

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION

NORTHWEST REGION  
FAA BUILDING KING COUNTY INT'L AIRPORT  
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98108



DATE: July 30, 1979  
IN REPLY REFER TO: ANW-614  
SUBJECT: North Clear Zone Recreation Plan Study  
*Sea-Tac International Airport*  
FROM: Environmental Planning Officer, ANW-614  
TO: The Files

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On July 25, 1979, I attended the first meeting of the advisory committee for the subject study. About 40 people were in attendance. These included Dave McNeil and Janis Snoey (consultants), Ed Parks (Port of Seattle), and Dave Baugh (King County). Also in attendance were Jack Block (Port Commissioner) and Dotty Harper (Highline Community Council). *661*

Dave McNeil and Janis Snoey made a presentation of some of the conceptual ideas for a recreation plan, including four alternatives. They also discussed certain parameters within which any such plans will have to be developed (e.g., involving soils, drainage, slopes, etc.). They mentioned that the main purpose of the meeting is to find out what the community wants (i.e., a first cut at it). Dotty Harper said more data is required to determine what the recreation needs are for the community. She said that the Highline Community Plan and the Sea-Tac Communities Plan are too general.

Janis Snoey began a discussion of FAA recommendations based on our recent meeting. She said that one of the FAA concerns involves large assemblies of people in the recreation areas. The question was raised on what constitutes a large assembly of people. She said, as an example, 30 people in the Sunset gym. I mentioned that FAA does not have specific quantitative guidelines on this subject and that much of this involves judgment and just common sense. There was much discussion on the types of recreation uses which could involve many persons at any one time (e.g., 200 people at a soccer field). One person said that there is a commercial/industrial use area north of Sea-Tac. She asked me how many people worked there. I said I did not know. She said that if it is okay for people to work there, then why is FAA so concerned about recreation uses in the area. She said if FAA is so concerned with safety, then why are people permitted to work there.

Based on some further discussions, I described the clear zone requirements as well as the land acquisition area which involved primarily

land use compatibility considerations. Although the title implies that the entire study area is clear zone, I mentioned that this is technically not the case. I explained that as far as safety is concerned, the clear zone area should definitely not be used for any intensive recreation activities. In the compatible land use areas, I mentioned that such uses should also be avoided in the runway centerline extended areas. Again, the question was raised on what constitutes unacceptable intensive uses in terms of numbers of people. I mentioned that golf courses, playfields, soccer fields, etc., would be acceptable if large, fixed spectator facilities are not developed. A few benches on the sidelines would be fine.

One person said that a study by Peter Breysse (UW professor) indicates that noise levels are such that there will be physical harm to people using such recreation facilities. I mentioned that noise impacts should be considered in the development of a final plan. Other issues mentioned included potential bird problems, lighting for recreation fields, and air quality problems. This prompted one person to ask if FAA was against recreation. I said that is not our intent or desire.

There were several people expressing an interest in developing extensive facilities ranging from motorcycle trails to indoor swimming pools. Another group did not want soccer fields or tennis courts across the street from their houses because of added noise, litter, and vandalism.

Other issues discussed included the need to develop a plan which can be implemented in logical phases (short-range vs. long-range). Also, the plan should consider the overall community, including the south clear zone and land acquisition area uses. A discussion also occurred on whether we are talking about a neighborhood park or a regional park. Most agreed that it will be regional in character.

Jerry VanNoctric, representing the Highline Recreation Council (20,000 members), mentioned the need for ATV areas, playing fields which are spread out, retention of streets and existing vegetation, bike routes jogging trails, and fields for softball, soccer, and outdoor basketball. She did not want a huge parking area developed.

The group as a whole wants more specific guidelines from FAA as to what we feel is acceptable or unacceptable (quantitative guidelines rather than qualitative). Consultant will contact us in a few days to discuss this subject in more detail. I will call headquarters and find out about similar experiences at other large airports as well as any new guideline information which they may have or are

*quantitative - pertaining to quantity*  
*qualitative - pertaining to quality*

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contemplating concerning this matter. Next meeting for this group will be August 8. I feel we need to work very closely with all interested parties on this study. The study will involve some six months to complete. This study could set some precedents in compatible land use considerations near major airports, involving recreational activities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'GWSaito', with a stylized flourish at the end.

GEORGE K. SAITO

ANW-614:GKSaito:mlj:X2633:7/31/79  
File:ANW-610:Site File A