

**VAN NUYS AIRPORT CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL**  
**Tuesday, November 1, 2011**  
**MINUTES**

A meeting of the Van Nuys Airport Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Ken Miller. Members present: Don Schultz, Ken Miller, Elliot Sanders, David Rankell, Harold Sullivan, Wayne Williams, Gerald Silver, Roger Oeland, Ron Merkin, Laurence Rabe, Rick Flam, Bob Frazier, Roger Ortiz

Members Absent: Harold Lee, David Bernardoni, Wendy Saunders

The Council vacancies as of August 2, 2011 are as follows: one appointment from the Board of Airport Commissioners and one appointment from Councilmember Dennis Zine.

The minutes from the October 4, 2011 meeting were unanimously approved.

**1.) STAFF REPORTS**

Mr. Romo reminded the Council of the December 5<sup>th</sup> CAC/LAX Advisory Committee Holiday Party at the 94<sup>th</sup> Aero Squadron. He asked Council members to contact Ms. Ghoukassian if they do not receive an invitation or have any questions.

**A. Capital Improvement Update for VNY Golf – Discussion/Action**

The new operators of the Van Nuys Golf Course, Mr. Ed Sause, President of Southern California Golf LLC and Craig McDonald, Regional Director made a Powerpoint presentation (attached) discussing the current status of the Van Nuys Golf Course improvements.

Mr. Sause stated they continue to show the restaurant to individuals but the major issue is the labor costs. He stated hopefully when the bathrooms are renovated and the roof is on and all the repairs are done inside the facility they can find an interested operator.

Mr. Silver asked what labor cost impediments that are being imposed on them by LAWA that affects their ability to find an operator for the restaurant.

Mr. McDonald stated since the Golf Course sits on LAWA property they are held to the Super Living Wage. He stated it does not work out for operators to pay this wage to servers.

Mr. Silver stated then because of this Super Living Wage they are unable to find an operator.

Mr. Romo stated the Living Wage is a City of Los Angeles ordinance and the Super Living Wage applies to LAWA but is also mandated by the City of Los Angeles.

Mr. Miller asked if all the restaurants at LAX are paying these wages.

Mr. Romo stated every concession at LAX pays the Super Living Wage and there are very few exceptions within the LAWA system.

Mr. Miller asked if they were intending for the restaurant to be full service.

Mr. Sause stated both kinds of operators have come through to look at the restaurant.

Mr. Miller stated a window service would have less labor impact rather than a full service restaurant and asked if this is the case.

Mr. Sause stated no.

Mr. Rankell asked how many square feet the restaurant is.

Mr. McDonald stated approximately 7000 square feet.

Mr. Rankell asked what else this space could be used for.

Mr. Sause stated they thought of a limited food, grab and go use, but the space is not good for customer flow.

Mr. Miller stated Southern California Golf is making great headway with their improvements. He asked what the impact would be if the restaurant space remained vacant for a long period of time.

Mr. McDonald stated it would be a negative impact and they continue to look for different options.

Mr. Merkin asked if the site is approved for catering.

Mr. McDonald stated they have thought of that but the kitchen is in need of updating.

Mr. Sullivan stated the fence on Vanowen at the Van Nuys Golf Course is in need of repair.

Mr. McDonald stated the chain link fence is going to be repaired.

Mr. Williams asked if most of the customers for the restaurant would come from the Van Nuys Golf Course or the outside community.

Mr. McDonald stated something like Billingsleys, a full service restaurant, would draw inside and outside customers. They are looking at all kinds of options for food.

Mr. Williams asked if they have gone to the City of Los Angeles and explained the situation in regards to the Super Living Wage and the issue they are having.

Mr. Sause stated no they have not but they want to complete all the repairs and improvements before going back to the City.

Mr. Williams asked if they have done a survey of golfers on what they want.

Mr. McDonald stated he knows they want a restaurant like Billingsleys.

Mr. Oeland stated he would take customers to Billingsleys at least once a week and everybody liked it.

Mr. Silver asked if the Proud Bird at LAX is subject to the Living Wage. He also asked about the 94<sup>th</sup> Aero Squadron.

Mr. Romo stated the 94<sup>th</sup> is not on airport property. He also stated the Proud Bird is subject to the Living Wage unless it has an old holdover lease prior to the Living Wage. He stated in the 11 years that the living wage has been in effect, there has never been an exception to any entity, but that does not mean it could not happen.

Mr. Miller asked if there has ever been compensation in lease rates to offset the Living Wage.

Mr. Romo stated probably not.

Mr. Sause stated they have outreached to kids with Golf Clinics and hopefully the repairs will get more people from the community to the Golf Course.

Mr. Merkin stated they acknowledge the success they have achieved since taking over the Van Nuys Golf Course.

### **B. VNY Part 150 NEM (Noise Exposure Map) Update Presentation (Follow-up) – Discussion/Action**

Mr. Tatro stated he has returned to update the Council on Mr. Silver's comment regarding the future projections of propeller and helicopter operations.

Mr. Tatro stated the following:

“With the forecast that you do under a Part 150, the FAA really has set very specific guidelines that defined how the forecast development is done. HMMH was hired and Ted Baldwin has been here talking about the Part 161, they did the noisier aircraft phase out regulation and EIR for that. He's the one working on the Part 150 as well. One of the things they have to do in forecasting is look at specific trends nationally and locally. We looked at the local tower counts and the operations log when the tower is closed. That all got submitted and a forecast was developed and NEM updated. And that has to be pre-submitted to the FAA. What the FAA is looking for is, are your projections similar to the terminal area forecast that they do for all the tower operator facilities across the country. And if you're within 10%, they tend to approve things. When we projected the 2011 base year and the 2016 base year against the new terminal area forecast that came out in late 2010 we were actually within 3-3 ½ % for the future year projection. The forecast has been approved by the FAA before this document was put together in draft form before they ever really did any of the noise modeling. HMMH were really looking into helicopter, propeller, and jet operations at this airport, which is not typical for a Part 150 study but more typical of a Part 161 study. They used 18 helicopter types and 16 propeller types, over 700 helicopter and propeller flight tracks, which is above and beyond what they had to do.”

Mr. Miller stated this is a study/model, but if it was proposed there would be a reduction, why does the current model not show one and when will we see a reduction.

Mr. Tatro stated part of it is there is a dramatic increase in jet operations and a reduction in propeller operations. The mix of aircraft is changing and jets really drive the contour. Phasing out Stage 2 is a tiny minority, while the propeller aircraft trend downward.

Mr. Miller stated this is just a model and it may change with the Prop Park opening soon and quieter jets coming in.

Mr. Silver stated Mr. Tatro is one of the best at this and he appreciates all he has done. He also stated that it's not fair to say the model is inaccurate, if it's accurate enough to satisfy the Feds. He would like to see some shrinkage in the physical perimeter of that contour over the next five years or tell the public the airports going to get noisier.

Mr. Oeland stated the efficiency of aircraft is getting better and quieter so that is an offset that cannot be projected.

Mr. Miller thanked Mr. Tatro for the update.

### **C. Customs at VNY – Discussion/Action**

Mr. Romo stated Signature Aviation is the FBO that will provide space for a Custom's Facility at VNY. However, nothing has been finalized and things could change. There is an agreement in principle, but funding needs to be approved, a set of user fees need to be established, and a commitment from Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is required. Mr. Romo stated he should have more of an update towards the end of the year and he will relay that to the Council.

Mr. Rankell asked if all the tenants would be able to use the facility.

Mr. Romo stated yes, as long as they share in the cost because for VNY it will be revenue neutral. He stated users will have to see how much it is to build the facility and recapture this cost over some period of time. CBP is going to charge them so much per hour with a minimum of so many hours per job. At the end of this a fee will be coming up that has to be paid. This will not be a profit center for Signature or anyone else.

Mr. Miller stated the facility does a couple of things, all the operators will benefit because tenants will have direct flights out of VNY. Signature will also benefit with transients that are coming and will likely fuel at their ramp if they are flying into VNY.

Mr. Silver asked if there will be any environmental requirements for the facility.

Mr. Miller stated he does not know what type of facility they are building.

Mr. Rankell stated we should not see a dramatic increase in operations.

Mr. Miller stated he does not think they will see a dramatic increase.

Mr. Romo stated the facility will be built in an existing footprint and therefore no new structure will be built.

Ms. Rabe stated there is a possibility there will be an increase in operations when this facility is up and running with foreign aircraft flying through with noisier jets.

Mr. Miller stated noisier jets will not be flying internationally to the USA.

Mr. Sanders asked when the last time there was CBP facility at VNY was.

Mr. Romo stated 10 years ago and unlike now, there was not requirement of a facility back then.

## **2.) REPORT FROM CHAIR**

Mr. Miller stated he is looking at the lack of CAC member attendance at meetings and asked Ms. Ghoukassian to create an attendance log for January – November 2011.

Mr. Miller stated he has not seen any construction progress with VNY leaseholders that were supposed to make improvements per their lease. He asked if there is any way to enforce this.

Mr. Romo stated he is not privy to lease discussions but he is briefed and he gets copies of discussions between Mr. Steve Martin and Commercial Development Group (CDG) and lessees/tenants that have made commitments through a competitive award of a lease of paying this rent and are supposed to put in so much money in capital improvements. In some cases they have made exceptions but Mr. Romo believes the airport's intent is to hold them to that financial commitment but the timing of the commitment comes in.

Mr. Miller stated the leases the airport offers are short compared to other real estate development leases, usually 30 years. The lessee has to amortize the money they will spend on a leasehold over the 30 years. After 30 years, the property goes back to the airport. Some tenants will say that it doesn't make sense to spend millions of dollars to own something for five years. There has got to be a line that these commitments were made and now there are deviations that need to be dealt with.

Mr. Rankell asked of the leases are public documents.

Mr. Romo stated yes they are.

Mr. Rankell asked if a sub-committee should be created to review the leases.

Mr. Miller stated before they do that he asked if Mr. Romo could provide him with a thumbnail sketch of leases that have deferments and then they could see if there is an issue.

Mr. Flam stated the Chair and Mr. Romo should work with Mr. Martin for an update.

Mr. Miller stated he will call Mr. Romo to discuss.

Mr. Romo stated he will reach out to Mr. Martin regarding this issue.

### **3.) BOAC AGENDA ITEMS CONCERNING VNY**

No items were discussed.

### **4.) PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. George Abrahams, a Beachwood Canyon resident, stated his group is seeking support from elected officials, Hollywood Bowl, and the LA Zoo. They have had support from Congressman Adam Schiff's Office to appeal the FAA's denial to their petition.

Ms. Fran Reichenbach, President of the Beachwood Canyon Neighborhood Association, handed out copies of a brochure (attached) regarding a helicopter service that allows passengers, with only 15-minutes of training, to fly the helicopter with the pilot. She stated this is very unsafe.

Ms. Rabe asked if they have gone to the FAA with this brochure.

Ms. Reichenbach stated no they have not.

Mr. Miller stated what this brochure constitutes is a flight lesson with a certified flight instructor. He advised they not lose focus of their cause.

Ms. Reichenbach stated a helicopter pilot advised them that their cause is ruining their business. She feels they are headed for a fight on this issue.

Mr. Merkin stated he received a newsletter from Assemblymember Mike Feuer regarding the Beachwood Canyon's FAA proposal. Mr. Merkin stated the Assemblymember is a good ally to have.

Ms. Reichenbach stated they have heard otherwise from the Assemblymember's representative and will be meeting with the Assemblymember to discuss their issue.

Mr. Williams stated he can help them with the meeting.

Mr. Abrahams stated the motion made by the CAC helped their cause.

Mr. Silver stated 12-13 years ago when Assemblymember Feuer was a Councilman he supported control of helicopter flights in the Sherman Oaks area but ran up against the FAA.

Mr. Peter Harts, President of the Toluca Lake Homeowner's Association, stated the noise in his area is usually caused by Universal Studios, but recently they have been getting helicopter noise complaints. He asked what the flight rules are for helicopters.

Mr. Williams stated he is the head of the helicopter noise committee and the best thing for them to do is get involved with the Hollywood Hills group.

Mr. Harts stated he will report back to his group on their next step.

Mr. Glenn Baily, member of the public, stated the Valley Alliance Neighborhood Council is a great way to get to all the Valley Neighborhood Councils for outreach of the CAC. He stated the group meets monthly and it's very easy to get on the agenda.

## **5.) NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Suggestions on how to increase awareness of the CAC – Discussion/Action**

Mr. Merkin stated they need to reach out to the Homeowner's Associations and the Neighborhood Councils to raise awareness of the CAC.

Mr. Miller stated he is concerned about CAC participation and the vast number of pilots who don't know about the CAC or what they do.

Mr. Sanders suggested reaching out to the VNAA President to attend the CAC meetings.

Mr. Miller asked Ms. Sanchez if she communicates with tenants.

Ms. Sanchez stated the VNAA usually reaches out to tenants directly but she has ways to forward information to tenants.

Mr. Romo stated when he attends the VNAA meeting every month he reminds them of the CAC meeting. The meetings are the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month, the VNAA meeting is at 4pm and the CAC is at 7pm.

Mr. Miller stated he used to attend the VNAA meeting but felt they were not accomplishing much.

Mr. Frazier stated the VNAA provides attendees with food but the CAC does not and maybe they should hold an event with food to get more people to attend.

Mr. Miller stated he is looking for ways to get people (area residents, business owners, and pilots) to attend the CAC meetings.

Mr. Williams stated the most successful community groups are the ones who provide food.

Mr. Miller stated maybe we can hold an annual CAC BBQ.

Mr. Williams stated when the Prop Park is built they can hold their meetings in their conference room and charge for lunch from the restaurant at the Prop Park.

Mr. Oeland asked if there has been any progress with the clean-up around the airport.

Mr. Merkin stated no there has not been any progress.

Mr. Williams stated the Sherman Way tunnel needs cleaning again.

## **B. Los Angeles City Council support of Santa Monica Airport Closure – Discussion/Action**

Mr. Miller stated he added this item to the agenda due to an online article (attached) regarding this issue.

Mr. Sanders stated he has been getting inquiries from Santa Monica Airport (SMO) propeller pilots to relocate to VNY due to this article. He stated this will increase operations, fuel sales, and noise at VNY if SMO is closed. He stated he wanted to make a motion.

Mr. Flam asked if Mr. Bickhart of the Mayor's Office had an opinion on this.

Mr. Bickhart stated he sat in on a meeting discussing this very issue. The meeting included Councilmember Bill Rosendahl. The issue is the City of Santa Monica that runs SMO has planes taking off, veering left over Venice, and then they head over the ocean. This affects Councilmember Rosendahl's constituents and that is why he is involved.

Mr. Miller stated they take this route due to the restricted airspace over LAX.

Mr. Bickhart stated back in the 1980's the City of Santa Monica did try to close the airport and made a 30 year deal that is now coming to an end. Councilmember Rosendahl is trying to get the City of Los Angeles to support the closure.

Mr. Miller stated he understands that SMO will be closing in 2015.

Mr. Bickhart stated the first thing that Councilmember Rosendahl wants to focus on is the flight schools; he believes they are the cause of a lot of the issues.

Mr. Silver stated the possible closure of SMO has both positive and negative effects on VNY. He invited Ms. Linda Levitan to get involved and to brief Councilman Tony Cardenas on this issue so that the CAC has a voice.

Mr. Rankell asked if there are any Stage 2 aircraft at SMO.

Mr. Williams stated no.

Mr. Rankell asked what the helicopter and jet noise is like at SMO.

Mr. Williams stated it is relatively noisy.

Mr. Merkin asked if they want to make a motion that addresses issues of using City funds to support the closure of SMO.

Mr. Ortiz asked if there should be a motion made.

Mr. Sanders introduced a motion as follows:

**“The Citizen’s Advisory Council opposes any spending of Los Angeles City funds for use in supporting the Santa Monica City closure of the Santa Monica Airport. It further opposes the closure of Santa Monica Airport.”**

**The motion passed unanimously with one abstention.**

Mr. Flam stated he feels they need more information regarding this issue and moved to table the motion until the January 2012 meeting.

The council voted on tabeling the motion, 11 opposed and 1 was in favor.

Mr. Silver stated he does not think they should delay this.

Mr. Schultz agreed with Mr. Silver.

Mr. Bickhart stated the motion should go to the Trade Commerce Tourism Committee.

## **6.) OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. Committee Reports – Discussion/Action**

#### **1. Status of Prop Park Development – Discussion/Action**

Mr. Romo stated there was a walk-thru of the Prop Park with Airport Operations, CDG staff, and Mr. Steve Argubright. They are working on plans to reposition some hangars. The work will occur in three phases over a 36 month period.

Mr. Sanders stated permits have been granted for grating and moving hangars.

### **7.) EMERGENCY ITEMS SINCE POSTING OF AGENDA – Discussion/Action**

No items were discussed.

**8.) ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS' COMMENTS – NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. Oeland stated on Roscoe he has had three flat tires and there is also trash and junk from cars left behind. He asked what can be done about this.

Mr. Romo stated he needs to call 311 and report it to Street Services.

Mr. Sullivan stated the trash on Roscoe is a real problem.

Mr. Williams stated he will not be able to attend the December Holiday Dinner.

**9) ADJOURNMENT:**

9:30 p.m.