

Town of Newington, NH
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Tuesday March 15th, 2022

Present: Chair Ted Connors, Selectman, Selectman Bob Blonigen, Selectman Brandon Arsenault, PDA Executive Director, Paul Brean, Newington PDA Representative Margaret Lamson, Newington/Greenland PDA Representative Susan Parker, many Newington residents and Eleanor Boy, Recorder.

T. Connors called the meeting to order at 1:07pm.

T. Connors welcomed everyone to the meeting. This meeting is to answer any questions that Newington residents have in reference to the potential leasing of land in two locations on the PDA property. One location, the North 40 Apron, is in Newington. The other location, referred to as Hanger 227, is in Portsmouth.

Paul Brean read the following memo, from him to the Pease Development Authority Board of Directors, updating the board about the potential air cargo development:

At the January 20, 2022, meeting of the PDA Board of Directors, the Board authorized the entry into Option Agreements regarding the leasing of land for two potential air cargo developments. As referenced then, option agreements were a preliminary step in these possible projects. While the developers noted development scenarios for each location in requesting the options, no specific development proposals have been presented to the Board for approval at this time.

Following the January 20th meeting, the parties finalized the Option Agreements, effective February 1, 2022. Additionally, the developers' engineers, Tighe & Bond, commenced a traffic study. VHB will review the traffic study when completed.

In addition to the traffic study, the developers have informed me that they are currently working with their consultants and engineers on survey, noise and environmental aspects of these projects.

While the developers are working on plans to present to the Board during public meetings for one or both locations, and hope such presentations may be this spring, they do not have a specific timetable for submittal at this time.

I will continue to keep the Board updated as things progress.

P. Brean stated that this development will not be a large cargo hub. The PDA will not support that type of proposal. There will be plenty of public meetings with public input as this process continues. There is an FAA requirement that these lots must be developed with some varying degree of aviation use.

The following is a summary of questions asked by residents and answered by Paul Brean:

Q: Could these lots be leased to a “Lockheed Martin” type of company that retro fits planes etc.?

A: We don’ know yet. Any use would go before the PDA for approval. The PDA won’t act quickly and would clearly identify the intent before any decision is made. M. Lamson said that this will not be a “logan north”, the north apron is her baby.

Q: What percentage of the current air traffic at Pease is from 11pm-7am?

A: 2%

Q: Would potential cargo planes be flying at night?

A: No. There is no infrastructure to support an overnight cargo company, mostly due to the fact that the location is 3/4 surrounded by water. Right now, there are 10 cargo operations a month.

Q: Will you only permit Stage 4 aircraft?

A: Yes.

Q: Will there be any restrictions on the aircraft?

A: The FAA won’t let us restrict. The PDA will address any potential noise issues.

Q: Are Fed Ex, UPS or Amazon part of this agreement?

A: There are 35 different parties that are currently on the list of potential companies. There is not a lease currently, there is only an option agreement.

Q: Has the application been reviewed by the PDA Noise Compatibility Committee?

A: That committee deals with current noise issues, so they aren’t part of the process.

Q: Does the FAA have to approve the lease?

A: No

Q: Will the new hangers be 3 to 5 times bigger to accommodate bigger planes?

A: This is just an option agreement so that the potential company can do a geo survey, traffic study and site design work.

Q: Would the geo survey allow them to build a bigger hanger?

A: Yes

Q: How many planes could be at the Hanger 227 location?

A: There is a 200,000 square foot hanger there now that can accommodate 4 wide body planes.

Q: Is the lease assignable? It could be an open-ended risk.

A: I can't answer that now because there is no lease yet.

Q: Would there be modifications to the current flight paths?

A: Any new company would mirror the current flight paths for the KC46 planes.

Q: Will there be traffic studies for both air and car?

A: Yes

Q: Does the PDA have adequate infrastructure to handle this new development?

A: Yes they do because the PDA now has this activity happening and are already supporting it.

Q: Would the new developers be allowed to expand into the land fill?

A: No. We know that the land is contaminated. Part of the process will be to remediate the contaminates and build new modern, efficient buildings. Both locations will only use the existing concrete slabs.

Q: There is a lot of concern about noise at the airport. Currently plane maintenance is done on the tarmac in the middle of the night. Will you consider creating berms for noise reduction?

A: Creating berms is a good initiative. We are interested in that. When we meet with the National Guard, we will bring it up.

Q: More planes at night will mean more noise?

A: It is unlikely that this development will be flying at night.

Q: Berms aren't the best for noise reduction. It works well for the house right next to the berm, but the berm actually increases the noise for the houses further away. With other options be considered?

A: Yes.

Q: If the potential developer changes, then that would mean that everything could change going forward, right?

A: Yes, our staff works with multiple development teams. They are currently working with ProCon and Kane for these 2 properties. Anything that is proposed will come before the PDA board.

Q: If there are breakdowns on this project is there a possibility of changing developers?

A: This current option agreement expires in six months, but can be renewed every six months for a total of 18 months. It could absolutely change. There is a benefit that this project has a local component and ties to the community. We will find the right fit for the Pease Airport.

T. Connors said that there would be other public meetings to keep residents informed and thanked everyone for coming.

The meeting adjourned at 1:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Eleanor Boy, Recorder