

PDK Watch Newsletter, September, 1997

Task Force's Assignment is Too Limited

CEO Liane Levetan's formation of a county task force to expedite the buy out of 165 residential units is a step in the right direction. These homes are in an area the Part 150 Study identified as most severely impacted by noise from DeKalb-Peachtree Airport. While our CEO is to be commended for initiating this effort to help correct the slum conditions that are developing around the airport, PDK Watch is dismayed by the continuing disregard for the other people, also identified in the study, who will still live near the airport in noise impacted areas after the buy out.

This FAA-approved study says that soundproofing is needed to help approximately 1,900 single and multi-family residential units (more than 5000 people) withstand the onslaught of noise caused by the airport. Where is the battle cry for these residents' quality of life?

In the last year both DeKalb County and Chamblee governments have finally cited the slum conditions developing around the airport but misplace the blame on the FAA. This problem is a direct consequence of the county expanding the airport without doing the environmental impact study requested by the neighborhoods. It is about time the county took responsibility for PDK's negative impact on the area and direct the task force to expand their mission to include all effected residents.

Congressional Bills Need Support

Two bills now being considered in Congress would reauthorize funding for the Office of Noise Abatement and Control in the Environmental Protection Agency. This legislation would take the responsibility of monitoring the health effects of noise pollution out of the hands of the agency that promotes the air transport industry, the Federal Aviation Administration, and puts it into the hands of the agency (EPA) that is responsible for protecting the public's health and the environment.

Please write to Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney urging her to support House Resolution 536 and its companion Senate Bill 951. Her address is 124 Cannon Building, Washington, D.C., 20515.

Airport Environmental Advocates Form National Organization

On August 23, 1997, PDK Watch joined several other civic-minded environmental airport groups from all over the United States to establish a national organization named Citizens Aviation Watch. Its guiding principle advocates a sustainable, equitable and accountable aviation industry.

A plan of action to protect people from aviation industry abuses was developed. The plan is aimed at protecting the public from adverse environmental impacts that aviation and airport activities have on public health, air/water/ground/noise pollution and property issues affecting everyone. The organization's first priority is passage of US House Resolution 536 and US Senate Bill 951 which call for the reauthorization of funding to the US Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Noise Abatement and Control.

Task List Update

This is a report on activities underway or actions taken regarding the task list formally adopted at the June 5, 1997, PDK Watch meeting.

Keep the airport noncommercial. Several members of PDK Watch met with CEO Liane Levetan on July 30. It was agreed that something is needed to clearly state there is no intent to allow scheduled freight and/or passenger service at PDK. CEO Levetan indicated that she would get with the county attorney and staff to find a process to publicly confirm this intent. PDK Watch strongly endorses the ordinance that is already written as it is based on case law. There has never been any specific objection raised to this ordinance; however, it has been tabled since September 10, 1996.

Institute and implement an effective noise abatement policy. Airport officials have acknowledged that there is no written noise abatement policy. Since PDK Watch believes that it is important to follow a written procedure that effectively deals with noise, a committee is being formed to write this policy. The time commitment for this committee will be six meetings over a three-month period with possible additional time for writing. If interested, please call David Green (770 939-2672).

New Airport Director

Carl ("Lee") Rimmel took over as director of DeKalb-Peachtree Airport on August 4, 1997. He came from the Aspen/Pitkin County Airport in Aspen, Colorado, where he was the Assistant Director of Aviation. Mr. Rimmel is a West Point graduate and served 20 years in the Army and the Marines. PDK Watch hopes that Mr. Rimmel will meet with the community at one of our upcoming general meetings.

Airport Advisory Board

Plan to attend the next meeting of the advisory board on Wednesday, September 24. According to the Good Neighbor Policy, an agenda will be placed in each county library and on the county television bulletin board before the meeting.

Support PDK Watch

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