

## **PDK Watch Newsletter, July, 1999**

### **Proposed Expansion of PDK Airport up for Vote**

On August 2 the Board of Commissioners will hear a request for rezoning property. The applicant wants to build an airplane hangar. Please see the enclosed sheet detailing the reasons this request should be denied, and then please take the time to do the following:

- Write to the commissioners at 1300 Commerce Drive, Decatur, GA, 30030, urging them to deny the rezoning request and preserve our quality of life.
- Urge your neighbors to join you in the protest against airport expansion.
- Attend the rezoning hearing on August 2 at 7:00 P.M. at the Maloof Auditorium to let the commissioners know you do not want expansion.

It is time to stop operational growth, protect the neighborhoods, and begin the clean up from the

damage caused by the airport. Let's see if our elected officials really mean it when they say the airport will not expand.

### **Will PDK Become Hartsfield North?**

The biggest fear we have about our County-owned and operated airport is that it will become Hartsfield North. We have seen movement in this direction over the years despite the public statements of elected officials, airport management, and airport users. The community wants to see action from elected officials that prevents a Hartsfield North.

Public statements made by our CEO not supported with public action will not protect our investment and quality of life. We demand an ordinance stating PDK will not become a regularly scheduled cargo or passenger airport, a strong and enforceable rule that planes weighing more than 66,000 pounds are not allowed into our airport, and no growth of the airport or its operations, especially into property purchased for noise abatement.

These three things are essential. If you do not want Hartsfield North, you must let our CEO know. If we do not act now, do not be surprised at what will continue to happen to us on an incremental basis.

**Elected officials are listening to us. Continue your letters and calls demanding action.**

Key messages: 1) no expansion of airport or its operations, 2) enforcement of the 66,000-pound weight limit policy, 3) an ordinance prohibiting regularly scheduled passenger and cargo service.

Write: CEO Liane Levetan, 1300 Commerce Drive, Decatur GA 30030.

## **Weight Limit**

In CEO Liane Levetan's memorandum to Airport Director Lee Rimmel on the weight limit of planes at PDK Airport, she says she "can find no rational basis to deny prior authorization for corporate and private aircraft which have been designed to comply with the federal aviation noise levels of stage II or greater, and which may exceed 66,000 pounds." There are several excellent reasons to deny airplanes weighing over 66,000 pounds from using our airport.

One, the weight limit is mandated in longstanding county policy and ordinance, which the CEO is charged to implement and enforce. The 66,000-pound weight limit policy is documented in an environmental assessment to the FAA, the FAA's review of this assessment, a decision by the 11th circuit court, the PDK Airport Master Plan, and a Part 150 Noise Compatibility Study.

Two, an FAA memorandum says, "In general, . . . the lower the maximum weight of an airplane, the lower the noise."

Three, a long ignored ordinance, now being used to rationalize heavier planes, clearly tosses these heavier planes into the same category as blimps, dirigibles, gliders, free balloons, and motorless aircraft when it says prior authorization is required for landing or taking off. Without a doubt, this ordinance intends for the heavier planes to be the exception not the rule.

Four, county policy requires an environmental study be conducted before any change is made. Allowing heavier planes breaches policy.

Five, changing the weight limit without the proper public notice and review is in violation of the rights of the community whose quality of life is most affected.

Six, allowing the larger planes makes it easier for regularly scheduled service to move into the airport. Result: Hartsfield North.

In a meeting with several residents from neighborhoods near the airport, CEO Levetan said she is reworking her administrative policy concerning the weight limit. PDK Watch awaits the opportunity to review the modifications, which should include a clear procedure on how prior authorization is given and how violators will be penalized.

## **Comprehensive Plan Amendments under Consideration**

The Board of Commissioners plan to vote on the amendments to the Comprehensive Plan in August. Let your commissioners know that of the several amendments concerning PDK Airport, the amendments that state the weight limit policy of 66,000 pounds and the use of buyout properties as greenspace are most important in maintaining our quality of life.

### **PDK Watch Needs Your Support**

PDK Watch is grateful to those of you who send in a check to help with the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter. To contribute to this fund, please make a check payable to Sven O. Lovegren and note on the check that it is for PDK Watch. Then please mail to: Sven O. Lovegren

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