

**Plymouth Master Plan Update
Questions/Comments/Answers
2022**

Public Meeting Questions:

1. How long is the airport runway and do you need FAA approval to lengthen it?"

Answer: 4,650 feet and if the FAA provides funding, yes the FAA will need to approve any changes to the runway.

2. What is the amount of this contract? How many are on your team and are you the Principal?

Answer: The Master Plan Update contract amount is \$250,000. There are 6 people directly on the team with an entire firm (120 employees) to assist as needed.

3. Is there any plan to develop a control tower or am I jumping the gun?

Answer: The FAA is not interested in adding more control towers. There are airports with many more operations than Plymouth that have tried unsuccessfully to implement a control tower and we can definitively state that the evaluation of a control tower is not part of this plan.

4. Is there likely to be noise contours developed as part of this project?

Answer: The category of the airport will not change. We will do a noise graphic and the Commission suspects that the noise will be similar to what it is now. We have done an AGIS (Airports Geographic Information Systems) survey which helps the airport identify and analyze what is in its airspace, what is on the surface, and what lies below the ground. With that survey it was determined that the possible design alternatives likely would provide more space for aircraft to take off, allowing them to use lower power settings and creating less noise.

5. Given the rapid growth in PYM- do you expect a large volume of public input as Covid decreases? Have there been any other concerns?

Answer: We have received a large amount of input from abutters, tenants, and users of the airport. We have also met with multiple groups including the residents of South Meadow Village as well as the West Plymouth Steering Committee. Covid did not seem to have an impact on the amount of feedback that was provided. Having a centralized email address helped capture any questions that could not be answered at a public meeting.

6. The airport has had challenges in the past. What is your plan to reach out and to make sure that we get to all people who may be affected by this Master Plan update and the alternatives developed? How do we bring their interest and needs to the table?

Answer: It is the Commission's intent and desire to maximize participation whether it be in the newspaper, the internet and, the select board who provided notice to the public of their meetings. There is a solid plan to increase participation and get the message out. We have put together a public participation plan and we will continuously look for ways to improve our process and make sure that it reaches as many as possible. There was also an article in the Old Colony Memorial Newspaper following the second public meeting. All members of the community are invited to attend our in-person meetings and/or write to us at our email address.

7. The schedule looks aggressive. Is there time to get Public Involvement?

Answer: This project will be task oriented with the goal of maximizing public participation. This project was conceived in the fall of 2021 and began the public phase four months ago which continues to this day. During this time many questions have been asked and addressed. In addition, the Commission is grateful to those who made a number of suggestions and will consider each of them. We will be working diligently, we are going to be extremely efficient, we have a whole team to work on it.

8. As time compresses- it won't be long before we have electrically powered aircraft. Has D&K given any thought to upgrading the airport's electrical needs?

Answer: D&K is very involved in new technology and will recommend numerous options for the airport. Several examples were given.

9. Could the grass be improved next to 15/33 for take-off and landing with tailwheel aircraft?

Answer: We are concentrating this Technical Master Plan Update on paved surfaces.

Public Meeting Conclusion: Please send an email to PlymouthAirportMasterPlan@gmail.com and we will add you to the distribution list.

Emailed Questions and Comments

1. Would it be possible to add vegetation along the tree line that runs parallel to South Meadow Rd?

Answer: Previously the FAA paid for vegetation along South Meadow road. Is there a particular spot where the vegetation is thin or has not survived that you feel it needs to be replaced?

2. Would it be possible to change the pattern for take off so that the planes are using the opposite run up pad to runway 6? (circled in black in the attached photo)

Answer: Aircraft use run-up areas depending on which part of the airport they are originating from and which direction the wind is blowing. From a safety perspective it would add significant risk to have aircraft cross an active runway into oncoming traffic from the opposite direction to utilize the opposing runway pad. Jet aircraft do not require a runup but can be idling at the end of the runway while they wait to take off. The Commission will be looking into ways to mitigate without compromising FAA safety standards.

3. Lastly, if option 2 or 3 of the proposal would create more opportunities for runway 24 to be used more frequently, we would be in support of either.

Answer: Lengthening the runway should not have an impact on the direction of the traffic. It may however increase the height at which aircraft departing on 24 fly over the surrounding terrain, and shift the location of the traffic pattern to runway 6 just slightly to the south.

4. Dear Commissioners

I have been a neighbor of the airport during various stages of the past 40+ years. Honestly, I have usually enjoyed the planes. And honestly, if the airport bothered us that much, my husband and I never would have bought a home in West Plymouth in 2005, then to the home my parents built a couple of streets over.

Yes, sometimes we feel the planes and jets are too low.

Yes, we really do not appreciate those 5:45 am jets.

We attended last weeks meeting and have had time to think, digest, and discuss with other neighbors. As a result a few questions have come up that we are hoping can be answered please

- A. Should the commission opt for plan 3 or 4, can you please give more detail about what the easement on the Carver residents property would entail? Would it be for just that tree (or those trees)? Would it be for any tree and structure on the properties identified? How many properties would then have an easement? Why wouldn't the airport commission consider working with those neighbors and pruning the affected trees vs removing them?

Answer: Depending on which runway alternative the Commission chooses as the preferred alternative, the Airport would indeed work with the neighbors to determine the best solution for protecting that airspace while preserving the aesthetics of the neighborhood. It was determined that Alternative 4 was not feasible, due to a number of impacts, and therefore the Commission elected not to proceed with #4. This leaves Alternative 2 and 3 for consideration. At this point, it appears that alternative 2 does not require any tree removal/topping. Alternative 3, at this level of planning, shows only one tree that penetrates the approach surface. This tree has been physically inspected and confirmed that it is indeed only one. The balance of trees (5 total) do not currently penetrate the approach surface and it is not certain at this point that any easements would be required for Alternative 3. The Environmental review will evaluate multiple ways to potentially mitigate these trees and these mitigation strategies would be presented in future public meetings. Topping trees rather than removing them is oftentimes an option. An easement is another option and protects airspace from environmental penetrations such as trees. The Airport will evaluate the need for the removal/topping of trees and would work with the landowners to acquire an easement that would limit the growth of trees above a certain height.

- B. Would an expansion of the runway increase air traffic? COULD an expansion of the runway increase air traffic? Neighbors are concerned with the possibility of a horse racing / casino facility coming to town and drawing more travel to town via the airport. We are concerned with having an increase in frequency of jets over the neighborhood, during the day as well as all hours of the night. COULD a runway extension mean that neighbors could have private jets flying constantly day and night?

Answer: There is always the potential for an increase in air traffic, with or without the added runway length. However, the goal of an extension of this length is to increase safety of the aircraft currently using Plymouth. Many aircraft currently utilizing the airport (Plymouth Airport businesses) are operating with moderate to significant limitations due to the current runway length. These limitations are exacerbated when the runway is contaminated with rain or snow. The Plymouth Airport Commission and Plymouth Airport Management will continue to work with the flying public to encourage adherence to the published noise abatement procedures, to include discouragement of early morning and nighttime arrivals and departures. The airport is obligated to allow operations at night, however, the

airport has historically been successful in encouraging operations that are amenable to the community.

A safer runway environment may attract increased traffic over what is seen today. Remember, though, that traffic has decreased 7% over the past ten years. So any increase would likely not be greater than traffic we have had in the past. We strive for a stable, safe, sustainable airport. This Master Plan Update does not allow for larger aircraft to use the airport. Larger, heavier aircraft require wider runways, taxiways and thicker pavement. None of this is being considered.

A runway extension to the “west” would result in aircraft taking off in an easterly direction, departing runway 06, towards the West Plymouth neighborhood, to be at a higher altitude at any given point in the departure. The higher altitude would depend on the specific aircraft but would likely be in the range of 100-180 feet higher altitude throughout the departure. Departures on runway 24, towards the west would be exactly the same as current. Landings on runway 24, coming in over the West Plymouth neighborhood would be exactly the same as current as the touchdown point would be exactly the same location, no change.

Development projects such as the race track are often proposed in Plymouth. This Master Plan Update is not connected to any other proposal, but will be our best estimate of the community and aviation needs in the future.

The possibility of a horse racing / casino facility is not within the purview of the airport nor is it or will be mentioned in the Airport Master Plan. We can definitively say, with authority, that the extension of the runway has nothing to do with such a potential facility as you alluded to. Other airports located near these smaller regional casinos or horse racing facilities do not attract additional air traffic. Large, national casinos and race tracks may attract air traffic but would not apply if a small facility were to be built in this area. We have spoken to the airport located near Foxwoods CT. and the airport reports that casino patrons do not fly-in, they drive in.

- C. There was an agreement between neighbors and the commission back in 2010/2011. I believe there was an entire Airport Advisory Group that was comprised of all walks of the airport and surrounding areas. There had been a proposal at that time to extend the runway to 5000 ft and it was decided that indeed it would not be extended. What is so different now that it needs to be extended? Many of the neighbors are the same, in fact, Matthews Landing has one of the lowest rates of home turnover, so I can venture to say we have many of the same residents over here. If neighbors did not want the extension back then, and the commission said no to the extension, why is it happening again?

Answer: The previous agreement was the product of the PAAG which served its purpose by providing a ten year look-ahead for the airport. The Master Plan Study conducted between 2007 and 2011 suggested an extension of the runway in an easterly direction, towards the West Plymouth neighborhood. At the time, the PAAG made a recommendation that the Commission adopted to not move forward with an extension to 5,000 feet. The decision by the Airport Commission and Airport Advisory Group suggested the plan be revisited no sooner than 10 years. That 10 years is now up, safety regulations have changed and the opportunities to increase safety and efficiency at the airport are being reevaluated. Under FAA guidance the runway configuration is still balanced with selection of any runway lengthening alternative. During the 2007 Master Plan Study a primary concern was to "Balance' the two runways in length. For safety concerns. The adopted 2011 Plan accomplished that. We now have two balanced runways. The additions that are being suggested today will not unbalance the runways. They will only enhance the Instrument approach runway when landing conditions are not ideal (ie rain, snow, slush). It is a good example of the transparency of the Airport Commission which holds monthly public meetings to gain community input on a wide range of topics. Community members have actively participated in more than 120 meetings since the PAAG met and many of the changes at the airport are a result of continuing community input.

D. Why was there no mention of this previous agreement during the public hearing?

Answer: The previous agreement expired and the need to update the Airport Master Plan is timely. The 10 years of significant and positive improvements to the airport was mentioned.

5. Why is okay to increase the income of a private business while decreasing the property value of neighbors, ie literally taking money away from neighbors? I am asking that the airport commission stand by their previous agreement made with neighbors when this was reviewed previously, and not vote for an action that could, in any way, increase air traffic to a point where their neighbors would not feel comfortable in their own homes.

Answer: We appreciate your comments and questions, and the intent of these public meetings is to evaluate the support and concerns of the community. The airport serves the entire community, encourages visitors who spend money in the Town's of Plymouth and Carver and provides nearly half a million dollars in tax revenue for the Town's. Please know that the Airport Commission is considering the impact to the entire community throughout this process. We understand the concerns regarding potential increases in activity but as noted previously, it is unlikely that any small increase in activity will come close to offsetting overall decreases in activity seen in recent decades.

6. Is the current proposal for only a runway extension to the west in the town of Carver?

Answer: Yes, at this time the Alternative's are only considering extensions on the west end of Runway 6/24.

7. Will there be any runway extension to the East in the town of Plymouth with this current proposal?

Answer: This Master Plan will not include a runway extension to the East.

8. With this extension, will aircraft be flying any lower then they currently are, over homes on approach to landing in the Town of Plymouth?

Answer: On the approach to Runway 24 (over the Town of Plymouth land), aircraft will not be flying a different approach than they currently fly. On the departure from Runway 6 (also over the Town of Plymouth land) aircraft could be flying higher than they are currently should the PAC choose an Alternative that extends the runway westbound, allowing for a takeoff roll starting further to the West.

Comment Via Email

As the Director of Operations of a Beech Kingair350, turbo-prop based at the Plymouth Airport for the past 15+ years, I would like to support the Airport Commission in the proposed master plan update. Our aircraft is a very quiet, twin engine, corporate 9 passenger airplane. Additional runway will better allow aircraft like mine to stop on the runway in the event of an rejected takeoff. I feel strongly that the proposed alternatives to lengthen runway 6/24 is appropriate to enhance the safe operation of small corporate aircraft such as mine. The proposed small runway extensions in the westerly direction appears to be a fair means of balancing the previous extension to the east some 10 years ago and will enhance safety while minimizing noise. I feel the proposed extensions will reduce noise from departing aircraft by starting the take-off roll further to the west, maximizing their altitude as they cross into the West Plymouth area. I support the Airport Commission's need to find an appropriate balance with all facets involving the airport.