



## AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION

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May 31, 2007

Honorable Scott K. York  
Chairman  
Loudon County Board of Supervisors  
1 Harrison Street S.E. Fifth Floor  
Leesburg, VA 20177

Reference: Board of Supervisors meeting - June 5, 2007  
Agenda Item 15c – ZMAP 2005-0011/Crosstrails

Dear Chairman York:

On November 21, 2006, I wrote you expressing the Association's strong opposition to the proposed Crosstrails development adjacent to the Leesburg Executive Airport. Since that time, the Board has conducted several additional meetings and public hearings to further discuss this proposed project at which you have heard strong public opposition. At the Board's May 15, 2007 meeting, formal action on the project was tabled until the June 5, 2007 meeting. We note the Crosstrails item appears once again on the Board's agenda as referenced above. We also note that staff is not supportive of project approval at this time.

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) representing over 411,000 members nationwide and nearly 11,000 in the Commonwealth of Virginia, wishes to reiterate our strong opposition to the Crosstrails development project. We urge members of the Board of Supervisors to deny approval.

While we fully understand the demands placed on local governments to allow development of vacant lands to accommodate the need for growth, development in close proximity to a public use airport (which operates 24 hours per day, 7 days a week) is simply not compatible use of land surrounding an airport. Additionally, the proposed development continues to fall short of meeting land-use planning guidelines published by the Commonwealth.

We are extremely concerned by what we see as patently false statements regarding the project and its impact on Leesburg Airport that have appeared recently in local media outlets.

One story seems to indicate that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) does not object to the location of homes near the airport and that the agency is "ok" with the project. The FAA has neither the statutory authority nor the power to approve or disapprove development near a public-use airport – on the airport, yes, but not adjacent to an airport where the airport sponsor does not own the property in question. The FAA does have the responsibility to determine if construction near an airport is a "hazard to air navigation." All that this covers is the height of buildings within a specific area near the airport and whether the height of a structure impinges on navigable airspace. These findings have absolutely nothing to do with whether a land-use is compatible with the airport. The FAA simply does not take a position in matters such as Crosstrails. If you doubt this information, we urge you to contact the FAA's Washington Airport District Office directly to confirm their comments.

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There have been public statements made that leave the impression that aircraft won't be flying directly over the property in question. That, too, appears to be false since the Crosstrails property sits under the instrument approach procedures to the airport.

Unfortunately, the Board is receiving their "expert" information from the project proponent and their consultants (the company that stands to make millions of dollars at the expense of the airport) leaving local elected officials to deal with the problems that will most surely be created should homes be built near the airport. You will receive noise complaints!

It has also been claimed that no airport has been closed because of residential development in close proximity to the airport. But what has not been said is that there are hundreds of public-use airports nationwide where homes have been built near the airport that have led to curfews and operational restrictions at those airports because of noise complaints from neighbors. Just look at Pompano Beach and Naples in Florida, Bedford and Lawrence in Massachusetts, Westchester, New York, Ellington Field and Sugar Land Airport in Texas, and McClellan-Palomar Airport and Buchanan Field in California, to name just a few. In every one of these cases, restrictions were imposed on the airport because of residential development encroaching on the airport environs.

We are confident that the Loudon County Board of Supervisors is interested in making an informed decision; a decision that takes into consideration the benefits and consequences that will accompany that decision. We appreciate the Board's willingness to solicit input from the aviation community at the airport as well as the airport's sponsor. However, we encourage you to seek out additional input and factual information from the FAA Airports Division as well as the agency's Air Traffic Organization. Under some circumstances, the FAA will make available to public agencies maps that depict flight tracks over properties near an airport. We believe that data will demonstrate very clearly that the subject property will have aircraft over-flights.

In closing, I would like to again respectfully request that the Board reject approval of this project. There are simply too many unanswered questions regarding the project's impact on Leesburg Executive Airport.

Sincerely,



Bill Dunn  
Vice President  
Airports

cc: Members, Board of Supervisors  
Randall Burdette, Director, Virginia Department of Aviation  
Dennis Boykin, Chairman, Leesburg Airport Commission