

MINUTES OF MEETING
RHODE ISLAND AIRPORT CORPORATION
GENERAL AVIATION STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN PUBLIC INPUT MEETING
WESTERLY STATE AIRPORT
THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2021 AT 6:00 PM

Please note this was a virtual/online meeting. There was no public gathering location and all attendees attended virtually, from remote locations.

Zoom meeting links and documents related to the meeting were posted on our website prior to the start of the meeting, which were accessed by proceeding to the www.pvdairport.com and clicking on the General Aviation Strategic Business Plan meeting button on the home screen. The best practices for virtual/online meeting experience were also be found in this folder.

Attendees joined the meeting using the link or dial in below information.

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://zoom.us/j/92144227476?pwd=bVB1QjFCMIZrNjdRUj8raUZFMdhlUT09>

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The meeting of the Rhode Island Airport Corporation General Aviation Strategic Business Plan Public Input Meeting for Westerly State Airport was called to order by Christine Vitt at 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Vitt introduced herself as Christine Vitt, Senior Vice President and Chief Infrastructure Officer at the Rhode Island Airport Corporation (RIAC). She oversees the infrastructure group that includes engineering, planning, construction, environmental and IT departments. She has been at RIAC for two and a half years and she is leading this charge on behalf of RIAC, but several colleagues are also on the call today and some of them will be presenting information with you as we go through the presentation. We look forward to dialogue and input from you towards the end of the presentation.

Ms. Vitt reviewed the agenda noting it was posted on the Secretary of State's website in December as well as on the www.pvdairport.com website along with slide content. You can find this information under the public meeting section. Technical support is on standby and the information on how to reach them can be found on the agenda. Due to circumstances, we are restricted to a zoom meeting. **Ms. Vitt** noted five public meetings were scheduled with the first being with Block Island on Tuesday and tonight we have Westerly. There are three more scheduled later this month for the remaining general aviation airports. This project was kicked off in 2019 with a three-phase process and currently we are at the end of Phase 2. **Ms. Vitt** noted the second item we will discuss on the agenda is the general aviation business RIAC challenges and opportunities. We have gathered input from stakeholders and officials meetings, which we will present

tonight. We hope to get public input tonight for this ten-year project so start thinking about between now and the next decade what should Westerly Airport look like. Under the third item we will obtain the public input with respect to Westerly Airport. I hope that there will be some good dialogue with respect to Westerly Airport. There were no sign ups to speak ahead of this meeting. During this part of the meeting, please raise your hand in the zoom function and we will ask for your name and unmute your line. **Ms. Vitt** noted we currently have 60 minutes slated for the public input part of the meeting tonight, which is plenty of time for good dialogue. We hope you will find the information we provide useful and beneficial.

1. Provide an overview of the general aviation strategic business plan process and review progress to date.

Ms. Vitt noted this is a very important initiative for RIAC. We have RIAC dedicated resources on the call to discuss their portions of expertise on what should potentially be happening at the general aviation airports, what they should look like, how they should operate. RIAC hopes to culminate with a plan that we can collectively work towards that is transparent. RIAC cannot and should not decide the future direction nor scale the future of the general aviation airports and we want your input. **Ms. Vitt** noted RIAC is here to provide a safe and functional environment for the use of the general aviation airports, but we have to do so in accordance with many federal requirements and regulations. We are here to promote, operate and maintain the airports for the benefit of the state, local communities and stakeholders or users that reside at the airports. RIAC cannot regulate air space, which is a common misconception that is out there, and we cannot discriminate on types of aeronautical uses at each of our airports where federal funding is accepted. **Ms. Vitt** noted the airspace hazard and obstructions is a statewide issue in Rhode Island as well as acquisition of aviation easements. There is litigation around this topic and when we open the public speaking portion of the meeting, we will be limited on discussions of obstructions, aviation easements and airspace hazards. Stakeholders have conflicting interests and we find ourselves balancing between the FAA, State, host municipalities, stakeholders and neighbors. We would like to be aware of what those interests are. Some of the airport stakeholders, neighbors or town, would like to see less activity due to noise and other stakeholders, FAA, pilots and the FBO would like to see additional development. **Ms. Vitt** noted there is no right or wrong answer; we would just like to see what you would like to see from an activity perspective at the airport over the next ten years. Another purpose is to see how we can get our airports to a self-sustaining state.

Mr. Schattle introduced himself as Mr. Brian Schattle, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer at the RIAC and noted as we are undertaking the strategic business plan one large focus is addressing the subsidies for the general aviation system. **Mr. Schattle** reviewed the subsidies by airports in Fiscal Year 2021 noting as a whole, we have a \$2.4M subsidy to the system. As we look at the strategic business plan, we are evaluating opportunities to address the subsidies for the system and head to self-sustainability structure for the airport. When RIAC looks at revenue streams and expenses at the general aviation airports, there is great opportunity to look for potential economic development opportunities for a system as a whole and revenue streams at Westerly Airport. **Mr. Schattle** noted, revenue stream includes a challenge that 47 of the 50 states country have an aviation fuel tax and we do not have that in Rhode Island. That

money is used to support operations and contribute to reducing subsidies. RIAC would appreciate any feedback in this process as we look forward to addressing subsidies as a whole.

Ms. Vitt noted when we introduced this strategic business plan project in November 2019, there were five key elements of the plan. RIAC will discuss the progress of each these elements in the PowerPoint coming up. There is a building and infrastructure condition assessment that looked at the vertical and non-pavement assets at the airport and identified the capital or maintenance needed in the next decade and similarly on the pavement side, we looked at all the airside and landside pavements to see what their condition is and how much life is left in those pavements and what type of investments are required to maximize those assets or replace those assets in the coming horizon. **Ms. Vitt** noted RIAC also did an airspace analysis to look at obstructions in the airspace and noted RIAC is required to pursue an airspace free of hazards. **Ms. Vitt** noted RIAC is working towards a business and financial plan to look at several revenue generating opportunities and potentials. This has been the structure of the plan from the beginning. We also initiated a task force who are on the call today. There are three distinct phases and we are on the second phase now. At the end, we will have a general aviation strategic business plan that looks at financial, economic and capital needs. **Ms. Vitt** noted emails and letters were sent to 11 host municipalities and 41 stakeholders announcing the general aviation strategic business planning effort. There is a dedicated webpage created to share this info. In Phase 1, we shared more than 41 documents, meeting minutes, notes and advertisements. All of that information is still there today and we are adding to that webpage with these meetings. We will be taking meeting notes from the recording and will post them to the webpage as well. Thirteen meetings were held between state officials, local leaders, community members and stakeholders in Phase 1. **Ms. Vitt** noted we also kicked off several projects that were intended to collect some data that would feed into the strategic business plan. The pavement analysis, building infrastructure assessment and airspace analysis data collection is completed and draft reports are being developed so we can look at this as a whole. RIAC expects there will be some modifications to the reports as we reconcile the information together and we will then finalize all the reports. There is a financial consultant ready to start the financial part, they are looking at the data as well, and they will likely have input. The bulk of that work will occur in Phase 3. **Ms. Vitt** noted it is important to RIAC to understand the future of our airports. RIAC is spending \$1.2M in this effort to be sure we have a comprehensive plan that is a usable plan that we collectively work towards the next ten years. It is important to know, the FAA requires several of the plans which check a box of regulatory requirements and keeps us eligible for federal funds.

Mr. Porter introduced himself as the Vice President of Planning for RIAC. The pavement management plan that was conducted over the summer of 2019 is a requirement and guidance element by the FAA through their advisory circular for airport pavement management program. During the summer of 2019, a consultant of a field of experts, did a complete assessment of the landside and airside of all pavement conditions. The assessment looked at all the conditions and created an index, which rates the pavements in terms of condition. They provided recommendations for future rehab or replacement needs that we will add to the strategic business plan. This provides a good idea of what we need in the next five to ten years and project costs. **Mr. Porter** noted we will have a good idea of estimated costs. A consultant did a facility assessment at all of

the general airports including Westerly Airport. They inspected the building, fencing, electrical vaults and drainage. Similar to the pavement study we did, we received an estimate of project cost. That is where priority ranking comes into play. There is a need for upgrade or improvements to the HVAC in the terminal at Westerly Airport and fencing and equipment for the facility. We did an aerial survey in 2019, which completed a survey of obstructions at all airports, which created an area of vegetation and structures that are penetrating into the existing runway space which will need to be mitigated to keep same utility. **Mr. Porter** noted it is important as we move forward, to remove obstructions on airport and get aviation easements for offsite obstruction to maintain the utility of the airport. There are approximately 1800 data points that include near obstructions, obstructions that are fifteen feet away from surface and are actually penetrating and it is a major focus as we move into the capital program. Phase 2 is nearly complete and we have had multiple meetings with host town municipalities and officials beginning the summer of 2020 to fall of 2020. On September 30, 2020, RIAC met with airport stakeholders and tenants to do a similar presentation and get feedback from tenants. We are here this evening to present to the public. We will be rolling into Phase 3 this year, which will focus on data, collected and hone in on the financial plan.

2. Review known general aviation business challenges and opportunities specific to the airport being discussed.

Mr. Porter noted Westerly Airport is a primary non-hub general aviation airport because it receives commercial service to and from Block Island Airport with over 10,000 enplanements. Westerly Airport is 321 acres with two runways; the longest runway being the primary runway is just over 4,000 feet long and 100 feet wide. The secondary runway is 3,900 feet long and 7 feet wide. The displacement of the landing thresholds are where we lost landing length. There are 19,000 operations according to FAA records. The passenger's services include tie downs, hangar space, fuel, and maintenance and FBO services with Dooney Aviation. **Mr. Porter** noted one item RIAC would like to discuss is the challenges at the airports and one of the challenges is getting the municipalities to incorporate the overlay in terms of Rhode Island State Law, which was established in 1946, then again amended in 1999, to incorporate the word shall. The towns shall administer these overlay zones in order to make sure that both the airport and the towns are developing around the airport to make sure that we are compatible land use around the airport. Westerly Airport is one of the airports that has incorporated this into their ordinance. **Mr. Porter** noted RIAC needs to make sure enforcements are being done as proposals are brought to townships for development for approval. On January 2018, Runway 14 had to be shortened by 590' due to penetrations of vegetative obstructions on off airport parcels that we were unable to get aviation easements for. In addition, Runway 7 we had to shorten by 375' for that same reason. Just over 900 feet of runway landing length was lost due to the inability to remove obstructions off airport. That continues to decrease the utility of the airport. An existing displacement threshold on the 32 end, just about 750 feet, which was already existing due to higher terrain on that end of the airfield. That creates challenges for us. **Mr. Porter** noted we had to return federal funding because we were unable to administer and act upon clearing those surfaces and we lost navigation aids that help pilots come in and out of the airport such as approach lights. **Ms. Vitt** noted we had this same meeting for Block Island Airport on Tuesday evening and they consider their airport a lifeline for them because their modes of transportation are limited and they look at Westerly Airport as part of that lifeline. They

are concerned with the loss of utility as well from that perspective.

Mr. Goodman introduced himself as the Director of Public Relations at RIAC and noted no single airport is alone. We all depend on each other. It is an airport system in the State that contributes to quality of life for everyone. We have had these sessions with stakeholders and we are seeing public input on what improvements and upgrades you would like. This is very different from any expansion of runways. The preservation of airspace bill is very important and we are encouraging the residents and stakeholders to engage with each other and with their local town officials. **Mr. Goodman** noted, if we can agree on one thing, the airports in our community need to work together and they need to be safe. Ongoing litigation has tied the hands of the DOT when it comes to addressing airspace hazards to avoid injuries and fatalities. RIDOT would be responsible for working through the negotiations and trying to achieve negotiations to address those hazards. It is not RIAC directly. This bill would amend the state law to clarify that RIAC, through RIDOT, can address hazards like the other 48 states do. Airspace hazards were cited as a contributing factor of a crash in the past. The last general assembly session took on this issue. **Mr. Goodman** noted RIAC shared a draft of the legislation in February before it was introduced, to the communities and requested expression of support for statewide solution for this issue, which is caught up in litigation and is threatening the runway length as well at Newport Airport. The legislation was introduced by Senator Sisnowski in the last session and the bill was left behind due to COVID 19, but we believe she will reintroduce this again and there will be a house companion to that again. This bill had passed the senate judiciary unanimously and it passed the state senate by a 35 to 1 vote. We are hopefully expecting it will be introduced again in this session, but with this being a new general assembly session, we are starting from scratch. **Mr. Goodman** noted RIAC listened to the concerns that some had and to alleviate any concern there was any unintended consequence in the wording, the bill was amended to further clarify that it is only to preserve and maintain the existing runway at the airport and it is not to expand. RIAC is working with the communities to explain what the bill is and what it does. There are concerns in some communities and support in others. Trees continue to grow and the utilities will continue to diminish. If nothing is done, trees will grow and the federal funds could be at risk if the community is not serious about safety.

Ms. Vitt noted RIAC has heard from communities, neighbors and stakeholders on the low flying and circling aircraft and helicopters, the noise of the operations at the airport and the tree and obstruction removal. With ongoing litigation, we cannot talk much about that topic. We are aware of those concerns and they are noted. We would like to look at ideas and opportunities at the general aviation airports. We heard different and unique ideas especially at Block Island Airport. The purpose of this discussion is to get ideas or synergies of things going on in your community that we may not be aware of. We are airport professionals and we do not necessarily know what you know, and we can learn from each other.

Mr. Porter noted our primary focus this year, into next, is removing obstructions on and off the airport pending available FAA funding in order to remain utility of the airport. There is potential opportunity of adding additional hangars, which does not mean an expansion of the airport; it is storage for pilots to add their planes in the winter months or storage of boats, or something else. There is a limited amount of space, but if you have ideas, we would like to hear them. **Mr. Schattle** noted any idea or insight about not only

development, but revenue streams that are outside of the box are appreciated including the services being provided as well, even if not necessarily aviation related.

3. Obtain public input on future challenges and opportunities that may be present for the specific general aviation airport being discussed – 60 minutes.

Ms. Vitt noted we will open it up to the public input section, but we would like to remind everyone we have to stick to the agenda and the topic of the Westerly strategic business plan. When you are making your comments, please keep in mind that is the topic of discussion here today.

Ms. Sandy Niles introduced herself as a former pilot out of Westerly Airport as well as stakeholder being part of the airport association and noted she is pro-airport. **Ms. Niles** noted the pavement graph did not show the new taxi lane and asked if that was supposed to be a fluff drawing. **Ms. Vitt** confirmed that it was a generic graph. **Ms. Niles** noted we are supportive of the airport and would like to see something in the terminal building that could become a restaurant because the deal that RIAC has offered in the past was not appealing enough to put an establishment. The space is unfinished and the last she knew, the company would have to equip the space completely and RIAC would own all that stuff. I think that space could be used for Adam Young of Mystic Sift to sell coffee and pastry without totally finished off that space that can only fit four tables. **Mr. Schattle** noted we appreciate that feedback and we are very focused to see what we can do. We are very pleased to have a great partner with FlightLevel. **Ms. Niles** noted there was a very successful restaurant, but it was a big space on the second floor. If the right thing happens, people will come. The right thing could draw in people from the town. **Mr. Schattle** noted that is the exact type of feedback we are looking for. **Ms. Niles** noted people would like us better if everyone was more aware of the very generous allocation of land for the police department. Some people who are opposed to the airport because airplanes make sounds and we need clear approaches. They think the town gets nothing out of the presence of the airport and anything that can be done marketing wise to remind the non-aviation people of Westerly that we have an airport as a response for civil defense and the airport is giving land to its town for its police station and it really costs the town nothing but we get the economical and the utility benefits of having it. **Ms. Vitt** noted we have captured all of this information. **Ms. Niles** noted she appreciates how hard RIAC works. You have a tough mandate and you need support. We will get you letters and work a little harder to explain the benefits to the town council and state representatives because there are vocal opponents that have their ears.

Mr. Sean Collins introduced himself as the regional manager for the Rhode Island Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association and thanked **Ms. Niles** for raising great points. **Mr. Collins** noted one thing that would have been good to see is what the number of current based aircraft versus your current capacity, which would show what development opportunities there are. In the AOPA perspective, we like to see the idea of additional hangars. In terms of being a utility to the community and the state, what exists for the airport to be able to go to Commerce and say here are our parcels available for land, being aeronautical or non-aeronautical on the airport, for them to be aware and what members may be interested in whether it is aeronautical or non-aeronautical opportunities. A one pager that highlights all available parcels and what they would or

would not be limited to in terms of use would be good information to have readily available for anyone interested in coming to develop your airports for private projects or public/private partnerships. This is something to work towards as a goal, as a target and something that would be tangibly useful for the community, especially for Westerly. Based on the analysis you have to do regularly, I assume it would be simple to create. The core segments should be available. This will go a long way. **Mr. Schattle** noted we are happy to hear, this is another critical focus as part of this strategy. We have a program in place doing this, which is similar to what you would see for real estate opportunities. It is a priority to us.

Mr. Fred Sculco noted he was happy that RIAC is engaged in conversations about food and things, noted there was a comment about safety at Westerly Airport, and asked how long the airport has been in existence in Westerly, Rhode Island. **Mr. Porter** noted the airport was built in the 1940's and it was one of the first state airports. **Mr. Sculco** noted there was discussion about a fatality that occurred when lights and technologies for notification was not quite at the range they are today. There are 19,000 annual operations, 500 per day and there has only been one incident in 80 years plus new technologies. When I hear the word safety as a reason for this, I have an inability to connect as a citizen. When I hear someone else say there is noise from planes and that is acceptable, that is concerning. First, noise pollution is a health hazard. It is not just something that you can transitorily talk about as if it was a cupcake. There are known tensions to fuel from airlines and students have trouble studying and there is a middle school close to the airports runways. Noise not only occurs during the day because the airport can never be shut down and that makes sense. **Mr. Sculco** noted I am not getting the sense RIAC understands the impact on the quality, not the financial income or the ability for FAA to put money into RIAC's pocket to continue to build and build. You have to start factoring what you are doing to our town. When you are starting to take easements, you are devaluing someone's property dramatically. You are taking a person's most valuable asset and you are reducing that dramatically. Look at the blighted property in Warwick that is gone and you will see that. Please do not patronize people who are unhappy about noise or someone who does not want an aviation easement taken. This is a substantial quality of life and financial asset depreciation you have to come to grips with. **Mr. Sculco** noted neither Warwick nor Newport are in favor of these plans in their communities. RIAC is not all bad, I am sure you mean well, but when you start doing these things to the communities and they do not want them done, but you are forcing them to, it does not feel like fair game. I would like RIAC to consider; maybe the town of Westerly likes the airport just as it is with a displacement so we cannot have bigger jets early in the morning. We can simply have what we are supposed to have to function with 19,000 operations. **Mr. Sculco** asked what is RIAC's end game and what are you looking to accomplish? The word utility was used and asked RIAC to explain to the community what the end game is and what utility means? Whose utility and whose expense does the utility get engaged at, please could you clarify. What is the end game and why 500 feet is so critical when everything that is operating there today is operating perfectly. What is 500 feet going to bring as far as utility that is going to change our lives. **Ms. Vitt** noted RIAC would document all comments. When the Westerly Airport was built, the runway lengths were defined for a certain aircraft and a certain need and navigational aides were put into place. When the takeoff length is reduced or the runway ends are displaced to mitigate for airspace safety hazards it reduces the utility of the runway. Utility meaning the available take off length for the aircraft that are using it. It also reduces the

navigation aids that are put in place whether they are new technology aides or old aides to support the safety of the airport. To keep the airport as is, goes against what the FAA requirements are for us where we are expected to maintain utility. Increasing utility is a very different conversation versus returning utility to the way it was originally designed, which has not come up in conversation here. Increasing utility has been one misconception. What we have heard is to return the utility to the way it was designed so it can be used in a safe manor by the pilots and the stakeholders. For the interest in time, we have noted your concerns about noise and as we mentioned earlier, we know noise is a concern at all of the airports. **Ms. Vitt** noted if you think about airports being here since 1940, over that time, vegetative growth has had a lot of time to get taller. Eighty years ago, those trees did not exist. The 1800 data points in the State of Rhode Island are all existing or near penetration points into airspace. The safety issues are paramount when it comes to airspace.

Ms. Lisa Konicki noted we are here and listening to the issues and I am calling from One Chamber Way which is directly at the end of one of the runways where the noise has not impacted my day to day studying or reading for the twenty five years I have been here, but we are certainly not insensitive to the people who had other experiences. In 2019, we brought two well-established restaurant owners to the airport to show the available space for a potential restaurant. At the time, the space that is available with limitations and lack of outfitting, etc. did not appeal to them unfortunately. **Ms. Konicki** noted however, as times change, we would continue to keep this on our radar. We would love to see something up there that is a draw card and an asset that brings the community to the airport grounds for something other than just the flight. Something like a small café or whatever it might be. We are aware of the space and we are always looking for opportunity to complement the existing offerings and help people get established in business in this community. **Ms. Konicki** noted there are many businesses that call the airport home and we do not want to see any additional actions that would potentially threaten their existing or impede their full operations. We thank you for what you are doing and appreciate being part of the community conversations because there are many competing interests and we are sensitive to all.

Ms. Sandy Niles noted the history of Westerly Airport is in 1928 a grass field was first used for a landing strip and then the town gave it to the State at one point. In 1940, the navy used this airport for part of their strategic needs and paved crossing runways. It has been there a lot longer than the schools and some neighborhoods that are encroaching in those spaces.

Mr. Sean Collins noted the aviation community certainly takes concerns of neighbors to heart. That emphasizes the importance for the community to do its part with proper land use zoning and acceptance of the overlay. Those efforts in the past have helped to mitigate many of the issues now. We would like to help RIAC do what they need to do to protect not only the flying community, but also the community on the ground with regard to past accidents or anything else. Emphasis for the aviation community, it is important for the community to step up to the plate.

Ms. Diane Brink asked, as RIAC looks at trying to better operationalize the airport, one of the things I do not understand are the implications of usage from the current number of 19,000 to what. I did not see anything that speaks to projections to change in

the utilization of the airport. I have lived here for twenty years, in the past five years; there has a visible change and an audible change in the activity level with increased private jets, helicopters, etc. There are additional environmental impacts as well. Would you consider in the future, providing better projection on the implications on the things that you are asking. The usage seems notable and an open-ended question without understanding what the future activity levels might be. **Ms. Vitt** noted this is a great comment. **Mr. Porter** noted every airport forecasts activity with existing operations on a yearly basis, but it is all dependent on the activity at the airport and what is available to the airport. As planners, we forecast out about a one to two percent increase in aircraft activity at this type of airport, but that fluctuates on economy and no expansion plan for Westerly Airport, which would increase the forecast. We want to maintain as it was designed and forecasted projections, we will stay in line with the FAA numbers. The most recent system plan can be found on www.pvdairport.com.

Mr. Fred Sculco noted we are experiencing increased activity at the airport over time. It was shocking the first time we saw a jet coming to Westerly Airport, as I live at the end of the runway. The community has a slight uneasiness about what is being done and how it is being done. When I heard they were displacing the runway, and then saw jets coming in, I thought this is diametrically opposed because on one hand they are saying we cannot have utilization of it yet on the other hand, they are bringing in planes they never have before. I believe the glide path is what we are discussing here. **Mr. Sculco** asked if we were not bringing jets into the airport and planes that were different from those normally used at the airport, would we be changing the glide path as we are with part 77 that encompasses over 1000 properties that are impacted. Would we be changing the runway to the extent that part 77 does that it incorporates all those properties. Now, may have to have potential easements on their deeds, which impacts the asset value of those people. Would we be doing this glide path change if we were not having jets and what is the end game, is it 20 passenger jets, 30 passenger jets? **Mr. Sculco** noted there are two airports five minutes flight time from us, Groton and about eight minutes from us, Quonset. Who is benefitting and who is being harmed not only quality of life but financially. This may be an attempt to bring in business, but these businesses may negatively be impacting the community. When I ask this question of what is the end game, it is because when that first jet came through, it shocked me from an airport I have known all these years. Trying to be upfront but the concerns that Warwick and Middletown expressed are similar to our concerns. It is not that we do not want an airport, it is an asset to the community, but this airport needs not to become an aggravation to our community in the context of quality of life, to our students who are working in their school or playing outside. **Mr. Sculco** noted our town is very focused on greenhouse gases and if you want to talk about where the greenhouse gasses get destroyed the most, you will have to look at jet fuels as a pretty high rank in that category of greenhouse gas emissions that are harmful and lead to global warming and rising sea levels in a town that is pretty much encompassed by water in the ocean. It is this feeling that we do not know where you are going and if we go back through the iterations of Warwick, it is embarrassing. **Mr. Sculco** noted you took 400 properties and raised them. You also obtained over \$400M from the FAA, but those things were done for economic development. You own land behind this runway. You have taken one house already and demolished that was there, and you own three more properties. There is also a golf course behind that and it is unsettled as to where that land goes and how it could possibly be extended for a lot of people and raises concerns. If you can give us a firm definition

of where this thing is going and why did we have to have jets when there are two other airports close by that could take jets. Are we at a point where Quonset Airport cannot take any more traffic? When we start hearing jets at the noise level when landing and taking off it is concerning for the neighbors as well as the health issues on land as well. **Mr. Sculco** noted 19,000 operations where are we going, 25,000 or 30,000 operations and we are going to have bigger planes with louder engines spreading more pollution getting more greenhouse gases. I am not opposed to progress but at some point, progression becomes regressive to the community because of the difficulty this places on the quality of life. When you cannot give us an end game and explain why we are not safe in this airport when we have had 19,000 operations occurring. Block Island Airport lands planes on shorter runways than we have. **Mr. Sculco** asked why we need to extend our runway, I cannot find it. You could move the safety lighting and equipment that I suggested four years ago to the 4,000-foot area and accomplish the same thing. The 19,000 could continue as they have with no safety issues. It is pushing in one direction, bigger and economic development but at some point, there is a cost. We are rubbing against quality of life and I want to speak for the people. Give us the end game and let us know where it is going. **Mr. Sculco** noted Warwick did not want it and Middletown did not want it, there must be some message that you are not getting from the people in these communities. You are listening to the economic development crowd but not the other residents that operate in the town. Encourage RIAC to try and figure out why we are getting all these planes and expansion of activity. You could put a restaurant in there but it would have anything do with a 4,000-foot runway it would have to do with the quality of the operation and how well they did it. As far as the other things around the airport, we like the airport and we would like it to stay in the old state it was. Not in the bigger form, that is impacting our community. **Ms. Vitt** noted RIAC has captured all of your comments and we are trying to define what the future is for these airports and we have conflicting interests. We are trying to find a way to navigate through those and come up with something everyone can live with the next ten years. We appreciate your time and input.

Ms. Mary Ann Russo noted she wanted to further extrapolate some of my concerns in line with Diane and Fred. Growing up in the community for almost 40 years, I feel we are at a tipping point. Coming into this community, my father was a pilot and I have fond memories eating at Dooney. We have a lot to consider in the next ten years. The environmental impacts and noise pollution, thinking about the economic gains for the community, we have not really discussed is the congestion we are seeing from vehicles from tourism. The congestion of planes is also concerned being directly on the inbound flight path myself, being woken up at 7:00 am it is disrupted and it is something we want to look at and consider. **Ms. Russo** noted we are at a tipping point, we do not want to become Warwick and we understand you need to maintain regulatory requirements to get funding from the FAA and obviously think about the economic expansion, but we want to know the end game. We want to understand the ten-year development plan is. There is a balance of both perspectives. **Ms. Vitt** noted we appreciate these comments as they are helpful and we have noted all of your comments.

Ms. Sue Cowley introduced herself as the Chief Pilot for New England Airlines and asked if there is any plan to reinstate the VASI's and PAPI's on the displaced runways. It has been several years and it is a very easy and functional safety system used for the incoming airplanes coming into the glide path that will keep the neighbors happy. Is there a way to add them with the new displacements? **Ms. Vitt** answered there

is no plan currently. The focus is on the magnitude of identifying obstructions and hazard removal. That is a great comment. If we are not successful in removing the hazards, we should bring this conversation to the forefront.

Ms. Vitt thanked everyone. RIAC does understand there are conflict of interest and appreciate everyone's time and feedback. The minutes of this meeting will be posted on the website. Email any additional feedback to the info on slide 21 of the presentation. Keep in touch and we will continue to plan the development.

4. Adjournment:

Ms. Vitt moved to adjourn at approximately 7:28 p.m.

PUBLIC ATTENDANCE SHEET
RHODE ISLAND AIRPORT CORPORATION
MEETING OF GENERAL AVIATION STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN PUBLIC INPUT
MEETING – WESTERLY STATE AIRPORT
THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2021

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AFFILIATION</u>
Allison Cahill	RIAC
Dennis Greco	RIAC
John Goodman	RIAC
Brent Semple	RIAC
Jeff Wiggin	RIAC
Dan Porter	RIAC
Christine Vitt	RIAC
David Cloutier	RIAC
Brian Schattle	RIAC
Danielle Fontaine	RIAC
Brittany Pagliarini	RIAC
Donna Melone Courtemanche	RIAC
Marion White	RIAC
Alicia Seabury	RIAC
Nicole Williams	RIAC
Ed Brearton	RIAC
Joseph Rodio, Jr.	Rodio & Ursillo
Bernard Stumpf	Constituent
Diane Brink	Constituent
Fred Sculco	Constituent
Hatsy Moore	Constituent

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MEETING - WESTERLY STATE AIRPORT
THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2021

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AFFILIATION</u>
Chris Grele	Constituent
Keith Stover	Town of New Shoreham
Willy Wilson	Constituent
Nick Burlingham	FlightLevel
Mark Robson	Constituent
Lisa Konicki	Westerly Chamber of Commerce
Dave Lucas	FlightLevel
Dotty Stumpf	Constituent
Gigi Porcelli	Constituent
John Townsend	Constituent
Mary Ann Russo	Constituent
Nick Burlingham	FlightLevel
Rosemary Conelli	Block Island Times
Sean Collins	AOPA
James Cowley	FlightLevel
Cynthia Sculco	Constituent
Charles Miller	Constituent
Sandy Niles	Constituent
Sue Cowley	New England Airlines
Sally Lawlor	Constituent