

## Discussion Points with FAA Responses

### Focus Group Meeting #1 – Phase 2 of the EIS Group A – September 25, 2007

#### Rick Rose, Grandview Heights Citizens Association

**Comment:** The EIS should take into account the significant historic resources in the area.

**FAA Response:** FAA is doing a complete inventory of National, state and local historic resources, including individual properties and districts in the EIS study area. The potential impacts to these resources will be disclosed in the Draft EIS.

**Comment:** Will FAA/URS meet with individual homeowners and conduct surveys of each of the historic properties in the EIS study area?

**FAA Response:** No, FAA will not be meeting individually with each of the historic property homeowners in the EIS study. However, FAA will prepare a detailed inventory of all historic properties in the EIS study area and evaluate the potential for impacts to each property. In the event our inventory indicates that a property is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic places, it is likely that the property owner will be contacted and interviewed and permission sought to have further access to the property.

**Comment:** The EIS should evaluate the socioeconomic impacts of the Proposed Project.

**FAA Response:** The Draft EIS will contain an analysis of the potential socioeconomic impacts of the No-Action, Proposed Project and other reasonable alternatives.

**Comment:** West Palm Beach should not shoulder the burden for growth in the region.

**FAA Response:** Decisions concerning regional growth are and should be made within the local jurisdictions concerned. These issues should be taken up by the Regional Planning Council and local political subdivisions.

**Comment:** A representative from Pineapple Park should be invited to the Focus Group meetings.

**FAA Response:** Please provide FAA with the name and contact information for a representative from Pineapple Park and FAA will invite a representative from this neighborhood to the future Focus Group Meetings.

### **Jose Rodriguez, Vedado Neighborhood Association**

**Comment:** Communication between the community and FAA needs improvement.

**FAA Response:** The FAA Administrator has issued and established an agency-wide public participation policy. In conformance with this policy, the EIS team has developed an extensive Public Involvement Program to foster effective coordination and communication with the public. FAA will strive to respond to inquiries on the EIS in a timely manner.

**Comment:** Will improvements to the national airspace system be considered in the EIS?

**FAA Response:** Only those improvements that may be required as a result of selection of an airport development alternative. The airspace in South Florida was recently studied and modified to help optimize the flow of aircraft in system. FAA will however, evaluate demand management alternatives in the Draft EIS.

### **Nancy Pullum, El Cid Historic Neighborhood Association**

**Comment:** If I cannot attend on the assigned night, could I attend on the other night? Also, can I appoint another person if I can not attend a meeting?

**FAA Response:** Yes to both. It is important that a representative of your community attend the meetings to keep informed on the EIS process.

**Comment:** Will general aviation and commercial passenger aviation be treated differently in the EIS?

**FAA Response:** FAA will consider all aircraft operations in the EIS. The differences in the characteristics between GA and commercial passenger operations will be taken into consideration in the EIS.

**Comment:** Will FAA collaborate with the local communities in the data gathering effort?

**FAA Response:** If there is specific data on a neighborhood that you would like the FAA to consider or include in the EIS, please provide this information to the FAA. FAA will not however, collaborate with local communities in the development of the forecast of aircraft operations that will be used in the EIS.

**Gail Meade, CCAN Vice-Chair**

**Comment:** The Proposed Project appears to be for the purpose of accommodating general aviation activity.

**FAA Response:** The Proposed Project will increase the annual and hourly operational capacity of PBIA, reduce existing and projected levels of operational delay, and enhance ground safety for all types of aircraft operating at PBIA.

**Comment:** The EIS needs to consider if the region and airport will continue to grow.

**FAA Response:** The EIS will consider future growth rates associated with PBIA and the region.

**Comment:** A new airport location should be considered.

**FAA Response:** In the alternatives evaluation for the EIS, the FAA will evaluate the development of a new airport to replace PBIA as an alternative to the Proposed Project.

### **Elizee Michelle, Westgate CRA**

**Comment:** A representative from the Westgate Neighborhood Association should be invited to the focus group meetings.

**FAA Response:** Please provide FAA with the name and contact information for a representative from the Westgate Neighborhood Association and FAA will invite a representative from this neighborhood to the future Focus Group Meetings.

### **Sarah Hannah, Palm Beach**

**Comment:** When will the project alternatives be provided?

**FAA Response:** FAA will provide the Focus Group representatives with an overview of the alternatives analysis at the next Focus Group meeting that is scheduled for mid-November, 2007, and for the general public at the Alternative Workshop that is scheduled for the end of November, 2007.

**Comment:** Could meeting minutes be prepared and disseminated to Focus Group members to understand issues from the other night's meeting?

**FAA Response:** FAA is not keeping official minutes of the Focus Group meetings. However, FAA will prepare a listing of "discussion items" and FAA's responses to those discussion items for all Focus Group meetings held. These discussion items and FAA's responses will be posted on the EIS web-site within 30 days of the date of each Focus Group meeting.

**Comment:** Is the Proposed Project needed to accommodate existing or future operations?

**FAA Response:** The Proposed Project is needed to accommodate both existing and future operational conditions at PBIA.

**Comment:** Noise is the primary environmental issue in Palm Beach.

**FAA Response:** FAA acknowledges that aircraft noise is an issue in the community. FAA is conducting an extensive analysis of potential noise impacts associated with the Proposed Project and reasonable

alternatives. In addition to the “standard” noise analysis required by FAA guidance, FAA has expanded the scope of the noise analysis to include supplemental metrics other than DNL, and operational conditions such as “average day, busy month” and “busy day” will also be included in the EIS noise analysis.

**Comment:** The EIS should consider the slowing population growth in the area.

**FAA Response:** The EIS will consider future growth rates associated with PBC and the region.

### **Tom Conboy, Poinciana Park Neighborhood Association**

**Comment:** The forecast of enplanements are three times the growth rate of the area.

**FAA Response:** FAA acknowledges that there are variations in growth patterns and rates in communities over time. In addition, there are numerous factors that go into the development of the aviation forecasts for an airport. The PBC DOA prepared aviation activity forecasts for PBC in a document titled “*Palm Beach International Airport Forecast Study, December 2005*”. FAA thoroughly reviewed the PBC DOA’s December, 2005 forecast and compared it to FAA’s own Terminal Area Forecast “TAF”. As a result of this review, FAA approved the PBC DOA’s December, 2005 forecast of aviation activity for use in the EIS and all other PBC DOA system planning efforts.

**Comment:** PBC DOA has estimated the costs of the Proposed Project to be approximately \$350 million, but the PBC DOA consultant’s report has stated that the project would cost approximately \$450 million. Which is correct?

**FAA Response:** FAA has requested that PBC DOA provide an estimate of the actual cost of the Proposed Project.

**Comment:** The airport should monitor flooding in the Pineapple Park neighborhood.

**FAA Response:** In the EIS, FAA will evaluate the potential for the Proposed Project and reasonable alternatives to result in impacts to designated 100-year floodplains in the PBC area.

### **Al Vazquez, Parker Ridge Neighborhood Association**

**Comment:** I am hopeful this is not a “false” public participation process.

**FAA Response:** The FAA takes the public involvement process very seriously, and is genuinely interested in sharing information with the public, keeping the public informed on the EIS process, and receiving input from the public on their concerns and issues associated with the Proposed Project at PBI. FAA has substantially revised the Scope of Work for Phase 2 of the EIS based on public participation during the Scoping process.

**Comment:** During the EIS Scoping meeting, FAA consultants stated that the Proposed Project was a done deal.

**FAA Response:** FAA has not made a decision on the Proposed Project at this stage in the EIS process, and regrets any incorrect information that may have been stated at the Scoping Meetings.

**Comment:** Has FAA ever denied a sponsor’s Proposed Project during an EIS process?

**FAA Response:\*** We are unaware of any project that was “denied” as a part of the NEPA process. There have been a few instances where airport sponsors chose not to carry out projects described in an EIS.

*\* FAA did not provide a response to this question during the Focus Group meeting because the response needed to be researched by FAA before an answer could be given.*

**Comment:** PBC DOA should be taking a more regional approach to accommodating forecasted aviation activity by planning for a new airport between Palm Beach County and Orlando (a map showing a general location for a new airport in St. Lucie County was submitted to FAA for consideration).

**FAA Response:** In the alternatives evaluation for the EIS, the FAA will evaluate the development of a new airport to replace PBI as an alternative to the Proposed Project.

**Comment:** The forecasts are based on “false” numbers.

**FAA Response:** The PBC DOA prepared aviation activity forecasts for PBI in a document titled “*Palm Beach International Airport Forecast*”

*Study, December 2005*". FAA thoroughly reviewed the PBC DOA's December, 2005 forecast and compared it to FAA's own Terminal Area Forecast "TAF". As a result of this review, FAA approved the PBC DOA's December, 2005 forecast of aviation activity for use in the EIS and all other PBC DOA system planning efforts.

**Focus Group Meeting #1  
Group B – September 26, 2007  
Discussion Points with FAA Responses**

**Maureen Taylor, Pioneer Lakes area**

**Comment:** I will provide the name of the neighborhood association leader for Pioneer Lakes.

**FAA Response:** FAA thanks you for this information and a representative of Pioneer Lakes will be invited to the future Focus Group Meetings.

**Comment:** Would the Proposed Project cause an increase in aviation activity?

**FAA Response:** The Proposed Project would not induce aviation activity at PBIA. The forecasts of aviation activity within the EIS study years (2013 and 2018) are the same with or without the Proposed Project.

**Comment:** What is the forecasted increase in aviation activity?

**FAA Response:** The FAA approved forecast for PBIA lists the total number of aircraft operations at PBIA to be 221,693 in the year 2013, and 238,457 in the year 2018.

**Comment:** What are typical mitigation measures that come out of the EIS process?

**FAA Response:** There are numerous mitigation measures that can be recommended through the EIS process, and they are dependent on the type of impact that would be experienced. For instance, mitigation measures for significant noise impacts could include re-routing aircraft flight tracks, acquisition of homes or soundproofing of noise sensitive structures. For wetland impacts, mitigation measures could include the creation or restoration of wetland habitats and functions, or the purchase of wetland mitigation bank credits.

**Comment:** What have focus groups accomplished in the past?

**FAA Response:** Focus Groups are a means by which the public's issues and concerns are made known to the FAA, and during which the FAA provides information on the EIS to the public. It is difficult to quantify the exact "accomplishments" of the Focus Group process, however, open and honest communication between the FAA and the interested public can only help in the EIS process.

**Comment:** PBI A degrades the quality of life of the communities surrounding it.

**FAA Response:** FAA acknowledges that PBI A has an effect on the quality of life in the surrounding communities. However, PBI A also provides a vital service to the community and has a significant economic impact on the community.

**Comment:** Are we able to view comments from resource agencies during the EIS process?

**FAA Response:** Agency comments that were submitted to FAA as part of the Scoping process are on the EIS web-site, both as summarized comments and the original comment letters in their entirety. Other resource agency comment letters submitted to FAA during the EIS process will be included in the Draft EIS, which will be made available for public review.

### **Joyce Vaughn, Palm Beach**

**Comment:** There is nothing we can say or do about the project to stop it from happening.

**FAA Response:** Once the EIS process is started, FAA is required to complete it, unless the PBC DOA decides to withdraw the ALP or if they significantly change the project such that an EIS is no longer required. In addition, even if FAA approves the project in the Record of Decision, the decision to actually build the proposed improvements lies entirely with the PBC DOA, not the FAA.

**Comment:** Why hasn't Mar-a-Lago been invited?

**FAA Response:** The Focus Groups provide an opportunity for the neighborhoods around PBI to make their special issues and concerns known to the FAA. Representatives of municipalities, private interest groups and other interested parties will have other opportunities for public involvement during the EIS process.

### **Nina Blakeman, Prospect Heights Neighborhood Association**

**Comment:** Noise, dust, and soot produced by aircraft are concerns.

**FAA Response:** FAA will be conducting a detailed analysis of potential noise and air quality impacts associated with the Proposed Project and reasonable alternatives. In addition, because of public comments submitted during the EIS Scoping process, FAA will also be conducting a soot analysis for the EIS.

**Comment:** The public can make a difference.

**FAA Response:** Public input so far in this EIS process has made a significant difference in the scope of work for Phase 2 of the EIS. Because of public comments submitted during the Scoping process, FAA has added over \$1 million worth of additional analysis to the Phase 2 Scope of Work. The Public Involvement Program has been greatly expanded, and the noise and air quality analysis work efforts have been modified to include a Supplemental Noise Metrics Analysis and Soot Analysis.

**Comment:** Reductions in property values and safety are concerns.

**FAA Response:** The EIS will contain an analysis of potential socioeconomic impacts associated with the Proposed Project and the reasonable alternatives. FAA will also evaluate the alternatives for their ability to meet all FAA safety requirements.

**Comment:** Will the use of other airports be considered in the alternatives evaluation?

**FAA Response:** Yes, FAA will evaluate the use of other airports as an alternative to the Proposed Project.

## **Bailey Gray, Southland Park Historic Neighborhood Association**

**Comment:** Will the peak operating season (March) be evaluated in the EIS?

**FAA Response:** In addition to the average annual day, which is the standard operational condition that FAA analyzes using the Integrated Noise Model (INM), FAA will also be conducting a noise analysis using the “average day, peak month (March)”, and “busy day” operational conditions.

**Comment:** Why could the airport accommodate more aviation activity in the past?

**FAA Response:** Although the airport has experienced greater numbers of total aircraft operations in the past, the fleet mix of aircraft using PBI has changed thereby reducing the efficiency of the airfield. The annual and hourly capacity of an airfield decreases when there is a greater mix commercial air carrier and general aviation aircraft.

**Comment:** If the EIS resulted in mitigation measures, is there any assurance that the County would complete them in a timely manner? *[Note: This question was also asked by Mr. Paul Agnew for clarification purposes.]*

**FAA Response:** FAA’s decision document, the Record of Decision or ROD will include required mitigation for any alternative that is approved. Please see CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1300-1508) in particular sections 1505.2 and 1505.3. Mitigation specified in a ROD has the force of law. The language in the ROD may be structured in such a way that time limits to complete the mitigation are included. Generally, completion of mitigation is enforced through the grant assurances. If the sponsor does not comply with their grant assurances, the FAA has the option to withhold funding.

**Comment:** How many EIS studies have resulted in the Proposed Project being denied or modified?

**FAA Response:\*** As you can see, conducting an EIS is a significant commitment of resources by the FAA; therefore, we generally don’t undertake doing one unless there is a reasonable chance of success. There have been a few projects that have been abandoned by their sponsors after the EIS process was completed. In almost every case, the original proposal submitted by the sponsor was modified to a greater or

lesser degree. Recently, the project a Chicago O'Hare was slightly changed as a part of the EIS review. Other recent projects at Panama City and Ft Lauderdale in Florida have been significantly modified as a result of consultation with the public, regulatory agencies and the airport sponsors.

*\* FAA did not provide a response to this question during the Focus Group meeting because the response needed to be researched by FAA before an answer could be given.*

### **Paul Agnew, CCAN Chairman**

**Comment:** The FAA study (Future Airport Capacity Task 2, or FACT 2) that initiated the planning for the Proposed Project was based on socioeconomic factors and is not valid.

**FAA Response:** Forecasts of future aviation activity levels used in FACT 2 were based on growth in populations, economic activity, and traffic demand while also taking into account the effect of new technologies, airspace, and runways on operations and capacity. The system-wide modeling process was augmented with information regarding specific airport operations and individual facilities through a validation process.

**Comment:** The new PBAU athletic fields planned for the Hillcrest area will include two new public spaces, and these should be considered in the EIS.

**FAA Response:** FAA thanks you for this information. All public parks in the EIS study area will be inventoried and potential impacts to them evaluated in the EIS.

**Comment:** FEMA (and other local, county, and state emergency preparedness agencies) should be consulted regarding the shortening of Runway 13/31.

**FAA Response:** FAA will coordinate the DEIS, which includes the Proposed Project and reasonable alternatives, with federal, state and local agencies through the NEPA/EIS process.

**Comment:** FAA should consult with the Air Transport Association (ATA) and other aviation trade organizations regarding the Proposed Project.

**FAA Response:** Trade organizations such as the ATA will be afforded an opportunity to review and comment on the DEIS.

**Comment:** A separation of 800 feet does not provide adequate separation to provide simultaneous independent operations.

**FAA Response:** FAA requires a separation of 4,300 feet for simultaneous independent operations during all weather conditions. A minimum separation of 700 feet is required for simultaneous arrivals and departures during visual meteorological conditions, or VMC, which occur 98.9% of the time at PBI.

**Comment:** How does the public request a public hearing after the Draft EIS is issued?

**FAA Response:** The public would need to send a comment letter to FAA requesting that the FAA conduct a Public Hearing. The FAA fully intends to conduct a Public Hearing for the DEIS at PBA.

**Comment:** A new airport location with adequate space is needed (similar to Orlando and Denver International airports).

**FAA Response:** In the alternatives evaluation for the EIS, the FAA will evaluate the development of a new airport to replace PBI as an alternative to the Proposed Project. FAA will also evaluate the use of other airports as an alternative to the Proposed Project.

### **Kevin Wellman, Glen Ridge**

**Comment:** The use of Runway 13/31 results in noise exposure over the Town of Glen Ridge.

**FAA Response:** Use of Runway 13/31 does result in noise exposure to the communities located to the southeast of PBI. The Proposed Project would lessen the use of this runway and thereby reduce the noise exposure to this area.

**Comment:** The removal of the FBO buildings on the south side of the airport would result in a loss of the “noise buffer” for Glen Ridge.

**FAA Response:** While the FBO buildings may provide a visual barrier between the Runway 27 ends and the Glen Ridge community, FAA has not quantified whether these buildings also provide noise buffering

attributes. Although the FBO buildings will be removed under the Proposed Project, the I-95 direct connect would still be in place and help provide a visual barrier between the Runway 27 ends and the Glen Ridge community.

**Comment:** Safety is a concern to Glen Ridge due to the town's proximity to the airport.

**FAA Response:** Part of the Proposed Project is to provide standard Runway Safety Areas (RSA's) for Runway 13/31, the runway that results in operations over Glen Ridge. This will enhance safety for both the public living in proximity to PBIA as well as aircraft operations to/from PBIA.

**Comment:** A new airport should be constructed northwest of the present location and PBIA should be used for general aviation only.

**FAA Response:** In the alternatives evaluation for the EIS, the FAA will evaluate the development of a new airport to replace PBIA as an alternative to the Proposed Project. FAA will also evaluate the use of other airports as an alternative to the Proposed Project.

### **George Humphries, West Gun Club Road Property Owners Association**

**Comment:** A new airport location is needed northwest of the present location.

**FAA Response:** In the alternatives evaluation for the EIS, the FAA will evaluate the development of a new airport to replace PBIA as an alternative to the Proposed Project. FAA will also evaluate the use of other airports as an alternative to the Proposed Project.

**Comment:** Average delay per aircraft operation is not a concern.

**FAA Response:** Average delay per aircraft operation is a measure that FAA uses to determine the ability of an airfield to efficiently accommodate aircraft operational demand. As average delay per aircraft operation increases past 4 to 6 minutes, delay rapidly increases. Economic factors (increased costs to airlines and passengers) and environmental factors (increased fuel consumption and aircraft engine emissions) are related to increased levels of delay.