



Noise Technical Committee

March 31, 2015
3:30 PM – 5:00 PM

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Alex de Soto, Citizen
Eric Johnson, WSDOT
Tom Jensen, Washington Pilot's Association
Cayla Morgan, Federal Aviation Administration

Tom Nesko, Washington Pilot's Association
Russ Ogle, Based Pilot
Thom Peters, Citizen
Tim Porter, Based Pilot

Consulting Team:

Colleen Cummins, Aviation
Renee Dowlin, Aviation
Hilary Fletcher, Aviation
Donna Taylor, Aviation

Introduction:

The meeting began with a brief introduction of the master plan process and an overview of the various other focus groups meetings that were being held (pilots, business, floodplain and hydrology). Hilary noted that Aviation was chosen as the consulting firm to conduct the Harvey Field master plan which will result in a 20 year plan. The Master Plan was kicked-off in fall 2014 and we are wrapping up what is known as the investigative phase - airport inventory, aviation forecast, and facility requirements.

Introductions were made by each attendee.

The focus of this group is to discuss noise issues related to Harvey Field and what the members felt should be addressed during the master plan process. It was acknowledged that the consulting team is not giving the group anything specific to react to which may seem like a challenge. However, even without specific information available, we are still looking for your input as it will help sharpen our areas of focus.

Harvey Field will be hosting the second Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting tomorrow evening and it will be followed by the first of two public open houses. Participants are encouraged to attend and bring family and friends. The second open house will be held during the alternative analysis phase.

Background:

A noise committee was created several years ago to develop a noise abatement procedure (a display board of that procedure was provided). This procedure found on the Harvey field website as well as on



the airfield to notify pilots. The procedure involves taking off to north to clear the railroad tracks and river and climb to 1,000 feet before turning to the north in order to avoid the downtown area (Ave I, J, etc.).

While this procedure has resulted in less noise complaints, there continue to be transient pilots that do not follow the procedure.

Discussion:

- Concerned about how to inform pilots/community of procedures; in need of better communication with pilots who don't follow it.
 - Pilots can also get info by just googling airport and most noise abatement procedures are on airport websites.
- Pilots guide put out by Washington State lists airports and notes noise abatement procedure exists but doesn't say what it is. Pilots in attendance thought it should be more prominent and not buried in notes and recommend contacting airport to obtain additional information.
- Pilots noted that the noise abatement procedure is primarily related to the departure and there is a large sign with the procedure located on the airfield prior to takeoff. Some participants believe if pilots ignore it, it simply means they don't care. Every once in awhile you see pilot go straight out and you try to talk to them on radio.
- Airport has created a message that goes over Unicom that tells pilots the noise abatement procedure and is typically played during spring and summer months. Harvey Field asks transient pilots to sign-in at the office and if they are not aware of the noise abatement procedure, a pamphlet is provided which shows them. If staff notices pilot not following procedure they get tail number and contact pilot so doesn't happen again.
- If people follow procedure exactly they tend to get to close to town. If they would just follow the railroad it misses town.
- Questions were asked if there had been a drop in noise complaints since the introduction of the noise abatement procedure.
 - Airport staff noted that there had been a significant drop. Noise complaints are sporadic and the Airport can go two to three months without any. The yearly number of complaints total between 40 and 50 and are typically from only five to six different people.
- There was a discussion around whether the residents should have the obligation to monitor the planes and make complaints to the airport.
 - Why should the residents be put into position to keep track and monitor pilots?
 - Some pilots don't have radios; not required to sign-in; so where is the monitoring?
 - Others noted the airport doesn't have to have a noise abatement procedure, it is voluntary.
- A resident in the group noted that in the summer they see the same planes consistently not following the noise abatement procedure.



- Airport staff responded that if you notice this happening please let the airport know. We do watch this and know airplanes. All our visitors do sign a transient log.
- We do not want to sit around all summer and keep track of planes because we feel nothing will change and if another 20 calls are received by the airport hat would change?
- A participant noted he lives on a residential airstrip which has a noise abatement procedure. We have it easier because it is a private airfield so we have more say on who can fly in/out. However, if enough people complain, politicians will make some changes.
- Another resident stated that they didn't mind the sound of a plane. They felt citizens should be encouraged to report someone violating procedure as there are not enough public employees to monitor everything. If citizens stop reporting then the Airport will not know there is an issue. If there is a feeling that people are not calling anymore because they think it doesn't matter then the Airport needs to do a campaign to encourage people to report so they can address the problem.
 - Examples were given: If you see a fire, you call the fire department or if you see someone breaking into a house you call the police.
- Some of the pilots provided an overview of the noise abatement procedure they follow: They believed it was better to turn west and go down railroad track as procedure really still takes you over the city. The pilot noted that his flight instructors taught him to go over the railroad tracks. The procedure should be adjusted to show the initial turn happen further to the south.
 - Another pilot stated that they need to be careful because if departing over the tracks it is important look for arrivals.
 - Another pilot responded that they always tell pilots to stay to right of railroad tracks and then inbound will be on south side of railroad.
- It was noted by the WSDOT participant that is seems as if the noise sensitive area currently shown on the noise abatement procedure map does not include all sensitive areas.
 - It was agreed that it did not.
- How many airports in the state have noise abatement procedures?
 - An exact number was not known but any airport in a congested or built environment has a procedure.
 - The consensus was that most pilots who are flying into a built-up area should know that there is a good chance a noise abatement procedure exists.
 - Abatement procedures are not required but are a good neighbor policy. Noise is always a challenge.
- It was stated that prop planes need all the power they can get to take-off as don't have as much power as jets but there are times when a small prop plane could use less power, i.e. not fully loaded
- Pilot noted that pilots as a whole don't want a negative response to Harvey Field. We do our best but maybe we can modify the existing procedure to aid.



- Harvey Field is within the urban growth boundary for Snohomish and some want it to move while others want it to stay. Feel that it is critical to make existing site work as many economic benefits.
- A question was asked about FAA's role in noise abatement procedures.
 - Staff stated that the FAA does not typically get involved in noise abatement procedures but do think they are great for airports to have in place.
- It was noted that the newspaper stated the airport needs to meet B-II standards, what does that mean?
 - B-II refers to the type of aircraft operating at the airfield which is determined by the wingspan of the aircraft and approach speed. The master plan was undertaken as it was determined that in the last few years there are a number of aircraft that are bigger (wingspan/approach speed) operating at Harvey Field than were previously. These aircraft meet B-II standards, thus we are looking at airport standards to accommodate these aircraft. In this case, I wasn't aware it is just one plane but an incremental change over the years to types of planes operating here. Before the FAA makes an investment in Harvey Field we need to ensure the standards can be accommodated.
 - FAA staff also noted that the forecast looks at what is operating here now and future demand so plan for the most demanding aircraft of entire fleet.
- Aviation staff reminded the group that Harvey Field is a reliever airport and the airport cannot restrict what type of aircraft lands here.
- More discussion around whether the existing procedure was the right one or if changes should be proposed? Have we done all we can? Once we have right procedure maybe create video to place on Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) website.
- Aviation staff asked a member if when the current procedure was developed if it was thought to be a good idea?
 - The response was yes as I thought they would be west further west and higher.
- Residents brought up the issue of making noise complaints and wondered what would result from calling in. What is feedback on these calls and communication with pilots? What is accountability?
 - Harvey Field staff indicated that the previous study and existing procedure has resulted in a significant drop in calls. The group then asked if the calls stopped because the issue was solved or because citizens felt disenfranchised. This was not resolved.
- Residents stated they talk with other community members who are upset about the noise but don't make a noise complaint because they do not feel it will change things.
- Other participants wondered about the growth of homes around the airport and would that increase calls.

The meeting wrapped up with the participants wondering if the procedure could be modified to go down the valley, and away from the downtown. This was looked at in 2007 but perhaps it should be revisited.

Aviation staff thanked everyone for their input and noted that another meeting would be held when the alternatives have been developed.