

PUBLIC WORKSHOP

August 21, 2001

The City of Mesa held a Public Workshop regarding the Proposed New Aircraft Flight Patterns for Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport at Mesa Centennial Center, Superstition Ballroom, 263 N. Center Street, Mesa, Arizona on August 21, 2001 at 7:30 p.m.

1. Welcome.

Mayor Hawker welcomed everyone to the public workshop and expressed appreciation for their interest and participation relative to this important issue affecting Mesa and the entire East Valley.

Mayor Hawker also acknowledged the presence of Councilmember Claudia Waters and Councilmember Mike Whalen.

2. Introductions and purpose of the meeting.

Mayor Hawker provided the audience with a brief synopsis relative to the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Northwest 2000 Plan. He explained that the Plan is the first phase of an evaluation process being conducted by the agency for the aircraft approach and departure patterns for Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport. Mayor Hawker noted that the Plan only addresses aircraft approaches/departures to the north of Sky Harbor, and added that in the future, the FAA will focus its efforts on aircraft approaching and departing Sky Harbor from the south.

Mayor Hawker advised that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to provide City representatives with an opportunity to present options regarding the FAA's proposed Alternative 3 and also to respond to questions posed by residents and businesses relative to changes to flight paths over the East Valley.

Mayor Hawker spoke in appreciation of the FAA's cooperation during this ongoing process. He also thanked the City of Scottsdale for providing aerial maps that depict the various Alternatives' flight tracks and east-flow departure routes.

3. Summary of FAA's Northwest 2000 Plan for altering flight patterns.

Jim Harris, a representative of Coffman and Associates, reported that the Northwest 2000 Plan is part of a nationwide effort in which the Congress requested that the FAA update the aircraft

flight management system. He explained that the primary goals of the Plan include: improving aircraft safety; reducing aircraft delays, and increasing aviation efficiency. Mr. Harris stated that the Northwest 2000 Plan was developed in response to the Congressional mandate to address such concerns in the Phoenix metropolitan area.

Mr. Harris stated the fact that the FAA drafted an Initial Environmental Assessment (EA) for public review prior to the implementation of Alternative 2; the fact that as a result of community and air traffic concerns, on June 25, 2001, the FAA released a Supplemental Draft EA; the fact that Alternative 3, which was derived from the Supplemental Draft, was an unacceptable option to the City of Mesa; the fact that there were no FAA-sponsored public hearings scheduled regarding Alternative 3; the fact that various East Valley communities sent a joint letter to the FAA requesting additional time for public comment and to develop a community alternative; the fact that the FAA granted a 45-day extension, and the fact that Senator John McCain supported the efforts of the East Valley leaders to reach an equitable solution regarding this matter.

Mr. Harris displayed graphics depicting the Albuquerque Air Route Traffic Control Center; Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 Proposed East-Flow Operations and Proposed West-Flow Operations and Proposed Arrival/Departure Flight Tracks, and the Community Alternative East-Flow Departure Route Draft.

Mr. Harris informed the audience that earlier this year, the FAA developed a Northwest 2000 recommendation (Alternative 2) for revised approach and departure routes for Sky Harbor. He indicated that as a result of citizen comment at public meetings held in Scottsdale and Fountain Hills and also from other reviewing agencies, the FAA developed Alternative 3 and is currently in the process of seeking comment regarding such an option.

Mr. Harris explained that as part of Alternative 3, the FAA is proposing to combine two flight paths (the Chili/Silow Departure and the St. Johns Departure) into a single path that would follow the current St. Johns route. He said that the Chili/Silow routes would then split off from the St. Johns, headed north, generally between Gilbert Road and Power Road. Mr. Harris noted that this option would effectively double the number of aircraft overflights over Mesa and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community; the St. Johns Departure would go over or near the greatest combined number of Mesa and Tribal residential areas of the two routes and at a lower altitude, and the use of a single departure path would contribute to aircraft delay for aircraft departing Sky Harbor to the northeast.

4. The proposed community alternative.

Mr. Harris reported that the Community Alternative would relocate Alternative 3's proposed combined departure route to a more central location. He advised that such a route would more closely follow the Salt River bed and the Beeline Highway; the route would be farthest from the residential areas on the north and south sides of the Salt River in both Mesa and the Indian Community, and that all of the communities affected by the aircraft overflight under the Community Alternative (Mesa, Scottsdale, Fountain Hills and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community) support such a proposal.

Mr. Harris discussed the disadvantages of the Community Alternative including: aircraft would fly further northeast and take more time and space to complete their departures; aircraft on the

modified Chili/Silow departures may come closer to aircraft approaching Sky Harbor from the northeast than the FAA would prefer, and a change in an aircraft arrival route may be needed to allow the use of the unrestricted climb and flight idle descent procedures, and the use of a single departure path would contribute to aircraft delay for aircraft departing Sky Harbor to the northeast.

Mr. Harris emphasized the fact that the Community Alternative is not in a completed form and that additional refinement to the option will be necessary.

5. Why and how to express your opinions.

Mayor Hawker encouraged the audience to submit their comments and suggestions regarding the proposed plan on comment cards which will be submitted to the FAA. He also invited those citizens who have questions of City representatives to come forward and state their concerns.

6. Question and Answer Period.

In response to concerns expressed by a citizen regarding the consolidation of the Chili/Silow Departure Path with the St. Johns Departure Path, Mayor Hawker clarified that such a proposal was unacceptable due to the fact it would increase the number of flights over the City's northern boundary from 97 to 223 per day. He explained that in the best interest of Mesa, Alternative 2 would be a more acceptable choice, but noted that such a proposal would send flights directly over the Indian Community at a very low altitude. Mayor Hawker added that the Community Alternative would equitably distribute air traffic over Scottsdale, Mesa, Fountain Hills and the Indian Community.

In response to a question from C.K. Sato, 1240 East Lehi Road, relative to the ability to relocate the 4DME GATE a half a mile to the north, Mayor Hawker explained that the GATE occurred as a result of a 1994 lawsuit between Tempe and Phoenix. He stated that as a result of such litigation, the GATE's location cannot be altered by Phoenix or Tempe for a period of 50 years.

In response to an additional question by Mr. Sato regarding the potential for the Community Alternative to negatively impact flight arrivals at Sky Harbor, Mr. Harris commented that the FAA has a complex system of airspace in the Valley and that moving some of the departure routes would adversely affect aircraft arrival routes. He added that the FAA is currently engaged in ongoing discussions relative to this matter.

In response to a question from a Mesa resident with regard to the Dry Heat Departure Route, Mayor Hawker clarified that such route is not proposed for change at this time and it is not the focus of the Northwest 2000 Plan. He stated the opinion, however, that it would be appropriate for the FAA to modify the route for aircraft that fly at a higher altitude.

Discussion ensued relative to the fact that for performance capabilities, aircraft depart into and land into the wind; the fact that Sky Harbor's runways change in direction in flow due to wind changes in the morning and the afternoon; the fact that it is the intention of the FAA to equalize the flow as much as possible to reach a 50/50 east/west split; the fact that on an annual basis, the percentage of west-flow departures is approximately 50%; the fact that in the fall and spring, there are more east-flow departures, and in the summer, more west-flow departures.

In response to a question from John Meisterheim, 9438 East Nora Street, Mayor Hawker advised that the distance between the Point "Vanzz" Alternative 3 (Fly By) and the Community Alternative is three miles.

In response to an additional question posed by Mr. Meisterheim, Mr. Harris noted that although there is no similar 4DME Gate for west-flow departures, aircraft are required to make a departure procedure turn on the south runways and initiate a slight left turn to fly over the riverbed to the west.

In response to a question from a citizen, Mayor Hawker stated that it is the goal of the leaders of the East Valley communities (Mesa, Scottsdale, Fountain Hills and the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community) that a joint proposal be submitted to the FAA and that the FAA provide input and suggestions regarding the feasibility of the Community Alternative prior to its final submission.

Project Manager for Williams Gateway Regional Economic Activity Area Wayne Balmer outlined a tentative schedule of upcoming meetings/deadlines with the East Valley communities' leaders and the FAA regarding the Community Alternative.

Citizens voiced concerns regarding the following issues:

- Mesa residents who live under the flight path of the Dry Heat Departure Route are negatively impacted by excessive aircraft noise which could potentially lower property values within the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Mesa residents near the Red Mountain Freeway will be required to contend with excessive noise upon completion of the Freeway and will also be subject to increased overhead noise from overflights.
- With the use of a single departure path, the Community Alternative will cause aircraft delays for aircraft departing Sky Harbor to the northeast.
- The ultimate recommendation of the FAA will affect the residents of multiple communities and that such a proposal should be given at least the same consideration as the current Cardinals Football Stadium controversy.

Mayor Hawker thanked everyone for their attendance and reiterated the importance of filling out comments cards. He added that the next public workshop will be held on Wednesday, August 22, 2001, 7:30 p.m. at the Red Mountain Multigenerational Center, 7550 East Adobe.

7. Adjournment.

Without objection the public workshop adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

KENO HAWKER, MAYOR

ATTEST:

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

I hereby certify that the foregoing minutes are a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Public Workshop regarding Proposed New Aircraft Flight Patterns for Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport held on the 21st day of August 2001.

BARBARA JONES, CITY CLERK

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