

AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR MEETING OF DECEMBER 9, 2004

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Whitehurst called the meeting to order at 2:07 p.m. in the Board Chambers on the third floor of the Merced County Administration Building, located at 2222 'M' Street, Merced, California.

II. ROLL CALL OF COMMISSIONERS

Commissioners Present: Tony Whitehurst, Chairman
Al Romero, Vice Chairman
Frederick Honore
Gail McCullough
Scott Malta
Lloyd Partin

Commissioners Absent: None

Staff Present: William Nicholson, ALUC Secretary
John LeVan, ALUC Staff
Victoria Lane, Recording Secretary

Legal Staff: Fernanda Saude, County Counsel

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: M/S ROMERO/MCCULLOUGH, AND CARRIED BY A UNANIMOUS VOTE, THE COMMISSION APPROVES THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 4, 2004.

IV. CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS

None.

V. NON-HEARING ITEMS

A. Update on funding opportunities for an Airport Land Use Plan update

John LeVan, ALUC Staff, presented the report on this item.

John Fowler, Director of the Merced County Commerce, Aviation, and Economic Development Department made some comments on this item. He talked to Bill Nicholson and he concurred that there is no money available for an update right now but the thinking at the time was that it would be \$200,000 to \$250,000 for the study. But it may be only \$50,000 to \$75,000 for the update to the study that was done in 1999. If that is case, there may be multiple sources for the money. One of the possibilities is the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Planning and Technical Assistance Grant (PTA). This could be leveraged through the City of Gustine, the City of Los Banos, the City of Merced, the County of Merced, and maybe even the City of Turlock, if we go into a partnership with the jurisdictions to get the money needed to do a

planning study. The CDBG Program's PTA's can be funded as high as \$35,000 per application per jurisdiction. This money is not guaranteed to be available since these grants have to be applied for and awarded, but the State does have the money available. There is another round of PTA grants which would take effect the first of January. There is another opportunity to apply now for the July funding cycle. They actually approve those grants in June. If the Commission so desires, he would be happy to work with the Commission to make this happen.

The other opportunity could come from the Federal Inter-Agency Task Force. It is comprised of 26 federal agencies. They were set up by Presidential Order exclusively for the 7 Central Valley Counties to deal with economics, workforce, education, housing, and other such issues. They are the fast-track agency for federal funding. Mr. Fowler suggested using the CDBG money for the planning study. Then if we had to do more in-depth studies or EIRs or something similar, one or more of these federal agencies could be asked for their monetary assistance. Mr. Fowler offered himself as a liaison to carry the wishes of the Commission to this Federal Task Force.

Chairman Whitehurst asked Mr. Fowler about the different time frames and which one we might fall into. Mr. Fowler thought that by the time the public hearings were done and the Board approved the submittal of the application that we would miss the deadline. Mr. Fowler also reiterated that if the ALUC Commission wanted to use CDBG funding, that it make a request of the County and the other cities that have airports to work together on a joint CDBG project so the burden doesn't fall on just one jurisdiction to come up with the funds. He also thought that the probability of getting funded would be high since the CDBG has a predilection for funding regional projects. Chairman Whitehurst asked that since multiple jurisdictions would be applying in this joint project, how would that affect the maximum allocation. Mr. Fowler stated that with the exception of the City of Merced (which is funded differently since they are an entitlement jurisdiction) every city could ask for up to \$35,000.

Mr. Nicholson stated that if the Commission so desired, they could direct him to write a letter to be signed by the Chairman to John Fowler to request that the County investigate this CDBG funding option and also to work cooperatively with the other jurisdictions to see if they would be willing to participate in this joint project. Chairman Whitehurst replied that if that option was a possibility he would certainly like to pursue it. Mr. Nicholson added that he would like to talk to Shutt Moen, who are the consultants who prepared the current plan, and get an estimate from them on the cost.

B. Discussion of the Airport Land Use Plan Purpose & Policies and Relationship to the updated Caltrans Land Use Planning Handbook

Mr. Nicholson presented the report on this item.

Commissioner Partin let the Commission know that the FAA had just approved their application for an airport master plan update for the City of Merced. He would like to schedule a meeting with his consultant for the next ALUC meeting. Mr. Nicholson asked what his time frame was. Commissioner Partin replied that it was an estimated 180 day process so they are hoping for a June completion date. He said he was open to trying to integrate their update on their master plan with the update on the ALUC compatibility plan. He also mentioned that if there was any money that was unexpended from the FAA grant he could look into the possibility of allocating that extra money towards the study. Mr. Nicholson mentioned that one of the duties of the ALUC is to review any updates to the master plans of the individual airports before the jurisdiction adopts it. This also includes the cities' or the County's General Plan.

Commissioner Malta queried whether Staff could plot or superimpose the new zones in the Caltrans handbook over the ones we already have to be able to see whether a full review is really required. He brought up the Riverpark Motorsports Parkway project that came before the Commission last year. According to the current plan, the project was inconsistent. However if the new Caltrans handbook was used, it would have been consistent.

Chairman Whitehurst is concerned about sufficient staff and funding and hopes the Planning and Technical Assistance Grant might be able to provide the funds to do the planning study.

Commissioner Honore brought up concerns about the Bellevue extension. Commissioner Malta echoed these sentiments. He feels airport encroachment is something that needs to be watched, with encroaching development, noise complaints would be imminent and the update to the plan would help with that.

Commissioner Malta asked how noise attenuation issues are incorporated for the houses built outside the Castle Airport Influence Area. Mr. Nicholson replied that it is accomplished through adoption of the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan or through the city's or county's general plan.

Commissioner Malta asked if the Commission could ask the 5 airport managers to help them come up with a new baseline for each of the airports that show what development has happened since October of last year since the Commission last met. Mr. Nicholson said that this information is something that each city would have. They determine whether or not they will bring it before the ALUC. The jurisdictions are basically policing themselves. Commissioner Malta said he wanted to try to see what growth we have and be aware of anything encroaching towards the airport's area of influence before it's too late to prevent any future encroachment and prevent closure of the airport. Commissioner McCullough and Commissioner Partin agreed with Commissioner Malta. They stated that you only need to get up in the air to see the gradual encroachment.

Commissioner Partin was also concerned about a possible soccer complex that might be going in near the B2 Zone of the Merced Municipal Airport. Chairperson Whitehurst stated that Commissioner Partin's concerns were well-put and well-founded. He said when the project comes before the Commission as an actual application they will review it and make the appropriate recommendations.

VI. GENERAL BUSINESS

As far as scheduling a meeting, Chairperson Whitehurst suggested that we let the issues develop and if staff gets a chance to look at the guidebook and do some impact assessment on the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan or if there is new information on early cycle funding through the CDBG Program then a meeting can be scheduled at that time, otherwise they will delay scheduling a meeting until they get further input from either Mr. Nicholson or Mr. Fowler. Mr. Fowler stated that even if funding was not available in the early cycle, he and Mr. Nicholson would still need to go to the Board and present CDBG projects for the coming year, this would be done in either January or February. He feels it would be important to at least have a request from the Commission to investigate CDBG funding options and he wondered if that might generate a need for a meeting. Chairman Whitehurst thought that was

addressed earlier in the meeting with the request for Bill to draft a letter from the Commission, he further suggested polling the Board to indicate their support or nonsupport for taking the action to write a letter to the Board of Supervisors to be delivered via John and Bill for researching possible CDBG funding.

MOTION: M/S MCCULLOUGH/MALTA, AND CARRIED BY A UNANIMOUS VOTE, THE COMMISSION REQUESTS THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS BE POLLED TO INDICATE THEIR SUPPORT OR NONSUPPORT FOR A LETTER FROM THE AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION ASKING THAT THE CDBG PLANNING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANT BE RESEARCHED AS A POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCE FOR AN UPDATE TO THE AIRPORT LAND USE COMPATIBILITY PLAN.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:21 p.m.