

PDK Watch Newsletter, August, 2000

Thanks, Commissioners

On July 26, 2000, the Board of Commissioners (BOC) voted unanimously to change the land use and zoning designations on the buyout property between Clairmont Road and PDK Airport. (Recall that the BOC passed a resolution April 13 to use this property as greenspace.) With the latest action they have given the property a Park Open Space (POS) land use designation and an R-200 zoning designation*.

Commissioners Gale Walldorff and Judy Yates spearheaded these changes to ensure the property is used as greenspace. Please send a note of thanks to Commissioners Elaine Boyer, Gale Walldorff, Jacquie Scott, Ken Davis, Bill Brown, and Judy Yates at 1300 Commerce Drive, Decatur GA 30030.

*Under the current Comprehensive Plan POS does not have any specified zoning categories assigned to it. The county attorney suggested the R-200 zoning (a residential zoning category) for POS.

FAA Wants Reimbursement for Greenspace

In a July 24, 2000, letter Scott Seritt, manager of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Airports District Office in Atlanta, said the county would not receive the \$3.5 million needed to complete the buyout of homes unless the county tells the FAA by August 15 how it plans to reimburse the FAA for the purchase of the property the BOC designated as greenspace. This is the property between Clairmont Road and PDK Airport purchased for noise abatement and still serving that purpose.

Mr. Seritt met with county officials during a BOC work session on August 1 to discuss this matter with the commissioners. During this meeting he said:

- a construction project currently underway on the airport will not be affected
- FAA expects reimbursement at the highest and best compatible use, which is commercial
- Congress is not interested in purchasing park land

Over the years the FAA has continually funded projects at PDK to expand and improve airport operations. These projects helped to create the uninhabitable areas that are now being bought out through a noise abatement program. These buyouts should have been done as part of the projects, not years later. Now the FAA wants to withhold funding and delay the buyouts even longer while allowing an FAA-funded construction project underway at the airport to continue.

Earlier letters from FAA officials in Washington, D. C., stated greenspace is an acceptable compatible use of property next to an airport. They also stated that as long as property purchased through a noise abatement program continues being used for noise abatement, the owner does not have to reimburse the FAA for the property. Further, the FAA has stated that any required reimbursement can be based on greenspace, contrary to Mr. Seritt's comments.

Commissioner Judy Yates pointed out that the local governing body sets land use, not Congress, and other county officials supported her position. The current land use is

Park Open Space and current zoning is R-200. There is no intention of commercial or industrial use.

Commissioner Gale Walldorff requested more time to resolve the issue. CEO Liane Levetan asked for an extension until November 15. Representatives for Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney and Senator Max Cleland supported the request for an extension. Mr. Seritt said he would respond within 48 hours.

Please write the commissioners thanking them for working to keep the property as greenspace and encourage them to stand firm. Also contact Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney at www.house.gov/mckinney, Senator Max Cleland at www.senate.gov/~cleland, and Governor Roy Barnes at www.ganet.org asking for their support.

Proposed Noise Abatement Policy by FAA in Review

Jim Duguay, PDK Airport's Noise Specialist, announced citizens have until August 28, 2000, to submit comments on the FAA's proposed Aviation Noise Abatement Policy 2000. To read this policy document go to www.airportnet.org and click first on Proposed Aviation Noise Abatement Policy and then July 14, 2000 or go to www.pdkairport.org and click on Noise Program, then the link to FAA Proposes New National Noise Abatement Policy, and then July 14, 2000. Here is an excerpt from the proposed policy directly effecting homeowners:

“Residents and Prospective Residents in areas surrounding airports should seek to understand the noise problem and what steps can be taken to minimize its effect on people. Individual and community responses to aircraft noise differ substantially and, for some individuals, a reduced level of noise may not eliminate the annoyance or irritation. Prospective residents of areas impacted by airport noise thus should be aware of the effect of noise on their quality of life and act accordingly.”

Reminder: Call 770-936-5442 to report intrusive noise from PDK Airport.

PDK Watch Via E-mail

PDK Watch can be contacted by e-mail. The address: [<pdkwatch@yahoo.com>](mailto:pdkwatch@yahoo.com).

If you want to receive information by e-mail, please e-mail your address.

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