

Ord 21-06
PZ Date: 8-25-22
CC Date: 9-27-22

Jamie Whitehouse

From: Jeff King <king.robert.j@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, August 25, 2022 2:14 AM
To: Planning and Zoning; bob@rcwheatley.com
Cc: Jamie Whitehouse
Subject: Written public comment - Eaglescrest Aerodrome map addition
Attachments: Century -airports.xlsx; Public Comment zoning 8-25.docx

SUPPORT EXHIBIT

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To whom it may concern

Attached please find my WRITTEN public comment on this item before the council. Apologies for the delay, but when I went to send it at ~4:30pm I noticed the supplemental packet had been updated and wanted to refresh my comments.

If you could confirm that the members of the planning commission received this I would appreciate it.

I also desire to make in person VERBAL public comments. Please let me know the time limit so I can properly trim this down as well as any special procedure.

Thank you

Jeff King

Written Public comment from Jeff King

RE: Comprehensive Plan Amendment Request to amend the Existing and Future Land Use Map elements of the Comprehensive Plan to change the Area designations of Sussex County Parcel No. 235-16.00-50.02, 235-22.00-441.00 (2.79 Ac. part thereof), and 235-22.00-442.00

Dear Planning commission:

My name is Jeff King, a private residence owner on Eagles Crest road, pilot and aircraft owner, who has an access easement on the runway property before you. I first learned of this amendment request by seeing a sign on the property last June. As a new resident to Sussex county and acutely aware of the housing explosion occurring in your area, I was deeply concerned as to what this meant to me and my access to the runway, one of the primary reasons I purchased my home in the EaglesCrest Airport.

I want to thank Mark Schaffer, Jamie Whitehouse, Christian Hudson and John Pardee for helping me alleviate my concerns regarding this proposal and that it might upset the existing non-conforming certificate granted in 2018, which allows for the airport runway and my continued access to it. Since my primary concern was alleviated, I dug into the material and recommendations of Century Engineering to this board.

First a bit more background about myself. I've served on two public airport boards, the board chair of the Hillsdale Michigan airport and most recently until I moved, the board of West Michigan Regional Airport authority, an airport similar to Georgetown, where we directly managed the airport budget of ~\$7 million. I've also served as our industry trade group (Aircraft and Pilot Association - AOPA) liaison to both the above airports as well as now Eagle Crest. I'm a past member of the Michigan Association of Airport executives,

attended many of their trade shows and worked closely with the Michigan Department of Transportation - Aviation division on many aviation issues across the state.

In summary, I'm both knowledgeable about the issues Century Engineering is attempting to present to you and quite concerned about some of these recommendations. Their concerns seemed to be based on licensing objections from DDOT rather than actual land use impact. Further, the data they presented to you leaves key metrics out, one being the actual number of aircraft at each airport... which is a direct measure of the impact it has on the surrounding land. I've attached a spreadsheet which more accurately depicts the impact of Sussex county airports as well as public airports across the state.

The bottom line here is EagleCrest airport, based on the number of aircraft at the airport, is the 5th largest airport, public or private in the state, and the 2nd largest in the county. Consequently the impact EagleCrest airport has on land use is poorly judged by "licensing" but far better judged by actual usage. If the PC needs a "fair" decision touchpoint for future requests, then can fall back on the smallest public airport in the state, which happens to be our Laurel airport, if they need a decision point. Laurel has 7 aircraft based at it vs Eaglecrests 23 based aircraft.

I also want to add in closing, this is far from academic for me, I have first hand experience in these issues. I've seen airports engaged in community noise disputes and even closed because of poor land planning decisions decades earlier. What I am seeing in Milton/Lewes is closely mirroring what occurred in my old community of Park Township Michigan 30 years ago. Farmland being converted to suburban residential housing, which is growing up around the legacy airport.

You have the opportunity to make a recommendation that will both guide land use planners and inform buyers of property in Sussex county as to what land uses and impacts are occurring in their neighborhoods. I ask that you please support the Hudson's proposal and recommend the county council adopt it.

Respectfully,

Jeff King
29577 Eaglescrest Rd
Milton DE, 19968
517-425-2900

Attachment:

Spreadsheet showing based aircraft at all airports in Sussex county, and public airports in DE

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With regards to Dover Airforce base, Century Engineering is correct, and I was mistaken, it is listed as "Public". Yet from a practical standpoint it's hard to consider it such. Just as with a private airport, it requires permission to land there as well as 72 hours notice. In addition, a signed waiver on file and a \$45 landing fee. With no aviation gasoline available, no services and a true public airport nearby (Delaware Airpark) I hesitate to even consider this a viable public General Aviation airport for the type of air traffic going into Eagle Crest airport. Indeed, the "public" usage seems to be aimed at NASCAR Team private jets going into the Dover Speedway.

I do agree with their modification of the 3rd recommendation, in that your decision matrix should be based on measurable items that impact land usage, such as number of based aircraft.

<https://www.airnav.com/airport/DE25>

<http://www.catatdover.com/pdf/Civil%20Air%20Terminal%20Request%20for%20Landing.pdf>

http://www.catatdover.com/pdf/Master_PPR_Packet_Spring_2022.pdf

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Public airports in Delaware

Airport	Desg	County	Runway Condition	Inst app?	Aircraft #	Ownership Notes
New Castle	KILG	New Castle	7275 Asphalt - Good	Yes	219	Public Publicly owned
Summit	KEVY	New Castle	4488 Asphalt - fair	Yes	21	Private Privately owned
Chandelle	ON4	Kent	2533 Asphalt -poor	None	23	Private Privately owned, Homes on airport
Chorman	D74	Kent	3588 Asphalt - excellent	None	44	Private Privately owned
Dover Civil terminal	KDOV	Kent	12903 Concrete - excellent	Yes	-	Military PRIVATE military airport, permission needed
DeIDOT Helistop	ON5	Kent	60 Concrete - excellent	None	0	Public No Fixed wing aircraft- ONLY 20 operations A Y
Delaware airport	33N	Kent	4201 Asphalt - excellent	Yes	45	Public State of Delaware owned
Jenkins	15N	Kent	2035 Turf - good	None	20	Private Privately owned
Smyrna	38N	Kent	2600 Turf - good	None	10	Private Privately owned
Delaware Coastal	KGED	Sussex	5500 Asphalt - good	Yes	69	Public Sussex County Council
Laurel	N06	Sussex	3175 Turf - good	None	7	Private Privately owned

Private airports in Sussex county

EagleCrest	DE25	Sussex	3500 Turf - good	None	23	Airpark with 20+ homes on it
Pevey	DE15	Sussex	2600 Turf - good	None	2	Single home next to it
Huey	DE14	Sussex	2600 Turf - unknown	None	-	Single home next to it
Sugar hill	DE17	Sussex	2300 Turf - unknown	None	4	also has 10 ultralights
Ockel farms	DE23	Sussex	2500 Turf - good	None	7	Crop dusting field
West airport	DE21	Sussex	3000 Turf - unknown	None	1	Single user
Murphy's landing	2DE8	Sussex	2350 Turf - unknown	None	4	Single home, one hangar

Source: <https://www.airnav.com/airports/>

Fast Facts:

Eagle Crest airport has the most aircraft based and longest runway of any TURF airport, public or private in the state
 Eagle Crest airport has more or the same # aircraft based at it then 5 of the 9 PUBLIC airports in the states
 Eagle Crest airport is the 2nd largest airport in Sussex county, by both based aircraft as well as runway length

Conclusion:

PC should base decision not on public/private but on real measurable metrics that impact both land use and adjoining properties.
 The best measure of that is the number of planes based OR number of operations and runway length.
 For now set minimum at Laurel airport figures, min runway length of 3175' AND 7 or more aircraft based at field.
Eaglecrest should be added to the comprehensive land use plan.