are intersected by, the eastern parcel **that Massport is transferring to RRV. These burn pits are under active remediation by the AF Remedial Project as a **source of PFAS contamination of the airfield groundwater**. These burn pits, along with several other PFAS sources on or near the airfield are the subject of a new and urgent AF investigation into PFAS contamination at Hanscom Field. The AF, the EPA and MassDEP submitted Public Comments addressing the PFAS issue. (See Key Government & Organizational Public Comments.)*

Status of Land Swap Agreement

- The Massport Board voted to approve the Land Swap and Access Agreement at the 10/20/22 Massport Board Meeting. The Terms of the Land Swap appear in the Minutes of the 10/20/22 Board Meeting. (See Key Documents, #2)
- Governor Baker approved the Land Swap in December, 2022. Citizens urge Governor Healey to rescind it.

Key Terms of the Land Swap and Access Agreements:

- **New perimeter road:** Because the value of the Massport parcels exceeds the value of RRV's parcel by \$930,000, a term in the Land Swap Agreement requires RRV to contribute that amount toward the cost of a new vehicle service road on the periphery of Hanscom Field (the "VSR Project"), and assume all responsibility for its construction.
- **Lease**
RRV will lease the North Airfield parcel from Massport initially for 20 years, with options for four additional 5-year terms, subject to FAA approval.
- **Reconfiguring Taxiway Romeo to support larger and heavier aircraft:**
While reconfiguring Taxiway Romeo is not included in the ENF (Environmental Notification Form) submitted by the developers to MEPA (office of MA Environmental Policy Act) for an

² See Map of Land Swap Parcels in ENF, Figure 1-2:

https://www.dropbox.com/s/h9q7vh5gy2bh5cd/Hanscom%20North%20Airfield_ENF-011723.pdf?dl=0;

environmental review, it is, however, explicitly and repeatedly described as an option in the Land Swap agreement, suggesting that it will be reconfigured in the future. Massport comments at recent meetings support this plan: “There will be no construction of Taxiway Romeo *at this time.*” (HFAC meetings, 4/18/23 and 5/16/23)

Why is the question of reconfiguring Taxiway Romeo important?

Taxiway Romeo is on Massport land just to the south of and adjacent to the former Navy hangar property now owned by RRV. The proposed project, as described in the ENF, includes plans to build a taxilane between RRV’s property and Taxiway Romeo to allow private jets from the proposed RRV facility to taxi to the runways. Reconfiguring Taxiway Romeo would attract larger, heavier private jets to the proposed RRV facility.

See excerpts below from Land Swap Terms:

“EXHIBIT A
RUNWAY REALTY VENTURES LLC HANSCOM AGREEMENTS TERMS SHEET ³
Massachusetts Port Authority, October 20, 2022
Land Swap and Through-the-Fence Agreement Term Sheet
Runway Realty Ventures LLC
L.G. Hanscom Field, Bedford, Massachusetts

Land Swap (prerequisites, conditions, approvals, and principal business terms):

Design of Taxilane and Taxiway

Design (necessary to establish boundaries of parcels included in Land Swap). **RRV shall undertake each of the following tasks: ...**

- **Define existing and future design group aircraft** to determine conceptual design ...
[= Bullet 2]

- **Review reconfigured Taxiway Romeo group IV object-free area (“TOFA”)**
(Taxiway Romeo currently supports up to design Group III aircraft with weight limits of up to 100,000 pounds) ...
[= Bullet 4]

Funding:

- **All costs for the Proposed Project**, including but not limited to fees of Massport’s outside counsel, and fees for the design, permitting and construction of the taxilane from the Navy Parcel to Hanscom Field, **and upgrades and improvements to the Hanscom Field taxiway infrastructure to support design Group III aircraft above 100,000 pounds and/or design Group IV aircraft, as requested by RRV**, and the design and construction of the perimeter fence, including access gates, post-closing, **shall be borne by RRV.**” end of excerpt from

³ Land Swap and Access Agreement, in Minutes of 10/20/22 Massport Board Meeting, <https://www.massport.com/media/bcxfc3u3/b221020.pdf> (p. 9)

At issue is whether Taxiway Romeo will be used to support design Group III aircraft under 100,000 lbs (currently the case) or if it will be reconfigured to support the larger, heavier design Group III (over 100,000 lbs) and/or design Group IV aircraft, thereby attracting these larger, private jets to the proposed North Airfield facility.

Massport representatives at meetings with the Hanscom-area towns report that *“There are **no** taxiway or runway improvements proposed with any of this development. We will **not** see an increase in the size of the aircraft using Hanscom Field.”*⁴

Technically, these Massport statements are correct--and simultaneously misleading:

- Reconfiguring Taxiway Romeo is not in the ENF development plans – but it IS in the Land Swap agreement, in the context of other changes relating to the proposed plans.
- Reconfiguring Taxiway Romeo “will not see an increase in the size of aircraft using Hanscom Field” because Hanscom *runways* are already being used by design Group IV aircraft (such as those carrying sports teams).

The issue that Massport sidesteps is that *the proposed North Airfield facility* will attract new larger, heavier Group IV private jets – if Taxiway Romeo is reconfigured.

Size Differences between FAA Design Group III and IV Aircraft

FAA Aircraft Category	Wingspan	Tail Height	Typical Weight	Length
Design Group III	79 ft - < 118 ft	30 ft - < 45 ft	Up to 100,000 lbs*	n/a
Design Group IV	118 ft - < 171 ft	45 ft - < 60 ft	100,000 lbs - plus	n/a
EXAMPLES:				
Design Group III EXS:				
- Challenger 300	63.84 ft	20.33 ft	Below 100,000 lbs	68.63 ft
- Gulfstream V (G-V)	93 ft 3 in	25.8 ft		96 ft 5 in
Design Group IV EXS:				
- Boeing 757-200	125 ft	44.6 ft	Over 100,000 lbs	155.2 ft
- Boeing 707-320	142 ft	42.2 ft		152.9 ft
- Airbus A310-200	144 ft	52.3 ft		153.2 ft

Source for weight data: [Massport Board Meeting Minutes, 10/20/22](#), pp. 9-15, Attachment 1,

*This reflects typical weight. Some Design Group III aircraft exceed 100,000 lbs.

⁴ Report on 2/22/23 Meeting between Massport and Hanscom-area Town Managers - Attachment 5; obtained by Public Record Request

See next page for Graphic Chart of Airplane Design Groups.

Source: <https://aviationplanning.design.blog/aircraft/>

Airplane Design Group

Group	Wingspan (feet)	Tail Height (feet)
I	<49'	<20'
II	49' - <79'	20' - <30'
III	79' - <118'	30' - <45'
IV	118' - <171'	45' - <60'
V	171' - <214'	60' - <66'
VI	214' - <262'	66' - <80'

