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October 18, 2010

Mr. Joe Niccoli, Chair
Planning Commission
City of Vacaville
650 Merchant Street
Vacaville, CA 95688

RE: October 19, 2010 Agenda Item G1 – Nut Tree Ranch Policy Plan Amendment and Nut Tree Master Plan Modification - City of Vacaville Redevelopment Agency, WW Nut Tree, LLC, and CT Stocking, applicants

Dear Chairman Niccoli:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) represents the general aviation interests of 405,000 members, more than two-thirds of the nation's pilots – including 46,900 members in the state of California. AOPA is committed to ensuring the safety, future viability and ongoing development of general aviation airports and their facilities as part of a state and national transportation system without unnecessary restriction to airport operations.

It is the Association's position that allowing residential development within 1,000 feet of Runway 2 at the Nut Tree Airport is a poor application of public policy. We provided our written comments and opposition to the Airport Land Use Commission on September 27, 2010. A copy of that letter is attached for your review.

The mere fact that the project proponent (noted in the staff report prepared for this agenda item) includes a noise mitigation plan showing that 216 dwelling units need to be sound insulated from the beginning shows that while technically allowed, it is a bad decision. The State of California Department of Transportation has even stated in their 2002 *Caltrans Airport Land Use Compatibility Planning Handbook* that noise insulation is a last resort and not a substitute for proper land use planning. Additionally, the State of California Department of Transportation, Division of Aeronautics, indicated in their September 23, 2010 letter to James Leland of Solano County, that the Nut Tree Policy Plan Amendment contained a number of inconsistencies with the existing Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the airport.

In actuality, this proposal is before you now due to a technicality with the Solano County Airport Land Use Commission process – rather than a finding of compatible land use.

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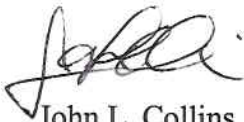
As a matter of fact, the Federal Aviation Administration national policy and guidance to airport sponsors is that residential development adjacent to an airport is an incompatible use of land. Airports operate 24-hours per day 7 days a week. As such, residents of this residential development will be subject to aircraft overflights.

AOPA strongly opposes approval of this project. We urge the City to reject approval and avoid any residential component adjacent to the airport. We suggest that uses that are more compatible with this public use airport be developed instead.

It is our opinion that it is poor public policy to knowingly expose citizens to sounds generated by an active and vibrant general aviation airport.

Thank you for your consideration of our views on this issue. If we can be of further assistance please contact us at 301-695-2200.

Sincerely,



John L. Collins
Manager
Airport Policy

Enclosures