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**To:** Sean Scanlon, Tweed Airport

**Date:** December 18, 2019

**From:** Shawn Callaghan, FHI

**Subject:** **December 11, 2019 New Haven public meeting for Tweed Master Plan Update**

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The first public meeting for the Tweed-New Haven Airport Master Plan Update was conducted from 6:30pm to 8:30pm at the Nathan Hale School at 480 Townsend Avenue in New Haven on December 11, 2019. The consultant team set up five informational stations to educate attendees from the surrounding community about the Master Plan process, its components, requirements, and methodology. The team also provided mapping to ascertain where attendees resided.

The Public Meeting was attended by approximately 75 members of the community along with several members of the project team and Tweed Airport staff.

The public meeting began with an introduction of the project team and the newly appointed Executive Director of Tweed Airport, Sean Scanlon. Mr. Scanlon said that he has only been director for three weeks and is eager to meet with airport neighbors one-on-one to discuss issues and respond to questions residents may have with the airport. Mr. Scanlon also provided his cell phone number (203-800-6331) for anyone that wanted to talk with him directly.

Jeff Wood of McFarland Johnson, the project manager for the Master Plan Update, made a 20-minute presentation on the planning project recently initiated by Tweed Airport. Mr. Wood explained what an airport Master Plan is, the need for the Master Plan, the Master Planning process, and the project schedule. He talked about elements from the last Master Plan that had been instituted. He explained the public outreach plan for the project, welcomed comments, and encouraged participation from the public as the team releases more information. The attendees were informed of several methods to provide input into the Master Planning process, including speaking with the project team at the public meetings, the comment form on the project website ([www.tweedmasterplan.com](http://www.tweedmasterplan.com)), paper comment forms at the meetings, and Facebook/Twitter pages.

After the presentation was completed, the attendees were asked to provide comments and input for consideration at this early stage of the planning process. Comments by the public included the history of the airport and its relationship with neighborhood residents, specific concerns about the impact of airport noise and fumes on nearby residents, and airport expansion. The following is a summary of the issues and comments raised by various community members during the course of the meeting. Please note that the attendees mostly live in New Haven close to the airport.



### Verbal comments heard during the meeting:

- One attendee commented that the proposed Master Plan has nothing about people in it, and the health issues associated with living near the airport included increases in heart disease, asthma, stress, and deteriorating mental health. She stated as pollution increases the health of the community was at risk.
- One Hamden resident that came from an aviation family commented that the area is held back because it does not have a real airport. He supported an expansion to bring business and economic development to the New Haven area.
- Several residents expressed concern about the previous information received from Tim Larson, the former Tweed Airport Executive Director. They were told there would be no runway expansion in exchange for a concession to lengthen the runway safety area and now there is talk of expansion again.
- Several attendees said the Airport should wait for the court case to be settled before doing the Master Plan Update.
- Considering how the economic projections of the 2002 Master Plan did not materialize, one resident expressed skepticism that the economic benefits promoting runway expansion in the new Master Plan would be accurate. The locals will not realize the economic benefits, only folks from outside the area will spend money on eating out, hotels, etc. When the new Master Plan does the economic analysis, the benefits should be more accurate. In the last Master Plan, the conclusion was that there would be no effect to property values, but the property values in New Haven have a 3% reduction in value. New Haven loses real estate revenue, so be more realistic in this Master Plan.
- One attendee asked if the airport is profitable and what tax money is used to support the airport. She understood that FAA pays for 95% of developing a Master Plan, but why put in more money if it won't benefit the neighbors? Who will benefit from this?
- Several complaints were voiced about Tweed not being a good neighbor, and people in the neighborhoods surrounding the airport not trusting the airport. The past promises, including the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that was recently overturned, were not honored so they don't trust this process. Lack of trust and a need for respect was brought up by several attendees.
- Some of the negative effects from the airport that were voiced included: cracked ceilings, noise (especially between 6:00 and 6:15am), vibrations, jet fumes, jet fuel spilling on properties, traffic and speeding, and Uber vehicles parking in the neighborhoods.
- One resident stressed the importance of reviewing the last Master Plan and seeing where that one came up short. Learning from those shortcomings, and how the projections did not line up is valuable to this Master Planning process.
- Some residents suggested that the airport should be made better, but not necessarily bigger.
- One resident stated that if you want to make everyone happy, expand Sikorsky Airport rather than Tweed. Sikorsky has industrial uses surrounding it, not residential. The access is better from the highway and does not go through residential streets. The bigger airport should be at Sikorsky, especially with the gambling that will be coming to that area. Sikorsky is big competition to Tweed.

- Many attendees asked Airport representatives what length was planned for the runway, and how big planes will be in the future. Mr. Scanlon stated that he was talking with several carriers, who need different runway lengths to operate. No decisions have been made yet, and this Master Plan process will help to understand the future needs.
- One attendee asked how much the Master Plan project would cost, and the team answered about \$800,000.
- One attendee stated that he would like to see the airport expand. He stressed the need to work together, and how great it is to fly out of Tweed. He agreed that Yale was an important user and more people should be brought in the use the airport.
- One resident claimed that houses would be taken as part of this new Master Plan. Mr. Scanlon answered that eminent domain and the taking of houses/properties has never been discussed.
- Several residents added that the water table is a threat to this neighborhood and climate modelling should be completed before anything else. One questioned whether the airport should continue to be located here. Mr. Scanlon said that the airport is independently working with an environmental consultant on climate change and resiliency independently of the Master Plan with findings that will be integrated into the Master Plan. The airport recently installed a tide gate, which should help with flooding.
- Several attendees asked if the runway expansion was a done deal. Mr. Scanlon assured people that no decisions have been made and this is the start of the conversation. All factors will be taken into account, including all public comments, when developing the Master Plan.