

Meeting Minutes

Airport Commission

Regular Meeting

April 10, 2024, | 6:30 p.m.
Chandler Airport Terminal
2380 S. Stinson Way, Chandler, AZ



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by CHAIRMAN HAWLEY at 6:30 p.m.

Roll Call

Commission Attendance

Vice Chairman Charles McCorkle
Commissioner Cecil Orozco
Commissioner Robert Ehlbeck
Commissioner Mark Mount
Commissioner Mark Riesterer

Staff Attendance

Ryan Reeves, Airport Manager
Scott Rinkenberger, Airport Ops Manager
Chris Andres, Airport Planning Administrator

Absent

Chairman Christopher Hawley

Others in Attendance

MR. DAMIAN NICHOLS introduced himself as the incoming Airport Commissioner.

MRS. MEGAN RINKENBERGER introduced herself.

MS ALISA PETERSON introduced herself, representing the City of Chandler General Planning division.

MR. JOEY GAMBIT and MR. ANDREW ANDERSON introduced themselves, representing the Echo Suites project owner and engineer.

Scheduled and Unscheduled Public Appearances

CHAIRMAN HAWLEY asked if there were any members of the public that would like to address the committee on any items not on the agenda.

None.

Consent Agenda

It was moved by COMMISSIONER MOUNT and seconded by COMMISSIONER EHLBECK to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of the February 14, 2024, MEETING.

Motion carried unanimously (5-0).

COMMISSIONER MOUNT requested the February minutes reflect correction of two grammatical errors regarding the recent business strategy meeting, including changing "SWAT" to "SWOT".

Action Agenda

MS. ALISA PETERSON introduced the Echo Suites development for the airport conflict evaluation.

MS. PETERSON reminded the Commission as to their role and responsibilities in the process. Before we get started, just to review planning presents these zoning applications to airport Commission to give the APC the opportunity to review our zoning proposals for conflicts with the current and future operations of the airport in such event that a conflict is Detected or observed, APC would be tasked with providing planning with a statement identifying the issue and recommending A corrective action on how to mitigate the potential conflict.

MS. PETERSON stated that this application is requesting preliminary development plan, PDP approval for site layout and building architecture for a four-story hotel. The subject site is located at the southeast corner of Cooper Rd. and the Loop 202 San Tan Freeway. It is located within the Chandler Airpark area.

In 2005, the Chandler Airport Center was approved. This was a master plan development. Chandler Airport center envisioned hotels up to 70 feet in height. Along the road and at San Tan Freeway, Cooper Rd. Interchange and in 2009, there was an additional approval for amending the master plan that allowed additional uses.

The proposed development site is bounded on the north by the freeway and Cooper Rd to the West, adjacent to the property. There is an existing gas station to the South Office building to the East and medical offices to the southeast. the Andretti Entertainment complex across the street to the West.

Site access onto the site will be from Cooper Rd. via shared driveway. Primary access will be off Cooper Rd. and secondary access via shared driveway from the office building development. The proposed building is a four-story hotel building of approximately 53,600 square feet.

Proposed colors and materials are represented as a compatible palette of five colors. High quality materials with a variety of textures and non-reflective materials and glazing. It is proposed as a cohesive design, an outdoor seating area, aligning with the porte-cochere at the front entry facing to the West.

The rendered nighttime scene includes some accent lights, linear surface mount lighting on the elevation of the building. It's capped at the top, so there's no chance for light glare up. All light is reflecting down and washing across the front of the building.

Specific to the general plan, this site is designated as an employment district within the Chandler Airport growth area within the Chandler Airpark area plan, it's designated as an innovative district. This application fits within the goals of that plan. It is supporting those technical and creative businesses supporting the business park development and in perfect alignment with the Chandler Airpark Chandler Airport Center again that was approved in 2005.

This site is not within a 600-foot radius of residential developments. There was no requirement for neighborhood meeting for the applicant was asked to send out a Mailer with a letter explaining the proposal. Elevations and site plans as of this point, staff isn't aware of any concerns. And once again, our purpose here this evening is to determine if there are any potential conflicts with the current and future operations of the airport identifying any potential issues and ways to mitigate the conflicts. At this time, we believe the recommendation will be no conflict with current or future operations of the airport.

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK questioned the height of the development with the difference of 47 feet in the report compared to 50 feet on the slide.

MR. ANDERSON confirmed height at 49 feet 4 inches including parapet and that the building height is well below any arrival and departure surfaces.

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK noted that this development is directly under the flight path and noted that proximity to the freeway and construction material would mitigate aircraft noise.

MR. ANDRES noted that, from a noise compatibility standpoint, the project is considered commercial use, not residential. Hotels do not have an expectation of noise abatement exceeding commercial standards.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE asked what the noise standards for interior commercial use.

MR. ANDREW ANDERSON stated that the standards are typically what a development generates, not based on what is received from outside sources.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE asked if there was a city requirement or guidelines for soundproofing. The applicants did not have that information.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE was concerned based on his experience at staying at airport hotels.

MR. ANDERSON stated that he believed the architects addressed these issues in their design and installation.

MS. PETERSON stated that most construction systems have a soundproofing rating depending upon the system that's selected. The way the framing is laid out and how many layers of sheetrock or drywall are put on is well addressed by professional architects.

COMMISSIONER RIESTERER asked about the parking lot lighting.

MS. PETERSON stated that the lights were fully shielded and downlit including accent lights, the zoning requires lighting to be contained on property, and the lighting will be comparable with nearby developments.

COMMISSIONER MOUNT asked if the lighting was easily changeable if there were brightness issues.

MS. PETERSON replied that she believed it would be.

MR. ANDERSON stated that the parking lot lights are softer, but for safety purposes and could be changed.

COMMISSIONER OROZCO asked if the parking would be covered.

MS. PETERSON replied that it will not be covered.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE asked if this project would be in the same height as the neighboring hotels.

MS. PETERSON replied that the hotels are generally similar in height and number of stories.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE asked about the project to the south and asked about the other hotels.

MR. ANDRES replied that this would be the third hotel and that additional hotel demand was identified in this area by the economic development department.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE asked how many rooms were included in this project.

MS. PETERSON replied 124 rooms.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE asked how many rooms are available on Cooper Road? The consensus was approximately 300 to 350 rooms.

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK asked about the differences in the zoning map for hotels on both sides of Cooper Road to Germann.

MS PETERSON replied that the 2005 Chandler Airport Center approval that was granted at the Cooper Rd. corridor and the interchange as the prime locations for hotels. Under that approval a project would have a right to build up to 70 feet.

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK stated that he recalled the recent hospital project being roughly at the 70-foot height.

MR. REEVES replied that the hospital project is even closer to flight paths but well below the airspace surfaces.

COMMISSIONER MOUNT moved to present an airport Confliction evaluation report to the zoning administrator and City Council with a finding of no conflict with airport uses for the proposed Echo Suites development.

COMMISSIONER OROZCO seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Briefing

Monthly Operations Report

MR. REEVES delivered the March operations report.

Monthly Noise Report

MR. RINKENBERGER delivered the February noise report.

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK noted that two callers that were 6.6 to 9 miles northwest and off the map.

MR. RINKENBERGER replied affirmatively.

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK asked what the normal altitude is for normal medevac helicopter traffic.

MR. RINKENBERGER replied generally, the regulatory altitudes under part 9 says the helicopter needs to be operated without onto hazard to persons or people on the ground. There is no

statutory number, but medevac operators state a preference for operating between 500 and 900 feet.

MR. RINKENBERGER stated that the medevac operators have prescribed corridors, and LOA's signed with Phoenix Tower and the FAA FSDO for the 101 corridor to make sure that they're staying underneath the approach corridors for Sky Harbor.

MR. RINKENBERGER stated that helicopters are inherently slower than fixed wing aircraft, so there is vertical separation and staff looks for a range between 500 and 900 feet.

COMMISSIONER MOUNT stated that a helicopter needs to be high enough and fast enough to autorotate in case of emergency.

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK clarified if there was a particular standard altitude because it can appear unsafe.

COMMISSIONER RIESTERER asked if police helicopters are on a specific mission or a general flight. MR. RINKENBERGER replied that the helicopters are generally on missions or transitioning the area. It appeared that a Mesa PD helicopter was providing aerial support for some kind of law enforcement incident. Phoenix PD and DPS helicopters are occasionally in this area assisting Chandler PD.

MR. RINKENBERGER further stated that the only time he has seen a DPS helicopter was when the casino at Gilbert and Hunt highway was under construction in a multi-jurisdiction support operation. Many of the helicopters refuel at Phoenix Mesa Gateway.

COMMISSIONER RIESTERER stated that the Mesa PD helicopter would just fly around and, during the time when altitudes were changes, they would report altitude violations to the FAA. MR. RINKENBERGER stated that the data he is seeing is not necessarily orbiting an area, rather the aircraft are transitioning from one part of the region to another. There are occasional touch-and-go operations at Chandler, but other times there has been a single 20–30-minute orbit for incident support.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE asked if most of the reports are incidents are at night. MR. RINKENBERGER replied affirmatively.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE asked if we pass on the noise complaints to the agencies.

MR. RINKENBERGER replied affirmatively and offered to reach out to the agencies themselves on behalf of the complainant. MR. RINKENBERGER also brokered a connection between an operator and complainant that was resolved between the parties.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE asked if the Airport notifies the agencies if there is a complaint, or if the agencies are flying in normal altitudes, do we handle directly with the caller. Is there an account going to the agencies?

MR. RINKENBERGER replied that 95% of the time he handles the matter directly with the complainant and most of the nighttime complaints are medical helicopters on mission.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE stated that he thought it was good that we're trying to be friendly neighbors. I was just curious if we're also trying to support government agencies by passing along the information.

MR. REEVES stated that the complainant contact is an opportunity to reach out and educate the public and the responses are almost uniform in understanding the nature of the activity. We use the partnership with operators to avoid repeat complaints.

COMMISSIONER MOUNT stated that if a complainant wanted to press matters beyond the FAA for helicopters, they could always contact internal affairs for that agency.

MR. RINKENBERGER replied affirmatively.

MR. RINKENBERGER delivered the March noise report.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE asked if these complaints are occurring during daytime or nighttime. He stated that he didn't want to make more work for staff, but asked if an extra column could be added denoting day or night. There was further discussion on the nature of the time stamps whether day or night or just denoting the time of the incident.

COMMISSIONER RIESTERER suggested time of day and COMMISSIONER MOUNT agreed that specificity would be useful.

COMMISSIONER RIESTERER appreciated the thoroughness of the report and noted that no operations were in violation of FARs. He asked if realtors mention that there is an airport in the vicinity.

MR. RINKENBERGER stated that his goal was to positively engage the complainant with explanations about the activity.

MR. REEVES agreed and elaborated on the certainty of responding to the issue which has resulted in community building.

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK asked about creating a summary heat map showing areas of concentration.

MR. RINKENBERGER replied that he is working with the GIS team at City Hall on that map for regular use.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE stated that the heat map would be to see how it could help in various venues or events. There was further discussion regarding timing, inclusion of data.

MR. REEVES stated that much of this would be covered in his O&D report.

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK requested that such data also be used in the airport conflict evaluation report for purposes of recommending approval.

MR. REEVES stated that MR. RINKENBERGER had to leave to retrieve a twin-engine aircraft with a flat main tire from the taxiway.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE thanked airport staff for their work.

COMMISSIONER OROZCO asked if the heat map could show what percentage of the complaints are for public service flights.

Monthly Origins and Destinations Report

MR. REEVES delivered the O&D report.

COMMISSIONER MOUNT asked who operates the Piaggio aircraft mentioned in the report.

MR. REEVES stated it was a private entity who uses it for both business and recreation.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE asked how many operations are Part 91.

MR. REEVES stated it is about a 40/60 split with 40% under Part 91 and 60% under Part 135.

Monthly Construction Report

MR. ANDRES presented the construction report.

COMMISSIONER MOUNT asked if the city or the Airport writes the grant.

MR ANDRES replied that he is the grant writer.

COMMISSIONER MOUNT complimented MR. ANDRES on the effort.

MR. ANDRES stated the FAA process is straightforward, so it helps that simple pavement projects rank high and have some economies of scale. MR. ANDRES noted that specialized projects such as equipment can be significantly complicated.

MR. REEVES noted that the grant cycle is complex and must be coordinated with the city budget process, the capital improvement planning process, and the FAA and ADOT planning offices. We consider how well our projects will score for funding, but also what the 66 other public airports are requesting to have the best chance.

COMMISSIONER MOUNT further thanked staff for their efforts.

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK asked about Taxiway Bravo and whether some of the taxiway connectors would be relocated or eliminated.

MR. ANDRES replied that this was the first phase of the Bravo extension and that the ultimate plan is to extend Bravo the full length of both runways.

MR. ANDRES noted that Phase 1 will address a hotspot and provide more flexibility for the east end of the north runway, particularly the November loop. MR. ANDRES further stated that Phase 2 would come into play if and when the south runway is extended.

MR. REEVES described the issue with the November hotspot as essentially a traffic jam between aircraft landing on 22L exiting on November while aircraft are staged for takeoff on 22R at the November loop. This creates pressure on Taxiway Mike, which could have resulted in an additional hotspot. With Taxiway Bravo extending to Lima, this provides additional routes outside the high energy areas of the north runway.

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK stated that some north-south connectors will be eliminated to Taxiway Alpha.

MR. ANDRES responded that the FAA requires offset taxiway connectors as a physical, traffic calming measure between aprons and runways and taxiways. The goal is to prevent runway incursions by forcing pilots to make affirmative turning movements. These changes will occur over time as part of other projects.

COMMISSIONER OROZCO asked about the old heliport redevelopment.

MR. REEVES clarified the project location.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE asked about the location of the Operations Garage.

MR. REEVES clarified the location and further described the additional parking lot and aircraft observation area.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE asked if there could be an observation area on the top of a garage.

MR. REEVES mentioned the poor line of sight of the garage due to the control tower. MR. REEVES further stated that the designer will be providing a few options for the current observation area as a comfortable public space.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE stated that an elevated observation area is worth looking into because terminals traditionally have an observation deck.

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK asked why our terminal does not have a deck.

MR. ANDRES replied that the building was funded by ADOT, and their budget did not allow for a deck.

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK asked about weed removal to increase visibility of the runway from the air.

MR. REEVES replied that the Operations staff spend most of their time on mowing and herbicide application. As the dry season approaches, the green vegetation will turn brown, thereby making black pavement stand out better in the summer. MR. REEVES mentioned that the 4R-22L rehabilitation project will create millings that can be applied in the infields close to Delta to eliminate FOD being blown off the taxiway into the hangars. We are looking at various applications and the experience from other airports. MR REEVES also mentioned the states pavement management program provides much assistance to Chandler for pavement maintenance.

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK asked how often does an aircraft recovery incident occur and who would have responded?

MR REEVES mentioned that responders would be Mr. Rinkenberger or the operations staff including after hours. Many staff live with a five minute to 30-minute radius. MR. REEVES mentioned that this type of incident happens every other week.

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK asked if these incidents occur more during the summer.

MR. REEVES responded affirmatively, but typically during the day.

COMMISSIONER OROZCO stated that he experienced a similar situation in Cleveland.

MR. REEVES responded that the post-incident inspections take longer than the actual recovery. Additionally, many of the partner businesses will support the Airport's recovery efforts.

Most of the time the checks we must perform afterwards take as much time, if not longer, than the actual recovery, and we do have our partners on the field boat, Chandler Aviation as well as Chandler Air Service. We've had many occasions where they will follow us out.

COMMISSIONER OROZCO requested a visual profile of the garage design. MR ANDRES responded affirmatively and noted that, for a garage, there are some architectural embellishments, but the building is designed for equipment storage.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE asked if the design has any historical considerations like the Quonset type hangar. MR. ANDRES responded affirmatively and that it was included at a reasonable cost.

Information Items

Manager's Report

MR. REEVES presented information on fuel sales totaling 44,444 gallons so far in the current fiscal year. This airport currently sells avgas at \$5.50 a gallon. Of the ten other self serves that are within about 50 nautical miles of here, the average price is \$6.68 a gallon. This airport is at \$5.50 due to intelligent buying opportunities. The average avgas price for the region, defined as California, Nevada and Arizona is \$7.98 a gallon. We are on target right now for this fiscal year to sell 56,000.

MR. REEVES provided an update on the strategic business plan and presented the mission and vision statement that will be presented to Council for feedback. The emphasis is on maintaining our general aviation roots.

MR. REEVES provided an update on the community impact statement, which will be a three-phase plan with heavy emphasis on public outreach and education and continual analysis. MR. REEVES further provided an update on the timing of a future Airport Rules and Regulations update in fiscal year 2026.

MR. REEVES provided an update on the Cooper Collector Road project being at the 30 percent design stage and construction is slated to begin in the fall of 2025 with completion in the fall of 2026.

MR. REEVES stated that staff will be attending the upcoming Arizona Airports Association conference in Yuma.

MR. REEVES reminded Commissioners that officer elections will be held at the next Commission meeting on May 8th and an open meeting law training session will occur on May 12th.

MR. REEVES informed the body that he will be giving a presentation on Chandler's aviation history on July 2nd at noon.

Member Comments/Announcements

COMMISSIONER EHLBECK stated that there is an open house for Chandler Commission and Board members next Wednesday, May 17th, at 7:30 a.m. at City Hall.

COMMISSIONER OROZCO stated the Chandler EAA chapter obtained gold status with the national organization. COMMISSIONER OROZCO thanked airport staff for their help in achieving this status.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE stated that he felt Commissioners needed to get ahead of upcoming initiatives and encouraged Commissioners to become familiar with the Airport Rules and Regulations because the update effort will be significant.

VICE CHAIR MCCORKLE acknowledged this day when, in 1972, Lieutenant Colonel Roy Wendover of the Royal Canadian Air Force set an altitude record of 30,801 feet in an Interstate Cadet aircraft.

Calendar

The next regular Airport Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 8, 2024, at 5:00 p.m., in the Chandler Airport Terminal, 2380 S. Stinson Way.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.



Ryan Reeves, Secretary



Christopher Hawley, Chairman