

Airport Management Advisory Committee

**Minutes of Meeting –April 5, 2019 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: Charles Ehren, David Gruber, Steve Tuma, Gene Oshrin, and Arthur Malman and non-voting ex- officio members: Sylvia Overby, one of the two Councilpersons and Co-Board liaisons for the AMAC, Len Bernard, the Town’s Chief Budget Officer and James Brundige, Airport Director.

Absent were voting members Munir Saltoun, Kent Feuerring, and Pat Trunzo III and Jeff Bragman, one of two Councilpersons and Co-Board liaisons for the AMAC. Among others attending for all or part of the meeting were Gail Simmons of the East Hampton Aviation Association, and residents of EH and neighboring towns who have been working toward helicopter noise reduction over their homes and other members of the public. 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 meeting was SCHEDULED for the following at Town Hall, at 9 AM:

**Friday, May 17**

The draft minutes of the March 15, 2019 meeting, as previously distributed, were approved.

Marguerite Wolffsohn, head of the Town’s Planning Department and Kim Shaw, head of the Town’s Natural Resources Department, joined the meeting to continue the discussion of solar facilities at the airport. Both concurred in the appropriateness of a solar canopy over the auto parking lot, and solar panels on roofs such as the fuel farm and terminal but noted that, while hangar roofs might also be interesting, their load bearing capacity would have to be ascertained along with the willingness of hangar owners to participate in such a program.

With respect to terrestrial installation near runways and taxiways and other clear areas, Marguerite Wolffsohn was adamantly against this use since it would reduce grasslands that are already in very short supply in the town.

With respect to the possibility of a major battery installation on the now vacant 5 ½ acre commercial/industrial parcel on the airport layout plan, north of the terminal and near the gun club, Marguerite Wolffsohn pointed out that it would be possible to adjust the location and shape of the present location of the 5 ½ parcel somewhat when actual planning started.

Kim Shaw also discussed a new solar product that could be used as paving for roads or paths. She was not sure if it could take the load bearing demands of a taxiway or apron. Arthur Malman asked if she could send along material on the product since the committee had been discussing some limited paving repair projects on which it could be tested. Sylvia Overby was more interested in testing the

product in an area around town hall or some other area where more residents could see it. Since airport paving projects took months of planning and the weight demands were markedly different, it did not seem as though the two tests would be mutually exclusive.

Sylvia Overby did not report any serious negotiations with potential non-aeronautical tenants. Arthur Malman reiterated his comments that there were still no for rent signs, no ads and no brokers and this procedure of just sitting back and waiting for lease inquiries was costing the town's airport fund hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in lost rents.

A discussion followed on installing signs now in the terminal and at the intersection of Industrial road and Daniel's Hole road. As to size constraints, Arthur Malman noted that the sign at the intersection would have to be reasonably read by a passing motorist and Len Bernard pointed out that the annual Blood drive sign at Town Hall was obviously a size that the town was willing to approve and was easily read by passing motorists.

It was agreed by all that the sign at the intersection should say "commercial/industrial land for lease" with a telephone number for the town department that would handle inquiries. The sign in the terminal would be done immediately and the proposal for the roadside sign would be presented to the town board.

Steve Tuma indicated that there had still been no substantive progress on the renewal of the Sound FBO lease and asked about the status of the large hangar leased by LI Aviation that is now vacant, although Dave the mechanic is still employed on a reportedly week to week basis. A discussion followed on whether the current tenant was required to maintain FBO services and whether any assignment or sublease to a new tenant would require a new tenant to provide FBO services and a review of those lease provisions was recommended.

Arthur Malman noted that, independent of this potential issue, the committee had been discussing updates to the Town's minimum standards for aeronautical users of the airport. It appeared that a user like Blade, which says it is not an aircraft charter company but merely an aircraft booker—if it is correct, might not be in any category currently covered. James Brundige was asked to circulate an email to the Committee with the current standards and his recommendations for changes so that these issues can be resolved before the season.

With respect to the issue of hiring an independent consultant to review the differences between the views of the chief controller and Robinson Aviation about the safety of the Sierra route during busy times, Arthur Malman recommended again that the town hire an independent consultant to evaluate the two positions. Sylvia Overby still thought it would be unwise for the town to hire an independent consultant to review the statements of the Robinson.

A question was raised as to the cost of such a review and Arthur Malman said he would contact Ron Price, who had previously worked on airport issues to to get an idea of the cost. Len Bernard reported, that after his check with the comptroller's office an RFP did not appear to be required to engage a professional.

On the second phase of the pavement report, it was agreed that David Gruber who said he was generally satisfied with the Baker proposal should speak with Baker just to make sure everyone agreed on the parameters of the work proposed.

Arthur Malman reminded the committee that, after their review of the draft report on why pilots would not shut down their transponders merely to avoid being tracked on take offs and landings, Patricia Currie of Say No to KHTO and Teresa McCaskie of the Southold Town Helicopter Advisory Committee, had referred to a purported statement by a particular FAA official allegedly indicating that some pilots could be turning off transponders.

Arthur Malman reminded the meeting that he had asked Jim Brundige to contact the FAA to confirm this statement before the report was finalized. Jim Brundige confirmed that, after following up directly with the office of Stephen Ferrara, the FAA official who reportedly had made the statement, Ferrara's office confirmed that this was not their position and that, while he might have said that it is possible that a pilot could turn off a transponder, no one in Ferrara's office believes pilots are doing so -- Arthur Malman asked James Brundige to include this concern and the FAA's response in an appendix to his final transponder memo.

Jim Brundige submitted his monthly report (copy attached as Exhibit A), indicating that work on the perimeter fence is already underway and change orders for the Marder's design for the approaches is being presented to the town board for final approval.

Gene Oshrin voiced his frustration at the town board for delaying and ignoring important airport capital projects, such as the completion of Taxiway A extension before portions of 4-22 and 16-34 collapse from their misuse as taxiways for heavy jets for which they were never designed, which was supported unanimously by both anti-noise and pro aviation members of the AMAC. He felt that that the Town was intent on doing nothing at the airport except critical safety issues, even though ample funds were available and was using the AMAC to merely deflect criticism for neglect.

Gene Oshrin pointed out that the AMAC had been set up by Larry Cantwell to make sure anti-noise interests would be considered on airport matters. He questioned in frustration whether, despite the inclusion of various constituencies on the AMAC, the board was listening to all town constituencies or merely a select few who wanted the airport closed while neglecting necessary repairs and improvements even when they would not increase operations. Gene Oshrin felt that a few residents were piling on noise complaints and that it appeared that Harris Miller had dismissed 35,000 of ANR's complaints as unverifiable. By contrast Gene Oshrin noted that even David Gruber, whom he had previously seen as antagonistic to the airport, while interested in reducing airport noise, was supportive of keeping the airport in good operational condition.

David Gruber pointed out that he felt that the AMAC was tasked with recommending the best ways to maintain and operate the airport, but the Town Board had the ultimate political power to decide which, if any, of those recommendations to accept. In that vein, he asked that the AMAC consider the whole question of use and design of the pavements around the terminal to come up with a

better understanding for long range planning so that individual project proposals could be better evaluated in that context.

James Brundige said that he and Steve Tuma had the experience needed for that task and had come up with a proposal for a plan on handling aircraft more effectively. David Gruber explained that it was entirely possible that their plan would be the best plan, but that the AMAC should engage a professional familiar with the airport to assist it in evaluating alternatives. He stressed that he was not suggesting detailed plans from Baker or another engineer at this time, but rather, as a first step, consideration of the current needs and then going on to refine that base line, assuming helicopter and jet traffic are effectively reduced and/or continue to grow at present rates. Since there was a concern about the cost of such consultation on planning Arthur Malman said he would also seek from Ron Price a ball park estimate for such a preliminary planning assignment.

The meeting adjourned at 11 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Arthur Malman

**AMAC Meeting**  
**Airport Director's Update**  
**April 5, 2019**

**Pavement Repair and Maintenance (Financial) Analysis**

- Work Authorization proposal #22 submitted to AMAC for review.
- Next step: Submit to the Town Board for approval. Sylvia and Jeff have this for consideration.

**Taxiway D and 422-3 Repaving**

- Baker is working on a proposal for TB approval.

**Perimeter Fence**

- Phase I of fence installation underway.
- Baker has analyzed the Marder design and has determined it will not penetrate the Part 77 surface and (most likely) will not have an adverse effect on Daniels Hole Rd. and Industrial Rd.
- Baker has submitted Extra Work Order #1 for Change Order Preparation and Construction Administration for Installation of Perimeter Fence. Requires TB Resolution. Sylvia and Jeff have this for consideration.

**Crack Sealing—Runway and Taxiway Striping**

- TB Resolution passed to accept Baker proposal to engineer and oversee construction for Runway and Taxiway Crack Sealing and Marking for \$37,750. Estimated cost of project: \$293,100.
- Bids closed March 29<sup>th</sup>. Low Bid: Axtell, Inc. from Jermyn, Pennsylvania--\$228,950. Baker knows the company and has certified them as qualified.
- Len Bernard and AMAC both agree that the project be funded from surplus. Town Board Resolution required to accept the bid and authorize airport surplus funds be moved to Airport Sub-Contract budget line, SX5610-54500 to fund the project. Sylvia and Jeff have this for consideration.

### **Pending Capital Projects**

- Ramp Lighting—McLean has provided an estimate of \$175,000 for the project including engineering. Sylvia advised that, before TB consideration, the project has to be reviewed by the Planning Department and the Town Safety Officer, Ed Michels. Ed Michels has reviewed the project and agrees that it is necessary. Marguerite Wolffsohn reviewed the project and advised the McLean would know the requirements of the Town when they design it. Sylvia and Jeff have this for consideration.
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### **Aircraft Tracking Memo**

- Patricia Currie's statement that FAA examiner Stephen Ferrara asserted that pilots can turn off their transponders. *"Based on my own conversations with FAA (Stephen Ferrara a year or so ago when my house was dangerously buzzed by a small Robinson, and with earlier reps), all admitted transponders can be turned off."*
- I called the NY Flight Safety District Office in Farmingdale where Stephen Ferrara is assigned as an FAA inspector. I left a message explaining the reason for my call and followed up with an email, a copy of which is available for review.
- Someone from the New York FSDO called regarding my email to Stephen. I did not get his name. He said, that while Stephen might have said that it is possible that pilots can turn off their transponders, no one in his office believes they do. I asked that Stephen or someone in his office reply to my email in writing, but that reply has not been forthcoming.