

August 27, 2007

Minutes

**NAS JRB FORT WORTH
JOINT LAND USE STUDY PUBLIC MEETING**

Public Meeting Date and Location

1. Monday, August 27, 2007 – 7 p.m. – Brewer High School Ninth Grade Campus Auditorium, 1025 W. Loop 820-N, Fort Worth, Texas 76108; moderated by Chuck Silcox, City of Fort Worth Council Member and Chairman of the Joint Land Use Study Policy Committee.

Total Attendance: Approximately 135 members of the public.

Public Meeting Purpose and Topics

The public meeting was held in accordance with the Joint Land Use Study Policy Committee's public involvement principles adopted on October 16, 2006. Topics covered at the meeting include:

1. Purpose and need for the Joint Land Study (JLUS)
2. Governmental entities participating in the study
3. Economic benefits of the NAS JRB to the region
4. Community mission for the next BRAC
5. Issues confronting the community and the base
6. JLUS draft recommendations for land use surrounding the installation
7. Surface access to NAS JRB
8. Study schedule

The meeting was held to educate, inform and seek comments from the public. Comments were solicited from those present who wished to speak for the record. Presentations made at the meeting are available at <http://www.nctcog.org/jlus>

Staff distributed a meeting agenda, a comment form/questionnaire, and a card, that announced all subsequent public meetings.

Attendees were encouraged to place colored dots on large maps to express their opinions about noise and traffic generated by the base. For noise three choices were given; "there is an acute, major, regular noise problem"; "there is a moderate noise problem"; and "I like the sound of aircraft here." For transportation, three choices were given; "there is a transportation safety issue"; "there is a transportation congestion issue"; and "there is a traffic signal problem". *Approximately 41 comments were received from the public through this exercise.*

Outline of Public Meeting

1. Welcome, introduction

Chuck Silcox, Chairman of the JLUS Policy Committee and Fort Worth City Council Member, welcomed the attendees and thanked them for their interest. He explained that the purpose of the study is to provide recommendations for compatible land use planning around the base in order to safeguard the mission and continued operation of the base during the future Base Relocation and Closure (BRAC) reviews by the U.S. Department of Defense. He referred to the BRAC of the 1990s during which Carswell Air Force Base and thousands of jobs were lost. The Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce and U.S. Rep. Kay Granger successfully put together a coalition of support that resulted in the establishment of NAS JRB Fort Worth. With another BRAC, the area cannot afford to lose the base because it would be devastating to the economy, he said. The policy committee is working hard to build consensus among the six participating cities so that land use policies provide for compatibility among the municipalities, base and property owners.

The following policy committee members, NCTCOG staff and consultants who were in attendance were recognized publicly:

Chuck Silcox, Council Member, Fort Worth
Dan Chisholm, Chief of Police, River Oaks
Vicki Mikel, Assistant City Manager, Lake Worth
Randall Brown, Public Works Director, White Settlement
Gunnar Rasmussen, Council Member, White Settlement
Carter Burdette, Council Member, Fort Worth
Joey Highfill, City Manager, Lake Worth
Keith Bailey, Council Member, Benbrook
Randy Skinner, Planning Manager, Tarrant County
Renee Lamb, Director of Transportation Services, Tarrant County
Mike Sims, Senior Program Manager, North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG)
Rachel Wiggins, Principal Transportation Planner, NCTCOG
James Falvo, consultant, DFW Advisors
Michael Coker, consultant, Michael R. Coker Company
Linda Pavlik, consultant, Pavlik and Associates
Gary Robinson, Westworth Village

2. Background on the Joint Land Use Study, Rachel Wiggins

Rachel Wiggins presented background on the Joint Land Use Study including the following:

- **Importance of NAS** – Lockheed Martin is located across the runway from NAS JRB. Together they employ approximately 25,400 persons and have an annual economic impact of \$4.3 billion.
- **Community mission** – The community mission when the next BRAC occurs is to win. Winning would mean additional units, squadrons, and equipment at the base and an increase in full-time active duty military personnel and reservists operating there. Above simply avoiding closure, additional military activities

would add to the local economy, create spin-off jobs and increase the demand for and value of real estate in western Tarrant County. Additional military activities would add to the value of the base to DOD and spread the overhead costs of the base over more military functions.

- **Importance of winning** – If the community wins and the base stays open or expands, there will be jobs in west Fort Worth, a strong demand for residential uses, an airfield with two users and a workable tax base. If the community loses, these then may not be sustainable.
- **Community opinions** – Opinions which will be considered during a BRAC include those of active duty military and their families; military reservists and their families; neighbors of the base; communities around the base; commanders of other military installations and top military personnel.
- **How the community wins** – The community should take the following actions to keep the base open. Transition non-conforming land uses to conforming land uses. Do more than just host military families; make a difference in their lives through assistance with spouse job searches, housing decisions and the provision for excellent schools for dependents. Help NAS JRB support other military installations. Improve the roads to the base. Come together as Friends of the Base.
- **Incompatible urban development** – Prior to 1940, the land surrounding the base was relatively undeveloped. Following construction of the base in 1941, through 2006, significant development has occurred in close proximity to the base.
- **Community action** – The base was nominated in 2005 for a JLUS. It was selected by DOD for the JLUS program in late 2005. In 2006, an application for funding was submitted and the JLUS Policy Committee was convened. Voting members are the cities of Benbrook, Fort Worth, Lake Worth, River Oaks, Westworth Village, and White Settlement and Tarrant County. The study sponsor is the North Central Texas Council of Governments. In March 2007, DFW Advisors was engaged as the study consultant, and the first public meetings were conducted in early April 2007, to inform the public about the study and solicit comments. Following discussion of the draft recommendations being presented at this public meeting, the policy committee is expected to adopt recommendations and present those to local governments for voluntary adoption.

3. Surface Access to NAS JRB, Rachel Wiggins

Surface access to the NAS JRB is important for the following reasons: mobility; safety; intersection functionality, maintenance, reliability, emergency management, and access for bicycles, pedestrians and freight. Ms. Wiggins showed a map on which highway exits and base and plant entrances were marked. Themes that have been identified during the study and recent tours include:

- Roadway geometry contributes to safety and accessibility.
- Roadway maintenance results in safety and convenience.
- Connectivity is important to foster community acceptance.
- Way-finding tools result in identification and access.

4. JLUS draft recommendations, Mike Sims

Mike Sims showed a map within the study area that indicated where compatible land uses are located surrounding the base, including several areas that are compatible with conditions and/or because they are vacant today. He also explained “safety zones” as designated by the National Air Force Aircraft Accident Data are locations where approximately 68.7 percent of accidents have historically occurred. The breakout is as follows: 27.1 percent in the runway area; 28.8 percent in the clear zone (CZ); 7.8 percent in the Accident Potential Zone I (APZI); and 5.0 percent in the Accident Potential Zone II (APZII). In his PowerPoint presentation, he visually pointed out the boundaries for each zone from both a safety and noise perspective.

The following are ways in which encroachment negatively affects military readiness:

- Reducing the numbers of available training days
- Reducing training realism as tactics are modified (altitudes, airspeeds, profiles) to comply with local laws
- Causing a loss of base access altogether (either temporary or permanent)
- Decreasing scheduling flexibility and complexity (when factoring in long lead times to assure legal compliance)
- Increasing time away from home during training prior to deployment

Mr. Sims said that aircraft noise and safety are managed by the following tactics and in appropriate zones:

- **Keeping people away** – Local jurisdictions prohibiting development in the core areas (APZs/CZs); restricting development in other areas and encouraging industrial uses.
- **Protecting people who are already there** – Local jurisdictions and state building codes requiring actions such as acoustical insulation.
- **Helping people to leave** – Federal and state governments offering relocation assistance.
- **Empowering people to make up their own mind** – State and county governments avoiding “surprise” noise by requiring information about the location of the base when houses are sold.

Mr. Sims also explained a table that showed zoning districts within the 65 DBN, 70 to 75 DBN, 75 to 80 DBN, 80 to 85 DBN, and 85 to 90 DBN in the six participating cities and Tarrant County.

Draft recommendations by the consultant team for improving communications among all of the parties include:

- Strengthening public education regarding noise ordinances
- Creating a JLUS Regional Coordinating Committee
- Seeking DOD input on school location decisions
- Improving on-line communications (updated websites, etc.)
- Creating a Friends of the Base support group.

Draft recommendations for local action on the part of the participating cities and Tarrant County include:

- Creating a Master Land Development Plan (Benbrook, Fort Worth, Lake Worth, Westworth Village, White Settlement and Tarrant County)
- Creating a Noise Mitigation Plan (Benbrook, Fort Worth, Lake Worth, Westworth Village, White Settlement and Tarrant County)
- Updating transportation and access plans (Benbrook, Fort Worth, Lake Worth, Westworth Village, White Settlement and Tarrant County)
- Adopting a Comprehensive Land Use Plan (Westworth Village and Lake Worth)
- Revising a Future Land Use Plan/Map (Benbrook, Fort Worth, River Oaks and White Settlement)
- Adopting an Airport Environs Ordinance (Benbrook, Fort Worth, Lake Worth, Westworth Village, White Settlement and Tarrant County)
- Implementing noise attenuation requirements for residential and incompatible non-residential uses (Benbrook, Fort Worth, Lake Worth, Westworth Village, White Settlement and Tarrant County)
- Updating building codes (Benbrook, Fort Worth, Lake Worth, Westworth Village, White Settlement and Tarrant County)
- Adopting new state lighting requirements (Benbrook, Fort Worth, Lake Worth, Westworth Village, White Settlement and Tarrant County)
- Establishing mandatory real estate disclosure for properties in 65 plus Ldn (Benbrook, Fort Worth, Lake Worth, Westworth Village, White Settlement, and Tarrant County)
- Requiring sound attenuation certification to be recorded with property deeds (Benbrook, Fort Worth, Lake Worth, Westworth Village, White Settlement and Tarrant County)
- Requiring noise zone verification on subdivision plats (Benbrook, Fort Worth, Lake Worth, Westworth Village, White Settlement and Tarrant County)
- Creating a neighborhood governments review program for certain development types (Benbrook, Fort Worth, Lake Worth, Westworth Village, White Settlement and Tarrant County)
- Investigating the creation of a NAS JRB Joint Zoning Board (Benbrook, Fort Worth, Lake Worth, Westworth Village, White Settlement and Tarrant County)
- Pursuing purchase of impacted properties in the Safety Zones (Fort Worth and Lake Worth)
- Creating an Avigation Easement Program (Benbrook, Lake Worth, Fort Worth, White Settlement and Westworth Village)
- Transferring of development rights (Benbrook, Lake Worth, Fort Worth, White Settlement, and Westworth Village)
- Land banking (Benbrook, Lake Worth, Fort Worth, White Settlement and Westworth Village)
- Adopting a Low Impact Development Strategy for storm drainage (White Settlement and Fort Worth)

5. Oral Comments received at the meeting

Support of NAS JRB

Comment by Michael Ryan: Since 1981, there have been no accidents. I walk to work and there is no problem. People want to whine about the noise after building a house in this area. We don't want people like that here. One son in the Marines; one in the Air Force. Both were raised near the base.

Comment by Evelyn Stearman: Chair of Chapel Creek Citizens on Patrol and married to a military man for 22 years. Since 1941, the base has been supporting the cities. There are a lot of empty buildings where people move in and out, and then they are gone. The base is still here. She has never feared the aircraft and doesn't hear the noise. Gas wells are more dangerous than planes. Plane noise is no greater than traffic noise.

Real estate disclosure and property values

Comment by Paul Brown: Resident for 38 years. Lives at 8508 Choctaw Trail, within one or two miles of the runway. He is a professional broadcaster and acoustical engineer who loves the sound of the jets. Very against the noise disclosure statement. Called it the last nail in the coffin for the Western Hills area. It would make it difficult to sell property. He is not concerned about the 68 percent chance of an accident and questioned when an accident had occurred. He also opposes the use of tax dollars to purchase property in these zones.

Comment by Michael Ryan: There should be disclosures attached to property deeds noting the land is in the safety and noise zones around the base.

Comment by Don Westerheiden: Has lived in Ridgmar for 44 years and remembers that there were no engine run-ups after 10 p.m. when the Air Force operated the base. Now, with the Navy operating the base, loud noises occur at all times of the day. Property values have gone up 44 percent since 2001, but the house across the street just sold for 50 percent less. He thinks this could be related to the publicity about JLUS and incompatible land use.

Comment by Patrick Barbolla: His company owns property in the affected area. Municipalities should consider the impact of these recommendations on the tax base. Retrofitting costs between \$10,000 and \$50,000 home when it is done "in bulk." New construction costs would be lower than maximum retrofitting, but if that is done, the new house would still cost \$30,000 more than another new house about half mile away. When property values decrease, property owners will expect a decrease in taxes.

Building code, sound attenuation

Comment by Joe Waller: Concerns about the City of Fort Worth's interim zoning and building code changes that require sound attenuation in noise zones. Questions whether sound attenuation will be required during remodeling or rebuilding (in case of fire). Also, questions if a house outside of the 65 plus, dNL area and the new owner wants to remodel it, will sound attenuation be required.

Comment by Michael Ryan: Restrictions should not be place on remodeling in White Settlement. If restrictions are put into place, financing should be available.

Summary of response: The City of Fort Worth's new ordinance revisions deal only with new construction. Each participating city will be responsible for adopting its own policies and ordinances.

Restricted land use

Comment by Patrick Barbolla: Schools which are located inside the APZI and APZII should be relocated. Does not think that a military installation with schools inside accident potential zones would survive a BRAC.

Comment by Thomas W. Ames: Which zones are being considered for purchase? (CZ, APZI, APZII, or all?) What specifically is hindering NASJRB from "winning?"

Comment by Shelly Harper: Can single family zoning be changed to industrial because of incompatible land use?

Summary of response: Recommendations are to zone property against nonconforming issues. If the residential property is outside the APZ zones, then codes could be changed to require sound attenuation so that noise inside a residential structure is no greater than 45 db. Rules are being formulated based on parcels, but neighborhoods should be a consideration.

Communication

Comment by Joe Waller: Would like to see communication on the part of the base to the community. Important to know what is occurring on base, without constraining operations.

Summary of response: There is a growing amount of cooperation by the base and base commander and a good working relationship with the JLUS policy committee and the community. Both sides have to be understanding.

Transportation and access

Comment by Joe Waller: The base is not causing traffic; it is Lockheed Martin. Las Vegas Trail is dangerous, especially during peak times. Other roads which should be looked at are Clifford, Silver Creek and Bonner.

Comment by Thomas W. Ames: How soon can road improvements be implemented?

Summary of response: Dollars must be identified to rebuild or widen roads. The JLUS Policy Committee will not make recommendations dealing with transportation. NCTCOG staff will bring forward recommendations to the Regional Transportation Council to support the land use policies which are being put into place through JLUS.

6. Written comments received at the meeting and following the meeting are available online at www.nctcog.org/jlus.