

**Rhode Island Airport Corporation (RIAC)
General Aviation (GA) Airports Strategic Business Plan
Town of Middletown Meeting Notes – Newport State Airport
Virtual Zoom Meeting, August 4, 2020, 3 p.m.**

Town of Middletown (Town) Attendees:

Shawn Brown – Town Administrator
Ron Wolanski – Director of Planning
Thomas O’Loughlin – Public Works Director
William Kewer – Chief of Police

Rhode Island Airport Corporation (RIAC) Attendees:

Brian Schattle – Senior Vice President, Chief Financial Officer
Christine Vitt – Senior Vice President, Chief Infrastructure Officer
John Goodman – Director of Media and Public Relations
Daniel Porter – Vice President, Planning
Jeffrey Goulart – Vice President, Finance and Business Development
David Cloutier – Assistant Vice President, Business Development and Commercial Programs
Eric Seabury – Assistant Vice President, Engineering
Jeffrey Wiggin – Assistant Vice President, Landside Maintenance

- Christine Vitt welcomed attendees and thanked them for their time and indicated the purpose of the meeting was to review the results of Phase I and move into Phase II of the GA Strategic Business Plan with the goal of making our general aviation airports self-sustaining.
- All meeting attendees began by introducing themselves and RIAC then proceeded to review the presentation prepared (attached).
- RIAC began by giving an overview and focus of the purpose of the GA Strategic Business Plan. RIAC indicated that they intend to hold another public meeting and stated that they are aiming for a more business constructive meeting to obtain helpful information on how to make Newport Airport self-sustaining. The previous public meeting centered on neighbor concerns which are important and already have been noted. RIAC would like more stakeholder involvement in upcoming meetings and noted that all meeting notes are shared on RIAC’s website.
- John Goodman explained the Preservation of Airspace Bill and reminded meeting participants that this bill is intended to maintain public safety. He indicated the bill was unanimously passed a few weeks ago by the Senate. He noted that RIAC took this route because the normal judicial process could take much longer and RIAC needs to be doing everything it can to ensure our facilities are safe. John stated that RIAC is constantly updating their website with pertinent information and that RIAC is aiming to be completely open and transparent with stakeholders and town citizens. He noted that the Town has opposed this legislation and that RIAC hopes to be able to address any concerns that the Town has in this regard. The words “preserve and maintain” were added by the Senate to alleviate concerns regarding the notion that the bill is intended to expand jurisdiction.
- Daniel Porter then reviewed how the Infrastructure team at RIAC hired and appointed Stantec engineering to inspect the buildings and infrastructure and the conditions thereof, at the airport. RIAC also hired Kimley Horn for a pavement management analysis, and further completed an aerial obstruction survey.

- Daniel Porter stated that RIAC is working to eliminate the subsidies currently required for the general aviation airports. Shawn Brown asked Daniel Porter if the \$80,000 identified in UUU's revenue included just the rents RIAC receives from the tenants. Brian Schattle replied that the revenue includes a culmination of a percentage of landing fees from non-Rhode Island registered aircrafts, rents from tenants, and fuel sales. Mr. Brown then asked Brian if there was any intercompany expenses charged from RIAC to UUU. Brian Schattle replied that this revenue includes all incurred costs from RIAC pertaining to UUU. Mr. Brown indicated he would like to follow up on additional information about these charges.
- Mr. Porter then continued with an overview of obstruction analysis at Newport Airport and the need to displace 3 runway ends to mitigate for safety concerns. Christine Vitt added that the design of the displacements is nearing completion and should be wrapped up soon. It is likely displacement will occur later this year. Christine Vitt stated that this displacement effort seems harsh, but explained that RIAC truly has no other choice until either the law is clarified or the litigation is resolved. And even if one of those were to occur in short order, obtaining easements and mitigating obstructions will take time.
- Daniel Porter then informed meeting participants about the overlay zoning that was deemed mandatory in 1999, and he stated that this law was discussed in the last meeting with Middletown. Ron Wolanski stated that there is a draft of an ordinance in final form, but unfortunately, COVID-19 interrupted progress as the next step was public meetings. Ron Wolanski and his team prefer in person meetings for topics like this, but will check on the idea of a virtual one. Ron Wolanski will send a draft of the document to Daniel Porter.
- Daniel Porter then asked meeting members if they have any ideas on how the airport can benefit the town. He asked participants for feedback on this and their economic vision of UUU. Mr. Brown asked whether or not a consultant had been hired to look at opportunities and ideas for UUU. Daniel Porter replied yes, Ricondo is our consultant and stated that RIAC will be feeding Ricondo ideas generated from these meetings. Christine Vitt asked Mr. Brown if he had any ideas about businesses that might be interested in using or developing at UUU. Shawn stated that he would like to get back to RIAC after he has a conversation with his Council as he would like to relay their thoughts. He added that storage concepts might be needed and add revenue, but the downside is they do not add jobs which is something he would think is important. Shawn also stated transportation is important in their area and just in time parts and materials for local businesses may provide some synergies.
- Ms. Vitt asked Shawn when RIAC could expect that he would speak with his Council and provide RIAC with feedback. Mr. Brown indicated he and Mr. Wolanski will put a plan together after this meeting and let us know.
- Mr. Brown asked RIAC how many easements are needed based on the recent aerial study results. Ms. Vitt indicated there are approximately 25 easements that have been identified that would be desired. Ms. Vitt said RIAC will soon be sending out letters to property owners. RIAC first had to create an Obstacle Action Plan and obtain FAA concurrence on this plan prior to doing so.
- Mr. Brown asked how many of the easements included past easements that were not obtained. Daniel Porter reported back that these easements include all current and past easements. Christine Vitt added that easement requests will be sent to all, including to those property owners where former acquisition attempts were unsuccessful.
- Mr. Brown asked about the National Guard using the airport. Daniel Porter replied that the National Guard owns the property at Newport Airport. Mr. Brown asked if the helicopters landing at UUU are

paying to do so. Jeffrey Wiggin replied that there are no landing fees for federal entities, but that they must pay for fuel fill up.

- Mr. Brown asked if there have been any outlandish or innovative discussions pertaining to airport improvement. Christine Vitt stated that one idea was whether it is possible for local municipalities to own and operate the airport. Brian Schattle added that RIAC is always looking for ideas and input from these communities and our doors are always open to meet with prospective tenants or developers. Christine added that people have asked about adding more hangars, but it's important to note that RIAC must follow FAA regulations and State laws when negotiating agreements.
- Christine Vitt stated that this phase II of the plan will be ongoing through March. She stated that RIAC is hoping to put this plan together with valuable feedback from the stakeholders as well as the community. She had asked if anyone had thoughts on a combined public meeting for all of the towns pertaining to UUU. Shawn Brown stated that due to COVID-19, he believes Zoom meetings will be probable, but that maybe keeping the meetings separate and smaller may be better to manage due to the virtual platform.
- Christine Vitt asked Shawn Brown if he could share any thoughts regarding the opposition to the preservation of safe airspace bill. Shawn Brown replied that he would be hopeful that differences could be worked out and suggested a meeting with the council.
- Christine Vitt closed by stating that it is a goal for RIAC to create a 10 year plan that includes input and buy in from stakeholders so we all have something we can collectively work towards. She reminded meeting participants that they may contact RIAC and the task force anytime and that there is also information and contact available at RIAC's dedicated webpage for this project. She thanked all of those in attendance.