**Airport Management Advisory Committee**

**Minutes of Meeting –September 30, 2016 at Town Hall**

Arthur Malman, Chairman of Town of East Hampton’s Airport Management Advisory Committee (“AMAC”), called the meeting to order at 9 AM.

The following members of the AMAC were present: voting members, Pat Trunzo III, Cindy Herbst, Bonnie Krupinski, David Gruber, Gene Oshrin, Munir Saltoun, and Arthur Malman and non-voting ex officio members, Kathee Burke-Gonzalez, Councilwoman and Board liaison for the AMAC, and, Jemille Charlton, Airport Director. Present by phone were Charles Ehren and Peter Wadsworth. Absent was Len Bernard, the Town’s Chief Budget Officer.

Among others attending were Kent Feuerring, the president of the EH Aviation Association, Zachary Cohen and Jonathan Sabin along with several other members of the public, some of whom attended only part of the meeting. Michael Waibel and Greg VanderMolen of Baker engineering and Jeff Smith of the Eastern Region Helicopter Association also joined the meeting by telephone.

Arthur Malman invited all members of the public to join the discussion.

The attached agenda had been previously distributed.

**The next meeting was SCHEDULED for 9 AM on FRIDAY October 28 at Town Hall [Subsequently rescheduled for 8 30 AM to accommodate Baker schedule].**

The minutes of the July 28 meeting, as circulated were approved.

Kathee Burke-Gonzalez asked if the meeting could focus first on matters relating to Baker since they were standing by on the phone. She reported that an RFP had been completed requesting bids for both clear cutting of trees along the main runway taxiway and the approaches for the main runway and an alternative for zonal cutting for the main runway approaches. Over 50 firms had requested more information, with a pre-bid meeting scheduled for next week and a board vote on a bond resolution related to tree cutting expected later in October. She stated that the board had not made a final decision on zonal versus clear cutting but that Marguerite Wolffsohn and Kim Shaw had indicated from an environmental standpoint clear cutting with removal of debris would be preferable since it would not be done so frequently and therefore the understory would be disturbed only once.

Arthur Malman clarified, without objection, that concerns of AMAC members to the current tree clearing plan was limited to trees on approaches and did not affect the AMAC’s recommendation to clear cut the trees along the main taxiway (less than about ½ acre of cutting) since many newer planes with wider wing spans could not now effectively use it because of concerns over wing damage—the result being that they were taxing up and down the main runway which, at busy times, caused more aircraft to circle before landing, exacerbating the noise problem and increasing congestion.

David Gruber pointed out that under the current plan about 20 acres would be cleared and questioned the need for such a large area to be cleared without further research. He pointed out that, among other things:

-- some tall trees outside the airport would still remain (unless agreements with landowners were reached to cut or light them or the towns of EH and SH would use their condemnation powers) and still interrupt flight paths and that this should be dealt with before airport cutting commences

-- the FAA was changing its rules as of 2017 to require a 50 to 1 climb ratio which, if applied to HTO would require dramatically more clearance off airport land or leave HTO again out of compliance and facing loss of instrument approaches,

--the FAA had already given the airport back one instrument approach just using PAPI lighting without current tree cutting,

-- since this is an old growth forest, with many trees fully grown years ago, it is probable that most tree penetrations now objected to by the FAA had been in existence for many years without any safety concerns by the FAA –it does not seem possible that 20 acres were under the FAA required glide slopes when clear zones were created several years ago and are now no longer under the slopes.  That would be a lot of trees getting a lot taller even though it was a mature forest a long time ago.

David Gruber noted that, looking at google earth shots of the airport, it seems that a large part of the target areas for clearance now without regard to the slope of the invisible surface, has never been cleared before (that does not apply to the obvious regrowth at the end of the runway 28 clearing) and asked if the dimensions of these areas are being driven by Part 77 requirements that were never properly met, by TERPS requirements that were never properly met, or by something else?

Pat Trunzo III stated that an environmental impact study was required by law before such a broad tree clearing project could be started.

Cindy Herbst and Gene Oshrin objected to questions now being raised at this late date about an RFP for tree cutting that was essential to safe airport operations and had been under discussion for almost 2 years. Bonnie Krupinski pointed out that instrument approaches were needed not only at night but also when fog rolled in during daylight hours.

Pat Trunzo III was upset that the AMAC had never seen a draft of the tree cutting RFP before it was published. He also questioned the $400,000 bonding estimate for tree cutting as he had been given estimates of $5,000 per acre for cutting and disposal for other tree removal projects.

Mike Waibel stated that the FAA’s action in curtailing instrument approaches at HTO a few years ago followed a fly over by the FAA that identified dangerous penetrations into the prior approaches by particular trees both on and off airport property. As to the PAPI’s, he noted that this was only a temporary fix and could be rescinded by the FAA at any time. However he agreed with David Gruber that a new 50 to 1 clearance rule would be impractical at HTO and most other airports and it was highly unlikely that the FAA would require it.

Arthur Malman suggested that the RFP process could go forward while the AMAC investigated further with consultants particular FAA requirements and possible alternative ways of satisfying them. He also suggested that, if possible, the RFP also be set up so that we could go ahead first with the main runway taxiway tree clearance which is non-controversial.

Kathee Burke-Gonzalez updated the meeting on the status of curfew violations in 2015 and to date in 2016. She indicated that there had been 65 curfew violations in 2015 of which 17 were of the stricter noisy aircraft curfews and 42 were of the general curfews. In 2016 to date there had been a reduction to 20, as apparently more aircraft are becoming familiar with the curfews. She noted that these violations are prosecuted through the courts and no fines had as yet been assessed for either 2015 or 2016 but additional court hearings are scheduled.

Kathee Burke-Gonzalez indicated that Baker had been chosen for the aeronautical section of the deer fence but that a final choice for the non aeronautical engineering was expected shortly.

Arthur Malman stated that the final Baker pavements report had been delayed because the subcontractor doing the core sampling had not been paid timely, but reportedly that had been straightened out and the final report should be forthcoming by year end.

Kathee Burke-Gonzalez updated the committee on the status of noise complaint data and reports and indicated that data was now also being collected by both Plane Noise and the Vector aircraft noise tracking system. She indicated that reports were being posted on the airport web site but David Gruber repeated his request for underlying operations, route tracking and noise complaint data for analysis.

Kathee Burke-Gonzalez also noted that airport litigation expense was within budgets for 2015 and 2016 and might be slightly lower than $1 million a year for 2015-2017.

Arthur Malman reiterated the committee’s request for a redline of the law department’s current draft of an airport lease against the form that the AMAC reviewed and commented on several months ago.

Jemille Charlton reported that paid parking had started in late August, but without the remote payment app yet available. He noted that about $600 had been collected from meters in July as some people pulled up the temporary plastic bags over the meters and deposited payments even before paid parking became effective. Enterprise had installed its signage on its spaces but Hertz had not. Jemille Charlton noted that it was up to the rental car companies to install their signage and enforce their tow away notices. Arthur Malman pointed out that if non rental car airport customers were parking for nothing in car rental spots, marked or unmarked, it resulted in lost revenue for the airport. Jemille Charlton noted that the police would begin giving out summons shortly to people who parked in numbered spaces or no parking areas without paying—excluding rental car patrons who parked in the designated rental car parking areas.

Kathee Burke-Gonzalez explained that the remote parking app had been delayed because of payment processing problems outside the purview of the Airport Director and were being worked out by the law and finance departments.

Jemille Charlton confirmed that the holes in the existing airport deer fence had finally been repaired.

Arthur Malman reported that, as had been suggested at prior AMAC meetings, Jemille Charlton Kathee Burke-Gonzalez, David Gruber, Cindy Herbst, Bonnie Krupinski and he had met at the airport last week to begin understanding how to improve airport operations, especially around the terminal, over the longer term 5, 10 and 15 years and to try to coordinate present projects into the long term needs. He explained that because of larger planes parking and using the airport, additional aircraft parking was needed. The group thought that, regardless of any loss of space occasioned were 16-34 to become the secondary runway, about 50,000 additional sq ft of aircraft parking area was needed in the short term and another 50,000 in the mid-term and possible areas were identified for these additions---subject to further consultation with the engineers.

Also discussed by the group were possible alternative areas for parking helicopters away from the main terminal, having a separate smaller terminal exclusively for helicopters, the locations for additional hangars , possibly moving some hangars now in the crowded terminal area to less congested areas, longer term automobile parking across Daniels Hole Road, etc.

Cindy Herbst pointed out that as the town was renting vacant parcels on the airport side of Industrial Road, it would be making it more difficult to satisfy future aeronautical needs. Kathee Burke-Gonzalez indicated that a lease being negotiated with Landscape Details, while for a plot identified by Cindy Herbst for possible future aeronautical use, was too far advanced to have the proposed tenant start on another parcel.

Bonnie Krupinski reviewed the Town’s color coded map of vacant airport parcels and indicated that, to avoid further confusion by various Town departments offering leases on parcels that could be needed for airport operations when non-essential parcels were still open, the color coding on three of the parcels be changed promptly on a new leasing map. Kathee Burke-Gonzalez indicated that she would follow up.

Pat Trunzo III pointed out that members of the AMAC should be brought into leasing and other airport matters before they proceed in a way which contradict other airport policies or objectives or have flaws in them that would be highlighted by a timely review.

Arthur Malman asked if members thought the town should hire special project managers or owners representatives to expedite major capital projects at the airport, such as airport paid parking which had been delayed. He also noted that reportedly the town engineer had indicated that he did not have the time and resources to coordinate and supervise the non- aeronautical portion of the deer fence

Kathee Burke-Gonzalez thought that most of the delays in paid parking had been occasioned by “back of the house” problems coordinating the vendors and their flow of funds from collections with the law and finance departments. Jemille Charlton noted that there had been no line item in the LKMA agreement to cover supervision of project implementation and suggested that such an item be included in future agreements. Jemille Charlton felt that it was not necessary to add project managers or owners representative at this time if the Airport Director could work with the engineers to bring in future projects in budget and on time.

Peter Wadsworth nonetheless expressed frustration that it had taken so long to get paid parking up and running and questioned why police had not been enforcing even the most basic parking rules during the summer, referring to photos he had taken in early August. He suggested further that since the police should have budgeted for enforcement during the summer, there was no reason for them not to enforce, and it was important to send a signal to all those who were parking at the airport that enforcement would not be lax. In light of the lengthy delay from the scheduled commencement of paid parking, he also questioned the wisdom of letting project management responsibilities fall to the engineers and stressed the importance of having a local project manager who also knows his or her way around town hall to get things done.

Arthur Malman suggested that a special fund inside the airport fund be established with the proceeds of airport land sales—pursuant to tenant purchase options in existing leases—that could be in the neighborhood of $10 million over time. These funds would not be used for current operations or spent on current capital items, but instead be retained perpetually for airport use as a revolving fund.

David Gruber explained that as airport capital programs needed borrowings, the airport would, in effect borrow first from this special fund and repay it with interest over time like it would do for any bond. Zachary Cohen and Peter Wadsworth offered comments on the mechanics and technical requirements related to such a fund.

Since the committee was in agreement on this approach, Arthur Malman asked Peter Wadsworth, Zachary Cohen and David Gruber to meet with Len Bernard to work out some of the details for such a special fund and to report back to the committee.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 A.M.

Respectfully submitted

Arthur Malman