



SAUGEEN MUNICIPAL AIRPORT

THE SAUGEEN MUNICIPAL AIRPORT COMMISSION

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, June 30, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Dan Gieruszak, Chair
Moe Hanif
Tom Hutchinson
Bill Roseborough
Jack Zeinstra

Commissioners Absent: Dave Hocking, Vice Chair
Kelani Stam, Secretary

Guests: Filomena McDonald, Airport Manager
Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary

The meeting was conducted by videoconference in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

2. Approval of the Agenda

Motion Moved by T. Hutchinson

Seconded by J. Zeinstra

That the agenda for June 30, 2021 be approved as circulated..

Carried

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None declared.

4. Delegations

The Chair noted that this Special Meeting of the Commission had been called to receive a delegation from the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority (SCVA). The SCVA was represented by Jennifer Stephens, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer who introduced Conservation Authority staff member Michael Cook, Regulations Officer, who is responsible for the file and has experience at the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Also participating were Matt Armstrong, Regulations Coordinator, and Erik Downing, Manager, Environmental Regulations.

Ms. Stephens noted that she has worked with nine other Conservation Authorities in Ontario as well as with Conservation Ontario, and is familiar with the work of Conservation Authorities. She said that the purpose of the delegation is to determine how to work together with the Commission to move forward with the project in question and explain the constraints.

Mr. Cook explained that he has visited a few sites at the airport, including Site 1 where the Commission proposes to remove some trees and brush, and add fill in order to minimize updrafts and prevent animals and birds from interfering with aircraft. Mr. Cook noted that this area has characteristics of wetland which is protected and there are reasons for concern about the proposed work. There are two other areas, Sites 2 and 3, south of the runway where minor filling and regrading would be more acceptable.

Mr. Cook showed pictures of Site 1 with standing water and obvious wetland features, and also presented a map of the area showing the runway and hangars in the south-east. He noted that this area shows standing water in and south, and in the north, brush, forest and a stream, as well as a Wellhead Protection Area. Ms. Stephens shared visual information from the provincial Source Protection Information Atlas, which shows water intakes and Wellhead Protection Areas where limited activities can take place. This information showed Lake Rosalind wells which are under the direct influence of surface water which means that the lake, the rivers and upstream wetlands directly impact lake water quality. Ms. Stephens added that this information shows a

Significant Groundwater Recharge area and a good portion of the airport is covered by these areas where there are a lot of water dynamics between the surface and ground water, as the aquifers are closed to the surface. She then asked Mr. Cook to explain the hazard mapping.

Mr. Cook showed a visual which showed dashed red lines as the boundary of the wetland and the flood plain which would be full of water. There is a buffer area around the wetland, and activity such as tree removal in the buffer area can affect the wetland, information which was communicated to the Airport Manager and Murray McDonald at the time of the site visit. The Chair asked how the area could be a flood plain when the elevation of the airport is higher than the Saugeen River. Mr. Cook explained that flooding could come from the north and east of Lake Rosalind and Marl Lake, and spill down to the airport area. Mr. Downing explained that the regulatory storm, such as Hurricane Hazel in 1954, is the standard against which floods are measured and what is done in the flood plain has impact on Lake Rosalind and Marl Lake. He noted that the SCVA does not want to negatively affect the Commission's use of its property, but if it filled part of the flood plain, this would displace water and create a concern about the cumulative effect. He showed the hazard land mapping which he said is not engineered but is the best available information about where flooding would occur.

Bill Roseborough said that he has never seen any great amount of water that would harm the areas in question and asked if the SCVA would entertain allowing clean fill such as broken cement to be used since it would allow space for water to remain. Mr. Cook explained that a report would be required to show the hydrogeological effects, and qualified people would have to be retained to produce such a report. Bill Roseborough added that he has seen standing water, but never flowing water in the area, and asked the SCVA to take a look to see if large drainage material would be allowed to level the area to prevent updrafts. Mr. Downing said that the SCVA is interested in addressing the safety concerns related to updrafts and resolving the matter. He said that the opportunities for other natural ways to manage the situation and help the Commission to rework and reshape the area have not been exhausted. Ms. Stephens added that the SCVA is not saying no and acknowledges the safety of pilots as the first and foremost concern of the Commission. However, it is important to look at viable solutions and whatever is put in the wetland must be appropriate. She said that the SCVA could engage a Planning Ecologist to provide an expert opinion about whether the wetland is appropriately classed to receive remediation. She noted that there may be other management activities besides filling in the wetland and it is important to work on these in the interim before putting in fill without knowing the impacts.

Mr. Cook suggested the use of predatory birds to scare other birds away, as suggested on Transport Canada's web site. Jack Zeinstra noted that there are nesting geese in the area but they are not the biggest danger. Mostly, the danger is in approaching from the east, when a plane has to be low and trees in the area create a buffer, blocking the wind which causes a plane to drop 20 feet. So the height of the trees is critical and they need to be managed for aircraft safety in the final stages of landing. He suggested that a good solution would be to put fill where the hangars are. Mr. Downing said that it is important to understand the challenges of the area and find less intrusive approaches, with vegetation management being one option. He said that there are many vegetation options, some less expensive than others and the SCVA has concerns about the removal of vegetation in a wetland.

The Chair asked if engineering solutions would be one of the more expensive options, and if the red hatched area shown could be moved away from the runway. Mr. Cook confirmed that this would in fact be expensive and should be considered as a last resort. He added that the SCVA has no policy on moving a wetland and such an approach doesn't take into account drinking water protection and suggested looking at less invasive solutions.

The Chair mentioned that there is interest in building hangars in the area approaching the buffer zone but which is not shown as cross-hatched. Mr. Downing said that the buffer zone is the area where there would be no negative impacts on the hydrogeology and that buildings could be erected there without SCVA regulatory concerns.

The Chair asked what the steps are to proceed from this point and Ms. Stephens said that the first step forward is to know which trees are problematic. She added that the Airport Manager had broadly described what needs

to be done, but more specifics are required so the SCVA can say what specifically can be done and whether a compromise can be found. She said that she will reach out to her colleagues who have airports in the area of their conservation authorities to find out their approaches to wetlands, how to decrease the habitat for wildlife and get a more technical opinion.

The Chair said that in terms of next steps, the Airport Manager should identify the trees in the south west corner that are problematic and the SCVA will look at retaining ecology expertise regarding the impacts. He noted that Mr. Cook should reach out to the Airport Manager when necessary to obtain more details.

The Chair asked about the time frame for the SCVA to take its next steps and Ms. Stephens said that getting quotes will take a couple of weeks, and so should be available by the end of July. She noted, however, that everybody is booked up and she will keep the Commission informed through the Chair and the Airport Manager. The Chair confirmed that an interim report should be available for the Commission's meeting of August 18, 2021.

Moe Hanif thanked the SCVA for participating in the meeting, noting that it is interesting to learn about the different effects on water quality. He added that there were trees at the airport that created a lot of problems before they were taken down and constant trimming is required to eliminate cross winds. The Chair suggested that if trees were replaced with shrubs that grow five to ten feet, there would be no maintenance trimming required. Mr. Downing expressed concerns about clear cutting and heavy equipment being used, but pruning might be acceptable and perhaps selective cutting, along with planting species more conducive to the use of the area. Moe Hanif said that he would find this acceptable.

The Chair noted that the airport is affected by two things: the wellhead protection area and the wetland. Ms. Stephens said that these issues are never easy and in a more complicated situation like this one, the SCVA wants to work towards an amiable solution to allow safe operations at the airport and ensure that the requirements of the SCVA are met.

The Chair thanked the SCVA for its delegation which concluded at 2.25 p.m..

5. Approval of June 16, 2021 Minutes

Motion Moved by B. Roseborough

Seconded by J. Zeinstra

That the minutes of the May 19, 2021 meeting of the Commission be approved as circulated.

Carried

6. Action Item Update from Minutes

A. GRIP/Autocross Insurance Update

The Airport Manager informed the Commission that she has been in touch with Jack McDonnell but there is nothing new to report. The Chair confirmed that work on the issue will continue and the event can be held next year if necessary.

7. Correspondence Requiring Action

A. Notice – Letter of Intent – Community Foundation Grey Bruce

The Chair referenced the building of a walking trail on airport property with loops that would promote health and wellness in the general community while also contributing to airport safety. He reported that there had been a complication in that as a non-profit organization, SMA needs the support of one of its member municipalities. He has submitted the completed Letter of Intent to apply for funding for this project and discussed it with the Community Foundation Grey Bruce's Executive Director. He will provide updates to the Commission as things develop.

8. Public Notification

There were no public notifications.

9. New Business

There was no new business.

10. In Camera & 11. Direction Coming out of In Camera

There were no items for in camera or direction coming out of in camera.

Adjournment

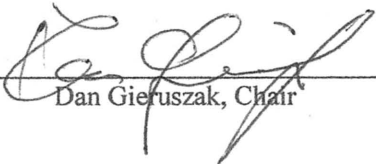
Motion Moved by B. Roseborough

Seconded by T. Hutchinson

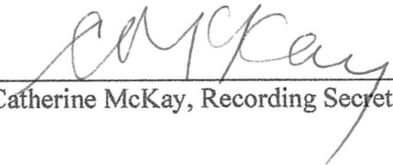
That the Commission adjourn at 2:30 p.m..

Carried

Next Meeting: Wednesday, July 21, 2021 at 1:30 p.m.



Dan Gieruszak, Chair



Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary