

PDK Watch Newsletter, January, 2006

(1) Open Government Hero Award

The First Amendment Foundation has named Mickey Feltus, plaintiff in the successful Georgia Open Records Lawsuit against PDK Airport, DeKalb County, CEO Jones and Airport Director Lee Rimmel, its Citizen Hero of the Year for 2005! The Foundation will honor Mickey at its annual Weltner Freedom of Information Banquet on January 28, 2006. United States Senator Johnny Isakson will also be honored with a Freedom of Information award on that occasion. For more details, see www.pdkwatch.org

(2) CEO Jones Learns that MANY Care About PDK Issues

On September 19, 2005 at a meeting called by and presided over by DeKalb CEO Vernon Jones, some 350 citizens packed the Maloof Auditorium to express their concerns about operations at PDK Airport and about PDK Master Plan policies. The enormous turn out and incisive concerns resonated with CEO Jones, who later publicly criticized all of the County Commissioners for not attending the meeting. For more details on the meeting and on the debate over the policies that are being considered to guide the future development of PDK Airport during the next several decades, see www.pdkwatch.org

(3) DeKalb Board of Commissioners approves PDK Master Plan Policies

On October 11, 2005, after a sometimes-contentious process lasting throughout much of 2005, the County Board of Commissioners approved a set of ten policies to guide the development of PDK Airport's twenty-year Master Plan. For a discussion of those policies and the text of the policies that was approved, see <http://www.pdkwatch.org/masterplan/112905-masterplan-adopted.asp> For the three earlier Master plan policy proposals--from (1) the Master Plan consultants, (2) the PDK Airport Advisory Board, and (3) Concerned Citizens--see www.pdkwatch.org under "Master Plan Concerns."

(4) Midway in Chicago; PDK in Atlanta--Could it Happen Here?

The recent crash at Midway Airport in Chicago raises concerns about whether a similar or worse accident could happen at PDK Airport because it allows oversized jet traffic over some of the most densely settled residential areas in DeKalb County. PDK is larger in gross area than New York's LaGuardia Airport. For details on the Midway accident, see www.pdkwatch.org

(5) Validity of PDK Environmental Assessment Challenged:

Information obtained as a result of the successful Open Records Lawsuit, raises grave questions about the validity of the data used in an Environmental Assessment of new departure paths for jets PDK submitted to the Federal Aviation Administration in late 2005.

--Larry Foster, for PDK Watch