

**Re-envisioning Whiteman Airport Community Advisory Committee Meeting:
Public Comments, May 26, 2022**

Shellie:

Hi, this is Shellie. I was just going to talk about the emergency preparedness kind of thing. Emergencies, just in the way that they are, only happen when there is an emergency. So, if there is, let's say, an earthquake, you don't know what airport is going to be affected by it. So let's say, worst case scenario, Burbank's affected, Van Nuys is affected, and Whiteman isn't affected.

So that's what the emergency thing is, so that you have at least some airport in the area that's ready to carry blood, carry emergency equipment, carry anything. So, just like we have the dam system and the flood control channels, we don't use those every day, but we know that they're there so that in case of a flood, it's there. And that's the whole purpose of an emergency preparedness thing.

Like during the air stop after 9/11, no airplanes were allowed to fly anywhere. The FAA gave special dispensation to Whiteman airport to be used to transport emergency blood and organs around the state. Because, I said, "Gee," we looked, and there was a plane flying around and we couldn't figure out why. And we called the airport, and they said, "Yes, we were chosen to transport blood. They needed emergency blood," in Sacramento, and San Francisco, or wherever they were going. I don't know.

But that's the whole purpose of having an emergency plan. It's for when emergencies happen. And then as far as the helicopter situation, if there is an emergency, that helicopter pad that they had there, is very small. So, if they needed like five helicopters to come in right away, they would need to use the airport to land on, or to practice on. Or, if it's too windy, instead of landing on a little head of a needle, they have a huge runway to land on, because the winds get crazy around here. We all know about that. But that's the whole purpose of having something for an emergency. So, I just wanted you to keep that in mind. Thank you.

Burton:

Okay. Thank you so much. I appreciate the comments from CAC member Yvonne Mariajimez regarding a soundproofing plan and instituting something, or at least suggesting something at this point. Just personally, just over the last weekend, on Saturday and then on Monday again, I was at two different homes, both within this vicinity. The first one on Saturday, within the vicinity of the landing pattern for LAX. And then on Monday, near enough to Long Beach Airport to hear the big commercial jets taking off from there. And both were a bit disturbing for me, hearing that amount of noise coming out, so it made me start thinking about the condition of people perhaps nearby to a smaller airport and how they might be reacting to sounds of smaller aircraft, even.

I live along Osborne Street, and there's a huge amount of traffic comes by here. I'm in an older home that is not soundproofed and doesn't have double-pane windows and so forth. So, additionally, I'm sympathetic to that kind of noise for road traffic, and I realize that a lot of that is industry going by, like trucks making deliveries to maintain commerce going on here.

And I personally was then thinking about how much I would appreciate having soundproofing in my place and how much of a difference that would make to my level of comfortableness living here. So, I'm in agreement with Yvonne Mariajimenez. Her suggestion about perhaps moving ahead with a suggestion to do that for the sake of the people in the vicinity of the airport there, and I'll live with the sound I get from the street here until such a time as my landlord decides to make some changes to the home that I live in. Just want to add my kudos to that and my suggestion recommendation, that kind of recommendation be put out there. Thank you so much.

Bob:

Okay. I thought it was a very interesting observation that Mr. Arias made. I think it is interesting to me because it's based on an assumption that closure of the airport is a reality or reachable goal. I think that what you will find, very quickly, when you start hearing about the FAA requirements, I think the nature of that goal may change. The suggestion for soundproofing is a very interesting one. It is very important to know that FAA will fund soundproofing if the airport produces noise in the community, outside the fence line of the airport, at a certain level in California. That is a 65 decibel CNEL. You can learn that very quickly by having someone from the Noise Management Department come in with your state noise maps and show you what the noise impact area is, excuse me, for the airport.

You don't need to wait a long time to validate that sort of a very excellent observation. I will tell you that at LAX the noise impact area is very clearly out in the community. I don't think that, because of the type of aircraft operating at Whiteman, you will have a large noise impact area, as defined in the Regulatory Manuals. I think that people on the Panel would be well advised to start putting those recommendations into the pot immediately. There is a process called the Part 150 Study that works in that fashion. I would encourage everybody involved to formalize their recommendations and their thoughts about how to mitigate the impact of the airport in the community. Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to speak.

Matthew:

Hi. Good evening everyone, Matthew, local pilot, who's been around Whiteman for eons. The meeting Tuesday night was a great insight, and I'm thankful that it was held. The only disappointments there were the absences, particularly Bobby Arias, Monica Rodriguez, and Veronica Padilla. Padilla's absence was really quite a surprise. She's the one that really was pushing hard for the in-person meeting. So I would have expected her to take part in that meeting and this one. It's a real surprise that she didn't turn up. Considering all the meetings we've had, and the responses we've heard, it's pretty safe to say at this point that closure of the airport ought to be off the table. After nearly a dozen meetings, we found that most of the community has no interest in closure. That in mind, we ought to look at other options such as improving the airport and looking at increased safety measures.

The matter of safety measures and improving them is a very interesting one because we've tried that before at the airport. In 2011, the airport's administration looked at establishing runway safety zones at each end of the runway. And as we saw in November 2020, and earlier this year in January, those safety zones would've been very valuable to have had.

They were expected to be implemented in 2019, a full year before that Civil Air Patrol plane came down and fell just a little bit short. The telephone pole that it ran into, by the way, is on the proposal map to be, to have been, cut down under the safety proposal. It is very likely, by looking at the maps and the videos of that crash, that Civil Air Patrol pilot and his aircraft would've probably made the airfield if the safety measures had been enacted. Now, unfortunately, Whiteman never did get those safety improvements.

Instead, in 2011, Pacoima Beautiful led the charge opposing those safety measures and to writing them as an expansion of the airport; fighting against establishing those safety zones. Now, after their opposition to those safety zones has led to visible consequences, they've called to close the airport, despite all of the community opposition to that. And I think it's just very terrible that Veronica Padilla, and most of her organization, weren't able to attend at their headquarters there at the Pacoima City Hall to listen to the community. Veronica Padilla has made a great deal of comments talking about how Pacoima Beautiful listens to the community and all this and that, but she didn't turn out to listen to the community when we had an in-person meeting just like she said. I don't know why that is, I don't know why she's coy about that. But I do know that Pacoima Beautiful has never wavered in their stance about closure. They've demanded closure to the airport, despite the popular opposition to it. I think that's wrong, especially coming from the people who oppose safety measures before they were for them. And before they advocated against them.

Norma:

Hello. Good evening everybody. I was present at this week's Town Hall and was very glad to see the diversity of people who showed up to show their support for the Whiteman. There have been three Town Hall's, and the goal was to reach out to the community, especially those who don't feel comfortable with Zoom. It seems that the outcome is the same; the community continues to support the Whiteman. I'm a little concerned about the idea of doing surveys not through the website or through the public works, but in paper. We need to be careful who hands out those surveys and how we reach out to the community for them to fill out those surveys. We need somebody who is not biased, if that's going to happen. I would strongly recommend that I continue to support the Whiteman, and it is very exciting to see how the people came together of all races, all ethnicities on Tuesday to show their support. Thank you. I yield my time.

Ellie:

Hi, thank you. If there was incident in county hospital would we close the county hospital? Or would we look at investigating that issue and maybe looking at whatever it is, corrective action, to the individuals? Was it an honest error or was it truly a blame worthy situation? Or would we jump to close the county hospital, which provides critical care for our community and is a big benefit. Same thing. I'm glad that we had the Office of Emergency Management and that the Fire Department is supporting Whiteman airport. I work for the Department of Health Services. I've been an employee, been contracting, for over 20-something years. And I believe in community development and engaging the community for development. The Board supports small businesses, et cetera. But the priority here with Whiteman Airport is one of safety, which my department actually has a policy of risk management and patient safety, which is actually a

model. It's called Just Culture based on lessons learned from the Aviation industry, which is interesting.

So my question is, does the Aviation Division County of Los Angeles Airports have such a policy in place? Since my department has that policy? And what that does, basically, is it ensures open communication. If you see something, say something; it engages everybody, from the physicians, nurses, security, safety. If you see something that doesn't look right, say something, communicate, 'it doesn't look safe.' That pilot? We have concerns. They have safety checks in place, checklists, and as a student pilot, in addition, and a member of two Aviation Associations, I can tell you that safety as a pilot is the number one chief objective in our training. The same within my department at Health Services. So I think that should be the chief objective and everything else is secondary. So I was really glad that I second what Matthew was saying. We need to look at safety as our chief priority in this endeavor. Thank you.

Thomas:

Thank you. The Town Hall Meeting was, I thought, a very beneficial meeting recognizing the diversity of input from various people. From my perspective, as a member of the Experimental Aircraft Association that puts on some of the youth programs, hearing that the communities were generally in favor, keeping Whiteman Airport was quite good for me to hear. Interestingly, after the meeting, some useful discussions took place. I was party to, and listening to, a discussion by Teodora Reyes of Pacoima Beautiful, wanting to know more about the coming of unleaded aviation fuel. She was asking very meaningful questions about that and thought that a greater effort should be made both by the pro airport stakeholders and I think by Pacoima Beautiful, to make the community more aware of the fact that unleaded aviation fuel is coming within the next year or two.

Moving on to a couple of other things. The power pole at the end of the runway there on Sutter, that pole should be removed. It was planned to be removed. I cannot imagine why Pacima opposed a safety improvement like that, but I'm very pleased to hear that the CAC is generally moving, segueing, towards short term improvements, irrespective of what may or may not happen 10 years from now. So removing that power pole and the associated wires is something that I believe should be done as soon as possible. Also, the soundproofing of those three homes on Sutter, Yvonne Mariajimez has pointed out, that based on what was done for soundproofing at homes around LAX, the notion of funding soundproofing those homes is actually quite viable. I personally would encourage, in the short term, doing those three homes immediately because they are very close to the beginning of the runway.

The airplanes landing are generally quiet because the engines are idling at that point, for the most part. But the airplanes preparing to take off are fairly close, just on the other side of the fence. And if I live there, I'd certainly appreciate the soundproofing. That's something that I think is a short term movement. It should be done to show that the airport community is sensitive to the needs of the community. So with that, I hope Pacoima continues to have the excellent youth opportunities and work opportunities that Whiteman Airport uniquely provides to them. Thank you very much.

James:

Okay, this is James. I would like to know, they're going to do any safety studies to find out why the homes were built so close to the runway of the airport? I mean that would be something that I would really like to know about. Also, I'd like to find out from Veronica why she opposed these safety recommendations? I mean, it'd be really interesting to find out from her what her reasons were behind that. And at the last meeting you had a person that mentioned about airports. This is a person that was on the CAC, a lady, and she was saying that they have accidents. She mentioned, as an example, was one of the highway patrols that got hit by a vehicle on the freeway and just burst into flames. Well, that person was drunk. Okay? He was like a torpedo and ended up just going right into that vehicle.

And obviously, you get consequences, but yet they continue to open up these liquor stores, more like 7-11's, 24-7 7-11's. And they just keep making the alcohol more accessible, more convenient. I would say, make it less convenient. If they want to get drunk, let them get some effort, let them do some effort. I'll obviously take them away from the gas stations. I mean, that's ridiculous to have alcohol served, selling alcohol from the gas stations.

And also I was, I really admired the pilots, how skilled they were. They definitely were skilled pilots and they tried to land in places where they felt that was safe and away from people, like the last one. I mean, where he put that plane. I mean, he really made an effort to keep it away from the public or any vehicles or anything that was going to cause any harm. I really think that we should keep the airport open, but we really need to investigate about how the development around the airport and how it's being done. And if they're communicating with the airport and how we can work together to make it safe for everybody. Okay. And that's my comments. Thank you.

Steven:

Okay, great. I don't have anything prepared. This is the first one of these meetings that I've attended, but a lot of talk has come up about safety and accidents. I'm a pilot at the airport, run a hangar there, and I've heard a lot of stuff in the news with some fairly extreme accident statistics. And I just wanted to point out that the NTSB database on accidents and incidents is readily available online. (Technical difficulty)

Teodora:

Hi, I'm Teodora. I have grown up here in Pacoima and currently live here in Pacoima, near the airport. The comments towards safety, and how the CAC started, is very true. Our community advocated for the shutdown of the airport, including immediate action towards implementing noise canceling windows; as well as a noise pollution curfew, which is putting a curfew on the flights. It's very emotional and I'm very happy to hear that the Board is moving towards that direction of implementing these type of mitigations for the community members who live more directly near the airport and have had to even pay out of pocket, from their banks, to implement their own noise canceling windows. If they were lucky enough everyone in the surrounding area deserves to have peace and quiet on their weekends and implementing these windows is going

to bring so much more peace to them, as well as making sure that we do support the community member's health; mentally and physically. The closure of the airport again is definitely a long run, but it's not something that's impossible.

I support the CAC and finding ways and make recommendations to help make the community more aware of what they can do and speak up and know that there is an option to shut this airport down. As well as doing more community engagement from the CAC and having the county or public works be really intentional about how they do their outreach. A flyer on a fence is not enough outreach. We definitely need to have a presence in our community events so that people have the opportunity. No matter if it's on paper, no matter if it's online, to make sure that community members have the space to actually advocate for what they want next to their home versus having folks who use the private aviation. Also, including supporting, I support Tony Cardenas' effort towards calling for a 30 day moratorium on these flights, on the private aviation flights, which are actually going to probably be the first time since the start of these operations from the airport to be paused.

Residents will be able to know what it's like to finally have quiet skies, not have to see a airplane circling around the sky multiple times and also landing really close to their homes. Phacoma, isn't a training playground. Phacoma does deserve emergency services. And I would like to see a presentation as a community member. I want to advocate for there to be another presentation on the operations that are done within the airport and have a good summary of what's already been said in these CAC meetings, as new folks are entering the space and having a clear example of a timeline from these commentaries of what's been said on these meetings, I again call for the shutdown of the airport. But in the meantime, please consider the public health of our community members here in the area and prioritize their health over just the usage of the private ADA Aviation and emergency services as well. We deserve to have the peace and quiet in our skies and for our mental health. So thank you so much for your time. And I truly appreciate the CAC members' commitment to uplifting this effort and continuing their dedication. And thank you. Hope you all have a good evening.

Steven:

Okay. I'm sorry about that, my microphone disconnected. I just wanted to say that I think that it's important to start from a basis of fact whenever you're looking at any of these different areas. And I think that there are a number of them in play here; including safety, community health, the wellbeing of the residents and so forth. With regard to accidents, there have only been four serious or fatal accidents since 2020, which was stated erroneously in the paper as being something in the eighties. And that's not true. There were not 80-something accidents since 2020. Of those had, we had proper safety zones and clearways at the ends of the runway, at least two of those would not have been an incident that would've ended up with, perhaps, minor injuries. We could have saved a couple of lives there.

And I think that should be one of the primary goals is the safety of the community and the aviation community. We can also look at things like departure and approach procedures, and paths that would reduce the noise to the community, along with soundproofing homes and working with the FAA to develop, or analyze.

There are possible changes to approach and departure paths, that would go long way towards mitigating some of those risks. Also, the unleaded aviation fuel is coming. Most of the planes that you see at the airport can use that on their lower compression engines and there's a big push to get 94 unleaded at the airport. I think that's a good thing. I think that consensus could be built to solve most of these problems; maybe not to everyone's final desired goal, whether it be closing the airport or doing nothing and keeping it the way it is, but somewhere in the middle, if everyone is willing to start from a factual basis and then work towards those goals, using those facts and the options that are available to them. So that's just, my suggestion is to look at the facts, particularly with respect to accidents and incidents, and then go from there. Thanks for your time and keep up good work.