

Airport Management Advisory Committee

Minutes of Meeting – April 10, 2020 at Town Hall

Arthur Malman, Chairman of Town of East Hampton’s Airport Management Advisory Committee (“AMAC”), called the meeting to order at 10 AM via Zoom meeting

The following members of the AMAC were present: voting members: Steve Tuma, Pat Trunzo III, Kent Feuerring, Charles Ehren, Gene Oshrin, David Gruber, Munir Saltoun and Arthur Malman, and ex-officio members Jeff Bragman, Councilperson and Board liaison for the AMAC, and Len Bernard, the Town’s Chief Budget Officer.

Absent was John Mak, a non-voting member, and James Brundige, Airport Director and ex-officio member.

Among others attending for all or part of the telephone meeting were Kim Shaw, Environmental Protection Director of the Town’s Natural Resources Department, and Melissa Winslow, Environmental Analyst of the Department, John Kirrane of the Sag Harbor/Noyac Civic Association, Sherly Gold of Say No to KHTO, John Cullen, a member of the Northville Civic Council and the Riverhead Noise Task Force, Michael Hansen, a Wainscott resident, Teresa McCaskie of the Southold Town Helicopter Committee, Alex Gersten, Director of Airports and Ground Infrastructure for the National Business Aviation Association (“NBAA”), and other residents of EH and neighboring towns who have aviation interests and/or who have been working toward helicopter and/or jet noise reduction over their homes and other members of the public and media.

The agenda had been previously distributed to members and made available to the public prior to the meeting and additional copies were distributed to attendees.

The next meetings are SCHEDULED for the following Fridays at Town Hall, at **TEN (10) AM:**

MAY 8, JUNE 12, JULY 10, AUGUST 14

Arthur Malman noted that it was likely that the May 8 meeting would be on Zoom.

The draft minutes of the March 13, 2020 meeting, as previously distributed, were approved.

Jeff Bragman gave a synopsis of the actions being taken by the Town during the Corona Virus. Arthur Malman asked if, given the workload involved in virus related matters, it would be appropriate for the AMAC to send the Town Board, at this time, the final copies of the AMAC’s recommendations for an airport economic study and the process for further airport related studies. Jeff Bragman explained that he had sent prior draft copies to board members and Arthur Malman said he would forward the final versions.

Steve Tuma reported that, other than flights of based aircraft, there was recently only about one non-based flight per day coming into HTO. Arthur Malman noted that the terminal building was closed

and that the several cars seen in the paid parking area were Hertz rental cars there only temporarily, without payment from Hertz, as an accommodation during the virus emergency until Hertz can arrange for pick up – since so many cars had been rented recently in NYC and dropped off at HTO by second homeowners relocating to the area earlier in the year than usual because of the virus.

Arthur Malman explained that Jim Brundige was attending to a family medical issue and he presented the Airport Directors Update (attached as Exhibit A) and walked the group through each of the items. He also noted that the new voluntary helicopter routes for 2020 had been finalized but, with almost no non-based aircraft using HTO, it will be difficult to evaluate them until the economy recovers.

He also pointed out that, with new projects suspended, and with little airport activity, this would be a good time for the AMAC to revise and update, with the airport director, town code regulations for airport users. For example, the current regulations still **Require** an FBO service aircraft on demand 24/7 although the town has a voluntary curfew and Sound Aircraft has adjusted its own operations to support the curfew. He suggested that Alex Gersten could review a working redraft with an eye to giving us ideas that other airports had been using. Jeff Bragman was wary of having an interested party review such a document before it was finalized by the town.

A question was raised by a member of the public regarding tracking data. Steve Tuma stated that Sound was creating an addition system to track aircraft within 2.5 miles of HTO. This would enable Sound to not only better manage its ramp but will also allow better tracking of historical data to see if operators were properly navigating noise abatement routes. Arthur Malman pointed out that Sound was doing this at its own expense in order to get the system online rather than wait for a lengthier town funded project to be approved.

Kim Shaw and Melissa Winslow joined the meeting for a discussion of solar matters.

Arthur Malman asked first about the Solar Roadways' glass paving blocks which act like solar panels and, at the same time, can heat their surface when needed in ice and snow and light up with LEDs for directions. He noted that James Brundige, Steve Tuma and he had met about a month or so ago and were considering a small demonstration project for the solar blocks in the walkway of the short term lot which is used by pedestrians going to and from the large paid lot as well as by almost all cars and heavier trucks entering the small lot. He also noted that the area would be small because of the high cost of the blocks at this time and was also being considered because of the proximity to terminal building utilities. However, the glass solar panels, while reportedly able to bear the weight of a 60,000 lb. truck, are not yet approved for runways and taxiways by the FAA – and such approvals typically take about 2-3 years. The major financing for Solar Roadways has come, not from the usual private equity or venture capital sources, but from several hundred thousand of dollars of rounds of DOT grants and over \$2 million from donations through a public interest website.

Kim Shaw reported that her department had been following up with Solar Roadways and, while the product was promising, at this time the cost was very high and the company's warranty was very limited, with the added costs of travel expenses for company technicians for installation and repair.

The discussion next moved to possibilities for solar generating capacity at the airport on buildings, land between runways and taxiways (for which the FAA had approved special types of solar panels), canopies over parking lots and possibly set out on other airport property [**the Town's 2016 Microgrid Study by Hitachi, on page 21, estimated that 50KW of solar energy could be generated at HTO from merely solar arrays on a covered parking lot area and the main terminal**]. It was noted that, although the roofs of the terminal and the fuel farm were town owned, most other roofs were on structures owned by the hangar owners, or, in the case of the Krupinski hangar, rented by a third party for a long term – all roofs would have to be assessed for the ability to support solar panels, and an analysis would be made (in relation to maximum sun exposure) of the direction they faced and shadows to determine if they were good candidates for the arrays. It was reported that there had been talk of a proposal to tear down the Krupinski hangar and replace it with solar panels; Arthur Malman thought a similar result might be achieved by simply reinforcing the roof.

With respect to solar panels on the cleared lands of approaches and between and around taxiways and runways, members were reminded that Marguerite Wolfson had been concerned that these “empty” areas were meadows of which the town had little left. Jeff Bragman observed that many proposals for solar arrays in the town would have tradeoffs and, with need for more locally generated renewables, various alternative previously rejected would need to be re-considered.

In his role as host of “GGG Insights”, Arthur Malman pointed out he had interviewed officials of PSE&G who had primary responsibility for grid issues and several important facts related to possible HTO installation of solar powers had been discussed. For example, people had been discussing using the approximately 5- acre industrial area in the northern part of the airport (presently vacant) for parking several large batteries in cargo containers. The PSEG official had pointed out that this would be cost prohibitive since the price of each would be millions of dollars; at some point the prices could come down but probably not in the next couple of years.

One challenge of generating solar at the airport, Arthur Malman noted, would be that more solar could be generated that could be consumed by the airport and its industrial road tenants. This would mean (assuming that the town is not yet ready to build a private distribution grid to neighboring properties outside the airport boundaries) cabling to the nearest PSEG substation on Buehl Lane, at a cost of several million dollars. The PSEG official had indicated that, even with the possible injection of electricity from offshore wind, the substation could be reconfigured to accept airport generated solar energy.

It was pointed out that one proposal route for bringing offshore windfarm electricity from Wainscott to the PSEG substation would be to run cable, part of the route for which would be near the airport. Arthur Malman said he had a preliminary discussion with the windfarm developers who had explained that their presently proposed cable could not accept more load from HTO generation, but left open the possibility of HTO paying for an incremental increase in the capacity of this cable which could prove the most efficient means of getting HTO produced solar to the substation – if the town was ready to make a commitment before the cable is finally designed.

Various people asked about particular areas at HTO for solar installations, their generating capacity and costs. David Gruber suggested having a company give us some very preliminary rough outlines of such information. It was pointed out that consultants could use Google Earth to give very quick initial estimates of possibilities for generation – assuming roofs could hold the weight of the panels. Kim Shaw indicated that the town had a consultant doing this and would see if they could consider facilities at the town as well.

Arthur Malman noted that town officials had not yet reviewed the three proposals for limited environmental testing of air and soil at the airport and, as a result, it was felt that these proposals should not yet be made available to the public. Sherly Gold asked why we were talking about some limited tests when she and many others had been advocating for a full-blown environmental carbon footprint analysis of the airport plan and comprehensive environmental studies. David Gruber explained that doing simple relatively inexpensive limited testing would give us better ideas for the parameters for a fulsome test and avoid costly dead ends. Arthur Malman pointed out that by the time such full-blown tests were designed and approved by the Town Board it would be several months – in normal times. Recognizing that simple testing for perhaps around \$25-50k – with limited air traffic expected this summer – would not be conclusive, it would still give us some information (that could not be otherwise collected until summer 2021 at the earliest), he, like David Gruber, advocated prompt action to begin gathering at least enough information to do some “back of the envelope” guesstimates before designing a full blown environmental testing protocol.

Arthur Malman thanked all participants for making the AMAC’s first Zoom meeting successful.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Malman

Exhibit A

AMAC Meeting Airport Director's Update April 10, 2020

Aircraft Traffic, Landing Fees

There was a spike in traffic early to mid-March—about 150 additional operations—75 landings and 75 takeoffs. By the end of the month, jet and helicopter traffic trailed off to where we might have anywhere from none to one or two a day. The average daily traffic for April is 16 operations a day—almost all of which are local single engine aircraft. On Thursday, April 2nd, there was one aircraft that took off and landed here. Landing fees are being collected, as usual.

Car Rentals/Parking

The paid parking lot is, for the most part, empty. Mike Norbeck, manager of the Hertz concession, has been swamped with rental cars from NYC and other locations from the influx of summer people coming out here early. Mike asked me if he could use the lot to store the overflow cars for a couple of days until Hertz picked them up. He gets no revenue from cars he does not rent and is no longer using the lot.

Construction and Maintenance Projects

Baker--The runway/taxiway crack sealing and painting project has been on hold due to colder weather since December 2019. It was to resume this month. The contractor and I have agreed to wait until the CDC and NY State restrictions are lifted before resuming work.

Savik and Murray--The Airfield lighting, Ramp lighting and Sound Proofing projects have been approved by the Town Board for engineering and bidding. Savik and Murray's staff is at work on those projects, working remotely from home.

Environmental, Economic and Other Studies

Jeff Bragman submitted the three Environmental proposals to the other Town Board members for consideration.

The Economic Study is being conducted by David Gruber and Kent Feuerring.

SBA Grant for Sound—Steve Tuma

Deer Fence-Guard Rail

The estimated cost of installing a Guard Rail along Daniels Hole Road is \$77,000. The draft Resolution to proceed with the work has not been adopted by the Town Board.

Voluntary Helicopter Routes Approved and disseminated by the ERHC.

What little helicopter traffic we have are, for the most part, utilizing the routes.

Revised Airport Regulations

Will require a change to the Town Code, which must be approved by the Town Board and by the New York Department of State in addition to an updated Minimum Standards document. With other projects on hold, it may be a good time to revisit this

Airport Capacity.

Jody Edwards is not available for this meeting. But, he has said many times that his original comments were made looking at pure numbers of operations without consideration for peak traffic times. His comments were also made before he experienced a full seasonal operation. I performed a study of capacity for a random busy week last season—August 12th through the 18th. As suspected, on the busiest days—Thursday afternoon, Friday all day and Monday morning, the Tower is at times handling up to one operation a minute, which is pretty much at capacity, given the amount of aircraft in the Class Delta airspace at the same time one aircraft is taking off or landing every minute. To handle the load, the Tower can issue a “Ground Stop”, which they did on a couple of occasions last summer. That indicates to me we reached capacity. However, the capacity issue is also about numbers of aircraft on the field. There are times when the ramp and parking areas are just about at capacity. So the notion that the airport can handle 4 times the number of aircraft is misleading

Exhibit B

{ALSO TO BE ATTACHED BY THE TOWN TO ITS FILE COPY OF THE FINAL MINUTES ARE THE FOLLOWING MATERIALS PRESENTED TO THE MEETING}

No other materials were presented at this meeting