



Meeting Notice

Date: January 19, 2007
Place: MDPA Clubhouse
Dinner: 6:30PM
Program: 7:00PM
Board Meeting: Jan. 15th

At the start of the year it looked like we could lose our clubhouse to airport development. A lot of energy and work was put in to insure we would have a place to hold our meetings. Airport management has been very helpful and we want to thank Keith for his efforts to insure MDPA has a future home somewhere on CCR, keep up the good work Keith.

This year's Christmas dinner was special. All the members help make it a time to remember. The tables were set up with real plates, fine silverware and Christmas decorations. Our old clubhouse never looked so good. It was a potluck dinner so all the folks brought side dishes and they all were great! Pat Miller did a tremendous job of carving the turkey and ham. Richard Roberts did the gift exchange MC duties and I must say he did a great job. That rocking-singing reindeer was a hit this year along with all the other fine gifts the members brought. Thank you all for the special Christmas dinner. I certainly enjoyed the dinner and everyone's company.

And now a little business. Please send your 2007 club dues in as soon as possible. We need your contributions to help pay for our clubhouse. You can pay by visiting our web site, MDPA.ORG, and completing the registration form, we accept all forms of credit cards. You can also use the mail and send in the invoice we mailed out to everyone. I ask all of you to find just one other person to join MDPA so we can continue to help aviation at Concord.

We do need to have a voice for aviation at Concord. The tragic accident of a few weeks ago has once again ignited the call to close the airport. This call for closure will calm down over time and the airport will not close, however, we all must speak up for aviation. Write letters to the newspaper explaining what a valuable asset the airport is. It provides over five hundred jobs and contributes millions of dollars in property tax to the county. So just from the economic point of view the airport is a valuable asset for Contra Costa County. Volunteer to speak at other clubs like Rotary and explain what an asset Buchanan is. If we don't speak up the airport management will be the only voice for aviation at Concord and we need more than one voice convincing the public that Buchanan is good for CCC.

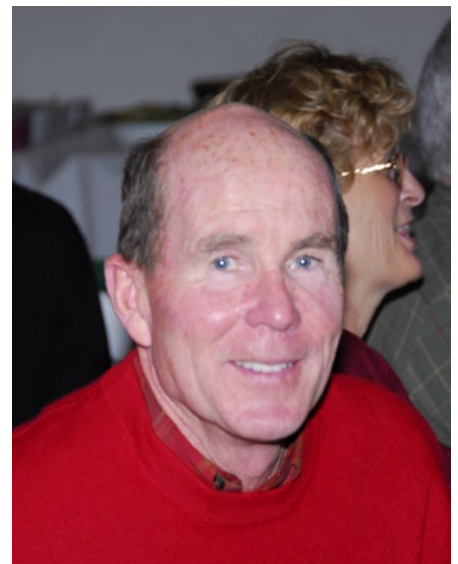
Next month's dinner is the crab fest so find your butter warmers and your crab crackers. Keep the blue side up!

Vince Siebern

President's Message January 2007

By Vince Siebern

Looking back on the past year it is apparent that MDPA had a very good year. There were lots of trips the club went on. We went on two international trips, one to Canada for fishing and one to Mexico for relaxation. There were several overnights to closer destinations that were well attended. We have had some great dinners this year. I bet we have averaged forty-five people attending the dinners! MDPA help celebrate the airport's 60th birthday by cooking breakfast for the vendors and other "workers" that helped set up the celebration.



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 newsletter should be e-mailed to

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December Dinner

By Vince Siebern

What a feast we had!! Turkey, ham, mashed potatoes and all the side dishes you could imagine. Richard and Pat got the turkey, ham and mashed potatoes and the attendees provided the side dishes and it all was delicious. Special thanks to Pat, he arrived about 5 PM and cut and carved until about 7 PM then he picks up his camera and takes all the pictures for us. Way to go Pat.

We had about fifty-five people for dinner and they got a surprise. What was the surprise you ask? Well, the board decided MDPA had made enough money this year so the dinner was only \$10.00. You can't find a better deal than that. What make this dinner special were the table decorations and place settings. Some of our members brought their best china, silverware and crystal so we didn't have to use paper plates and plastic forks! In addition, they decorated the tables for the Christmas dinner. The clubhouse looked great, the food was mouth watering and the wine must have been good because we ran out.

After dessert it got serious for the gift exchange. Richard was the MC for the exchange because he was the only one who could remember the rules for the exchange and the number of steals per round. Maureen, who gifted the Texaco airplane, which is always a big hit, claims Richard changed the rules but it all worked out because we had no gifts left when the exchange was over. What got the most steals? A rocking reindeer was the winner this year. We had pink flamingos, 18-year-old scotch, all kinds of Santa's and a great variety of gifts. I want to thank all the dinners for their participation in the exchange. It was a great success and you make it possible.

Don't forget January is the crab feed. See you then

AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

By Dave Evans

AOPA Airport Support Network Volunteer (CCR)

Last month this newsletter contained an article by Richard Roberts on the threat to development at Buchanan Field by the County Fire Chief's refusal to sign off on a building permit for Concord Jet's new FBO facility without the inclusion of a very expensive foam based fire suppression system. This month, we will follow up with an overview of the status of development at the field, in general; a more detailed examination of the issues in the Concord Jet case and what progress has been made in the past month.

Development Status

As we all know, new development at Buchanan Field was almost non-existent for many years due to the attempt by Supervisor Mark

DeSaulnier to close the airport and redevelop the property for other uses. However, with the defeat of this attempt, interest in private and commercial development at both Buchanan Field and at Byron Airport has surged dramatically. Excluding the 1999 Concord Jet proposal to expand their facilities into a full FBO operation, the new trend began in October of 2005 with a proposal to redevelop the 9 acre tract on which the MDPA clubhouse resides into a new hangar complex. This was the first case in recent airport history, where there was actually a competition to determine who would be selected to develop airport property. Since then proposals for development of other areas have been received to the point where virtually all space that is available for development has been spoken for and there is at least one developer waiting in the wings to take over if any of the currently proposed projects don't make the grade.

According to airport documents, at least seven projects are currently proposed at Buchanan Field

- Concord Jet, a new FBO operation of 45,000 sq. ft. with 5000 sq. ft. office space
- Sterling Aviation (see ad in this newsletter), a complete renovation of the existing FBO operation including new land to expand the FBO facilities and add new commercial space. Approximately 30,000 sq. ft. for the FBO operation with 90,000 sq. ft. of commercial space.
- ADG's 9+ acre development of condominium style hangars for various sized aircraft. This will include a maximum of 49 hangars and up to 15,000 sq. ft. of office space including a community meeting area and potentially new airport offices.
- CCR Hangars (Jerry Alves/Richard Roberts/DeNova Homes), a proposal for the development of 11 acres near the current Reach helicopter facility to include 66 hangars and up to 30,000 sq. ft. of office space.
- DeNova Homes, a proposal for a corporate hangar of approximately 15,000 sq. ft. and 4,000 sq. ft. of office space.
- Seecon, a proposal for a corporate hangar of approximately 40,000 sq. ft. and 4,500 sq. ft. of office space
- East Ramp Hangars (Jerry Alves/Richard Roberts), reuse of a portion of the East Ramp tie down space to allow a maximum of 16 box hangars, 34 T-Hangars and potentially 17 shade hangars.

An additional four projects at Byron Airport are

- Byron Jet Center, 8 executive hangars
- Byron Aviation, 17 T-Hangars
- Byron Air, a corporate hangar
- Holiday Air Tours, a corporate hangar

Of the proposed projects at Buchanan Field only one project, the new Concord Jet facility has progressed to the point of executing a lease with the county. In fact, Concord Jet has completed all preliminary permit requirements and is waiting on approval of a building permit to break ground on their project. All the other projects can be described as being in a feasibility stage and they're watching what happens with Concord Jet before making any firm commitment to the county.

The Problem

The problem is that Concord Jet's request for a building permit is stalled waiting for building plan approval from the County Fire District, a key step in the permit process. The Fire District wants Concord Jet to upgrade their planned fire suppression systems from a standard water sprinkler system to a foam based system including an expensive containment facility to prevent environmental contamination in the event the system is ever triggered. The County Building Department disagrees: they think a water system is just fine. Concord Jet points out that such foam systems are corrosive and if triggered would destroy any hangared aircraft in the

process of putting out the fire. The cost of such a system would increase the cost of their project by several million dollars. Insurance companies say based on their experience foam systems aren't necessary or even desirable and they don't require them. The controversy has raged hot and heavy at the county level for months but the Fire Chief says the Fire Code requires foam and sticks by that decision.

Enter the Board of Supervisors

As you may know, any revenues the county receives from operations at the airport are required by the FAA to go into a separate Enterprise Fund to be used solely for airport related expenses. However, this does not include taxes and so in the wake of the attempt to redevelop the field for other purposes, the Board of Supervisors has changed its point of view and earlier this year passed a resolution, authored by Mark DeSaulnier, encouraging the airport to seek ways to promote development at the airport for the benefit of the county tax base. Director of Airports, Keith Freitas, was directed to work directly with the County Administrator to streamline policy and procedures to get development moving at the airport. A standing Aviation Subcommittee of the Board of Supervisors consisting of the two supervisors in whose districts the airports reside, Mark DeSaulnier and Mary Piepho, was established to manage the process.

Faced with the current deadlock between the Fire District and the Building Department over Concord Jet's permit and the consequent concern from the rest of the developer community should a similar fate befall them, the Aviation Subcommittee finally stepped in and on December 11, 2006 held a public meeting at the Airport Office to hear all sides of this issue. As you can imagine, this was a very well attended meeting, especially by developers and all relevant county offices were represented.

The Fire Chief's Point of View

Actually, the Fire Chief didn't attend but the Deputy Chief and the Fire Marshall were there. To understand the nature of the controversy, you need to understand their logic on the matter.

- The Fire District and only the Fire District is responsible for interpreting and enforcing the Fire Code
- The Fire Code was last changed in 2002. Since no new hangars have been built on the airport since then, this is the first time this issue has come up.
- The County Building Code (not the Fire Code) requires water sprinkler systems for all buildings (not just hangars) over 10,000 sq.... ft. in the county. A good example is that of a well publicized 15,000 sq.... ft. fruit stand in the East County that was required to have sprinkler systems. This not unusual as Alameda County requires sprinklers for structures over 5,000 sq.... ft..
- While the County Fire Code doesn't talk about hangars directly, it incorporates by reference the State Fire Code
- Where water sprinkler systems are required the State Code refers to NFPA Standard 13, a guide line published by the National Fire Protection Association.
- NFPA Standard 13 refers to NFPA Standard 409 which covers the design and installation of fire suppression systems in aircraft hangars.
- NFPA Standard 409 recommends foam in certain situations depending on a number of factors including the proposed usage of the hangar (maintenance, non-maintenance), hangar construction, etc.
- The Fire District evaluates each proposal on its own merits and, in the case of the Concord Jet proposal, after extensive discussions with Concord Jet, has determined their usage requires foam.
- County Health Department regulations require that if a foam fire suppression system is installed, a containment facility must be provided to prevent the foam from contaminating the environment.
- Since no other developers have as yet submitted formal documents for review, the Fire District can take no position on whether such a system would be necessary in any other hypothetical situation. Again all submissions are reviewed on their own merits on a case by case basis.

(continued on page 8)



Russ Roe



Shirley Mckenzie & Diane Enbom



Pat & Nancy Miller



Pardeep Panikar & Richard Roberts



Byron Bowers & Sarah, Stewart Bowers,
Vince Siebern , Joyce Bowers, Kathy Roberts



Brian Enbom and Paul Chelew



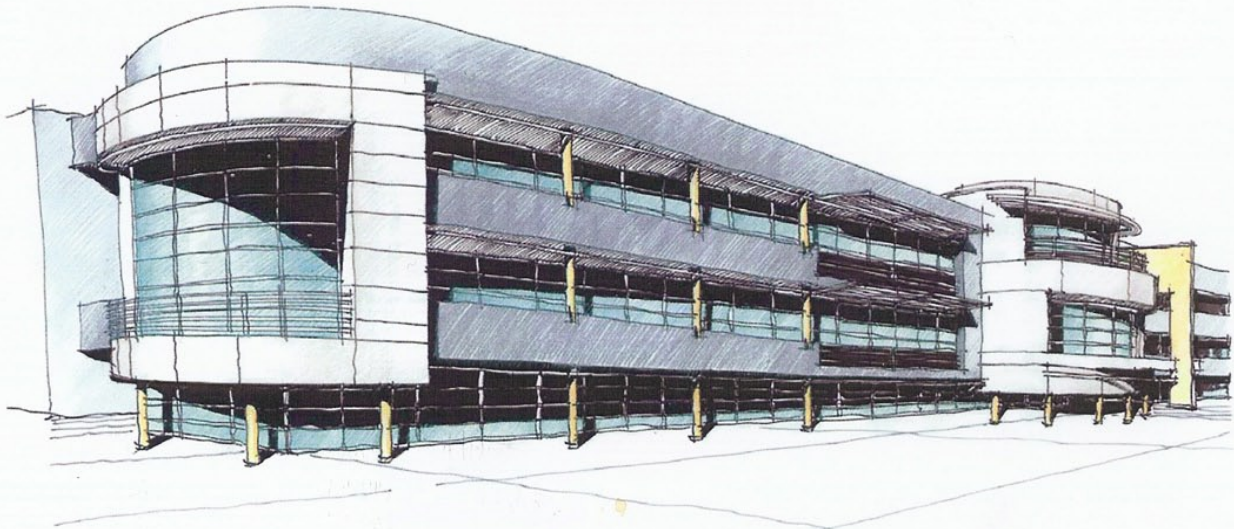
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(From Page 4)

The International Building Code

The County Building Official, who is head of the Building Department that actually issues permits disagrees with the Fire Chief's interpretation of the code. He believes that the explicit Building Code requirement for water sprinkler systems is all that is required. However, interestingly enough, he also brought up a new evolving standard, that being the International Building Code (IBC). This new code has now been adopted by the United States at the federal level and is in the process of being adopted by the various states. In the case of California, this adoption process is under way and scheduled for completion some time late in 2007. Since the County Fire Code currently incorporates the State Code, if no further action is taken at the county level, the local code will be controlled by the IBC when it is adopted by the state. And while the IBC still references NPFA Standard 409, it contains a specific exception from the foam requirement for "Group 2 hangars used to store privately owned aircraft where no major maintenance or overhaul is performed." This exception would apply to most of the proposed projects except potentially Concord Jet and Sterling who are required as FBOs to provide maintenance services.

Developer Response

Based on these representations, Concord Jet stated that they didn't really intend to maintain aircraft in their new hangars and other developers indicated that they might just wait until the new code is adopted before they proceeded with their proposals. The Fire Marshall allowed that a change in usage might change things and the Director of Airports took an action item to meet with Concord Jet to review the maintenance requirements in their lease. The best comment that I heard was that of the representative of one developer who said that all he wanted was to be able to tell his principals what the cost of their development would actually be. Then they can assess the financial feasibility of their project. That, indeed, is probably the bottom line for all developers concerned.

A Solution?

After all the hysteria died down, the members of the Aviation Subcommittee very pointedly asked the Fire Marshall and the Building Official if 30 days would be sufficient time for them to meet privately with all interested county departments and construct a solution that would allow development to proceed. Although the Fire Marshall was not as enthusiastic as the Building Official, they both allowed as how this could be done. The results of these discussions are to be reported back to the Subcommittee which will then schedule another public meeting, perhaps sometime in February. It was clear that all parties involved (with the possible exception of the Fire Chief), want to see this issue resolved and the impediment to development removed with no further delays.

Follow Up

After the meeting, I discussed these results with John Pfeifer, the AOPA State Representative, and Bill Dunn, AOPA's VP for Airports. Bill indicated that AOPA has seen similar situations in other states and that, indeed, the new International Building Code seems to be the way all jurisdictions are going. Foam systems may, in fact, be the way of the future for high risk usages but not for the average pilot owner doing owner maintenance as defined in current FAA regulations.

In a meeting this past week, Director of Airports, Keith Frietas, indicated that initial meetings have already occurred at the county level and, although a final solution is not yet in hand, the general direction is toward an approach that would use the new IBC provisions as a guide line even before their adoption by the state.

In the Concord Jet case, this might allow their new hangar facilities to be built with water systems only,

without the need for a costly containment, if they restrict major maintenance activities to their existing hangars that have already been permitted and built. In the case of most of the rest of the proposed developments, whose usage would not include major maintenance and overhauls, foam systems would not be a factor. The only remaining case that might require foam is the Sterling development which is arguably the largest of all the proposed projects and calls for the complete demolition of their existing facilities and the construction of an entirely new facility. Mike Bruno has estimated that the cost such a foam system might be \$3 million or more, a good 10% of his total project budget.

In this case, time will tell, but the cost of a foam system may just be part of the cost of doing business for FBOs in the future. It will remain to be seen whether these additional costs will make new FBO projects infeasible or whether they will just be another increment in the cost of flying for the aviation consumer.

That's it for now – we'll keep you informed as things progress.



Dave Evans & Jude Potter with the Rocking Reindeer



Bev and John Levy



Joyce, Pardeep & Jennifer



Sarah with Richard



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Blue Skies and Tailwinds to:

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