

BEFORE THE TOWN OF COLONIE
PLANNING BOARD

In the Matter

-of-

a Public Information Meeting to Consider the
Airport Area Draft Generic Environmental Impact
Statement.

Memorial Town Hall
Route 9
Newtonville, New York

October 2, 1990
7:00 p.m.

PRESIDING:

PETER E. PLATT, Chairman
Town of Colonie Planning Board

PLANNING BOARD:

- WILLIAM HERMAN
- GEORGE ROBINSON
- GEORGE HOLLAND
- DOMINIC MASSIMILLIAN
- JAMES SHEEHAN
- DANIEL O'BRIEN

CONSULTANTS:

- CLOUGH, HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES:
- PETER CONWAY JOHN FRAZER
- LARRY WOODS LARRY CALLANDER
- PETER FAITH

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. PLATT: We would like to thank everyone for coming. I would like to describe briefly to people how the format is being run.

George Holland has to read two legal notices that we have to get into the record. After that, Peter Conway and his staff from Clough, Harbour & Associates will give a brief presentation concerning the DEIS document. After that, the board will come back up here, and we'll entertain questions from anyone and everyone in the audience and hope we can answer them to your satisfaction.

MR. HOLLAND: "Public Information Meeting Notice, Planning Board, Town of Colonie, Albany County, New York. Public notice is hereby given that the Town of Colonie Planning Board will conduct a public informational meeting on the 2nd of October 1990 at 7:00 p.m. at the Memorial Town Hall, Route 9, Newtonville, New York, for the purpose of presenting the Airport Area Draft Generic Environmental Impact

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1 Statement. All parties of interest and citizens
2 will be given an opportunity to be heard with
3 respect to this document. Dated September 22,
4 1990, Town of Colonie Planning Board, Peter E.
5 Platt, Chairman." This notice appeared as a
6 legal advertisement in both the Gazette and the
7 Times Union on September 22.

8 This one, "Public Informational
9 Meeting Notice, Town of Colonie Planning Board,
10 on the Airport Area Generic Environmental Impact
11 Statement. The Town of Colonie Planning Board
12 will conduct a public informational meeting on
13 Tuesday, October 2, 1990, at 7:00 p.m. at
14 Memorial Town Hall, Route 9, Newtonville in the
15 large hearing room. The purpose of this public
16 informational meeting is to present the draft
17 environmental impact statement for the airport
18 area and hear any questions or comments that the
19 public may have with respect to this document.
20 Copies of the document are available for review
21 at the Town of Colonie library, the Town of
22 Colonie Town Clerk's office, the Town of Colonie
23 Engineering and Planning Services Department,

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1 the Village of Colonie Town Hall, and the Albany
2 County Planning Department. For further
3 information, you may contact the Town of Colonie
4 Engineering and Planning Services Department at
5 482-0248." This appeared as a display
6 advertisement in the Saturday, September 22, and
7 Wednesday, September 26, editions of the Times
8 Union and the Daily Gazette in Schenectady. It
9 also appeared in the September 26th edition of
10 the Spotlight.

11 Mr. Chairman.

12 MR. PLATT: With that, we will
13 turn the meeting over to Peter Conway of Clough,
14 Harbour & Associates.

15 MR. CONWAY: Thank you. Good
16 evening.

17 As Chairman Platt indicated, my
18 name is Peter Conway with Clough, Harbour &
19 Associates, an engineering and planning firm,
20 here in Albany, New York.

21 The purpose of tonight's public
22 informational meeting is to present the Albany
23 Airport Area Generic Environmental Impact

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1 Statement.

2 Over the last ten years, the area
3 which is being addressed in the generic
4 environmental impact statement has experienced
5 significant pressure for growth and
6 development. Realizing that efforts had to be
7 made to evaluate this growth and establishing a
8 plan to effectively mitigate the impacts
9 associated with this growth, a cooperative
10 effort between Albany County, the Town of
11 Colonie and the Village of Colonie was
12 initiated.

13 The target area, which is on this
14 overhead exhibit here, is generally bordered by
15 the Mohawk River, New Karner Road, the village
16 and town municipal boundaries, Sand Creek Road,
17 Wertman Lane, the Northway, and Forts Ferry
18 Road. It was agreed by all the municipalities
19 -- being Albany County, the Town of Colonie and
20 the Village of Colonie -- that a comprehensive
21 approach in addressing the growth in this area
22 through the preparation of a draft generic
23 environmental impact statement was the best and

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1 proper approach.

2 The three benefits of preparing a
3 draft generic environmental impact statement are
4 as follows:

5 It allows for cumulative analysis of
6 numerous projects before municipalities within a
7 defined area;

8 It allows for the analysis of undeveloped
9 land within an area based on reasonable growth;
10 and

11 It also provides a mechanism for assigning
12 capital costs for needed improvements on a basis
13 for current and future projects within a defined
14 area, especially the area we are discussing here
15 tonight.

16 Briefly, how did we get to where
17 we are today?

18 Under the SEQRA process, the Town
19 of Colonie was designated lead agency October
20 24, 1989. After that, a series of scoping
21 sessions were held -- one with the Town of
22 Colonie, the Village of Colonie and Albany
23 County; one with the involved agencies such as

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1 New York State DOT, Environmental Conservation;
2 and the general public. A draft GEIS was then
3 prepared and accepted by the Planning Board on
4 September 4, 1990. So, essentially, we're at
5 this point right now in the process where we are
6 soliciting input from the public on the draft
7 generic environmental impact statement.

8 The purpose of our presentation
9 tonight is to give a brief overview of the
10 project. As you can see, it's a comprehensive
11 document, and we'd like to highlight some of the
12 major issues in the document as they relate to
13 infrastructure, traffic and capital
14 improvements. And, basically, the staff tonight
15 will present that in an overview format.

16 I would like to stress that what
17 will be presented here tonight indicates those
18 improvements that would be necessary if growth
19 were to continue in this area of the town. So I
20 would like to stress that this is a draft
21 generic environmental impact statement. It's
22 not the end of the process. We're here tonight
23 to solicit comments on the draft generic

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1 environmental impact statement, and that the
2 comments raised here tonight will be addressed
3 in a final generic environmental impact
4 statement.

5 The format for tonight's meeting,
6 as Chairman Platt indicated, is that each member
7 of staff who I will introduce in a minute will
8 present their section of the draft generic
9 environmental impact statement. Larry
10 Callander, to my immediate left, will present
11 land use and environmental issues. John Frazer
12 will present utilities. Peter Faith will
13 presently transportation and traffic related
14 issues. And Larry Woods will present the
15 economic impacts associated with the project and
16 give a brief summary. And we do have a number
17 of exhibits through slide presentation and
18 overheads as well as exhibits in the back.

19 And with that, I would like to
20 introduce Larry Callander.

21 MR. CALLANDER: Thank you,
22 Peter. When we were retained by the county, the
23 village and the town, they asked us to evaluate

1 development over a 15-year period. That
2 analysis basically carried us from 1990 through
3 the year 2005. There were a number of factors
4 contributing to growth in the study area. Next
5 slide.

6 There are over 60 projects that
7 are currently before the town and village
8 planning boards -- can anybody get this light
9 here, by any chance?

10 I will move on anyway.

11 Essentially, those projects included residential
12 development of over 800 dwelling units and
13 additional 2.3 million square feet of commercial
14 development. This included industrial, retail,
15 and office development. Also we had several
16 meetings with local developers, and we
17 identified an additional 1.9 million square feet
18 of development.

19 Did anyone get the lights yet?

20 The meetings with developers
21 indicated there would be an additional 1.9
22 million square feet of additional development
23 which might occur between the years 1990 and

1 1995. In addition, there were over 3300 acres
2 of land within the study area that was
3 undeveloped, and this comprised approximately 39
4 percent of the total land area in the study
5 area.

6 Also the Capital District
7 Transportation Committee undertook several
8 transportation studies in the Wolf Road and
9 airport areas and identified significant growth
10 that was likely to occur and also identified
11 transportation deficiencies within this area --
12 within those two areas.

13 In addition, various studies and
14 reports on the Albany County Airport indicated
15 that enplanements would double by the year 2005.

16 As a result of this initial
17 study, we conducted, first, land-use analysis
18 which we called, "The high growth future
19 development scenario." This scenario considered
20 build out of most of the available land within
21 the study area. It was based on existing zoning
22 but didn't include certain lands. Certain lands
23 weren't included as considered being readily

1 developable lands. That included wetlands, the
2 Ann Lee Pond Nature and Historic Preserve as
3 examples, as well as several active farmlands,
4 cemeteries within the study area, Shaker Ridge
5 and Mill Road Golf Courses. What were included
6 in this high growth analysis, however, were all
7 the current projects before the town and village
8 planning boards as well as the input obtained
9 from local developers and landowners who held
10 over five acres of property within the study
11 area.

12 In addition, we included the high
13 growth land use future as outlined by the
14 Capital District Transportation Committee in
15 their "Airport and Wolf Road" studies.
16 Basically, the committee or CDTC in cooperation
17 with the New York State DOT and the Capital
18 District Transportation Authority is responsible
19 for carrying out the continued and comprehensive
20 transportation planning process for the Capital
21 District region; and the general studies which
22 they developed on the Wolf Road and the airport
23 area were relied upon, in part, for our growth

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1 projections developed in the draft generic
2 environmental impact statement.

3 If we could go to the next
4 slide.

5 Essentially, the high growth
6 future looked like this. We were looking at the
7 development of over 2000 housing units in the
8 study area, an additional 1.5 million
9 enplanements at Albany County Airport, and total
10 commercial development of over 12.7 million
11 square feet. As you can see from that analysis,
12 the big contributor in commercial development
13 was for office space within the study area.
14 This study area was considered but was rejected
15 as not being realistic and being too aggressive
16 in terms of the amount of economic development
17 that was likely to occur throughout the Capital
18 District over the 15-year planning period.

19 In light of that, we began to
20 undertake a second land use analysis which
21 considered significantly less development during
22 the planning period than the high growth
23 future. We termed this the "target growth

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1 development scenario." If you go to the next
2 slide.

3 Target growth scenario looked at
4 a total amount of residential development at
5 just under 1600 dwelling units. Again 1.5
6 million enplanements at the airport. But only
7 7.3 million square feet of commercial
8 development. Significantly less than the high
9 growth future. This analysis was the projected
10 level of development in which all our impacts
11 and suggested mitigation measures were based on
12 in the draft document.

13 Next. The next section I would
14 like to discuss is the section on demographics
15 to give you some idea of what the population
16 levels would look at in the study area in the
17 town during that period. Essentially, we
18 estimated in 1989 the estimated population
19 within the study area was just over 8,000
20 people. The total number of housing units that
21 exist within the study area at this time is
22 approximately 3100. Based on the target growth
23 future, we'd be looking at population in the

1 year 2005 at over 12,000 people, a 50 percent
2 increase. The total number of dwelling units
3 would increase up to about 4700 units. On a
4 townwide level, we estimated the population in
5 1989 to be approximately 81,000 in the Town of
6 Colonie, including the villages. By the year
7 2005, that population would reach nearly 100,000
8 people in the town.

9 Next section, "Vegetation,
10 Wildlife, and Aquatic Ecology." One of the
11 initial activities we undertook was an
12 evaluation of the existing vegetative
13 communities in the study area. As you can see
14 from this exhibit, there are significant areas
15 within the study area that still consists of
16 forestland and also a great deal of open fields,
17 basically inactive agricultural fields and
18 active agricultural lands within the study
19 area. Under the target growth development
20 scenario, basically that projected level would
21 lead to the development of over 1100 acres of
22 undeveloped land in the study area, and that
23 consists of about 34 percent of the remaining

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1 available open space within that area.

2 A number of mitigation measures
3 have been suggested in the draft generic
4 environmental impact statement to lessen the
5 impact of development. The most significant
6 measure calls for the establishment of green
7 belt areas to maintain existing vegetative
8 characteristics.

9 To give you some idea of what
10 that looks like, basically we identified three
11 primary green belt areas for development. This
12 included the areas surrounding Ann Lee Pond over
13 to Stump Pond and carrying up through in the Vly
14 Road corridor. That would be the largest green
15 belt area proposed. Development of a second
16 green belt area adjacent to the Mohawk River,
17 and another green belt area located east of the
18 airport along a tributary of Shaker Creek around
19 the Wade Road area.

20 In addition, I've also included
21 the existing town water course protection areas
22 that are highlighted in blue. This is in
23 existing town legislation which protects 100

1 feet on either side of existing water courses
2 where no disturbance is allowed to occur.

3 Various techniques could be
4 employed to establish these green belts, one of
5 them being the establishment of a farmland and
6 open space conservation district. Another means
7 of establishing these green belts could be
8 through the outright public acquisition of
9 property. And a third such technique that was
10 suggested in the document included the
11 establishment of a "Transfer and Development
12 Rights Program," which would encourage the
13 preservation of land by allowing landowners to
14 transfer their development rights from land
15 which they own in the study area to possibly
16 other parcels within the town.

17 Next slide. Now, I would like to
18 take a minute to discuss the hydrology,
19 drainage, and water quality section. This
20 overhead shows the existing drainage areas
21 within the airport study area. They include --
22 the primary area which includes about 80 percent
23 of the study area is the Shaker Creek drainage

1 basin, which includes Albany Airport and
2 primarily the majority of the lands within the
3 study area. To quantify the amount of runoff
4 from projected development under the target
5 growth scenario, the U.S. Department of
6 Agriculture Soil Conservation Service computer
7 models were used to calculate the pre- and post-
8 development runoff for each drainage area within
9 the study boundary. The major impact, of
10 course, would be on the Shaker Creek drainage
11 area. It is, certainly, the largest within the
12 study area, and most development as a result
13 will occur in that area.

14 Mitigation includes the continued
15 implementation of storm water management
16 guidelines which have been established by the
17 town. It was also recommended that on-site
18 detention and retention of stormwater be
19 required on a site-by-site basis rather than an
20 implementation of any centralized stormwater
21 system. And that is primarily due to the
22 physical nature of Shaker Creek and the layout
23 of the drainage basin. This would mean that all

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1 stormwater management improvements would be
2 undertaken at the time an individual project was
3 constructed in order to mitigate the impacts of
4 additional stormwater runoff.

5 I would now like to turn over at
6 this point to John Frazer, who will review the
7 section on utilities.

8 MR. FRAZER: Thank you, Larry.

9 Our evaluation of utilities
10 included a study of five different utilities.
11 Next slide, please.

12 They include electric, gas,
13 telephone, water and sanitary sewer. Providing
14 these services to the study area include: For
15 electric, Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation; also
16 for gas, Niagara Mohawk; telephone service is
17 provided by the New York Telephone Company.
18 Water is provided by two entities. The majority
19 of the study area water is provided by the
20 Latham Water District, and a small portion of
21 the study-area water demand is met by the
22 Village of Colonie. Sanitary sewer is provided
23 in the majority of the study area by the Town of

1 Colonie Pure Waters Department. Also providing
2 service is the Albany County Sewer District and
3 the Village of Colonie.

4 Our evaluation included, first, a
5 letter to each agency describing the project in
6 not too much detail but enough to introduce the
7 personnel reviewing it to the study area. Also
8 included was a request for information, which
9 included any existing mapping, facilities
10 mapping that they could provide us as well as
11 input as to the improvements that would be
12 required as a result of the growth in the study
13 area.

14 Following that letter would be a
15 meeting in which we discussed with specific
16 personnel within each agency the existing
17 facilities and the impacts in more detail that
18 the study area growth would have on each
19 utility. The real purpose of the meeting was to
20 get a commitment from each utility entity. What
21 we did is, we took the information provided by
22 the personnel of each agency and assembled that
23 into the GEIS and presented it in the study.

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1 Next slide, please. Based on
2 conversations with each entity, we came up with
3 the required improvements under each. As we can
4 see from the slide, under electric, gas, and
5 telephone, no improvements are required. These
6 agencies provide the necessary capacity to meet
7 any demand, and the costs for these improvements
8 are simply passed on to the user base as is
9 currently the case.

10 As we move on to water, we can
11 see that the improvements are substantial.
12 Improvements include supply treatment and
13 filtration improvements; pumping improvements;
14 storage, transmission, distribution
15 improvements. For example, looking at the map
16 here, which is a map showing the existing
17 facilities of the Latham Water District, we have
18 identified -- and I'll be brief with these -- a
19 few improvements.

20 First, under supply, treatment and
21 filtration, improvements to the Mohawk
22 Filtration Plant, including improvements to the
23 intake structure there.

1 Also, pumping improvements require, for
2 example, a pumping station in the airport area
3 along Vly Road to provide increased pressure to
4 the higher portions of the town in this area.

5 Also storage. In the same area, a 600,000
6 gallon storage tank in the Vly Road area west of
7 Denison Road to provide storage to the same high
8 areas of the town.

9 Transmission improvements include, for
10 example, replacement of a 10-inch main along old
11 Wolf Road with a 16-inch main

12 And moving on to distribution which --
13 distribution/transmission. When you consider
14 distribution, it means a more specialized, more
15 specific area which is improved -- which
16 realizes improved service due to this
17 improvement. Those are smaller diameter mains.
18 And that would include, for example, Sand Creek
19 Road, replacement of the existing 6-inch main
20 with a 12-inch diameter main.

21 Moving on to sanitary sewer. The
22 Town of Colonie Pure Waters Department has
23 indicated that each project is reviewed on an

1 individual basis, and that any mitigation that
2 is required is passed on to the developer of
3 that portion; therefore, no improvements are
4 required. The Albany County Sewer District and
5 the Village of Colonie currently have sufficient
6 facilities in the areas included in the study
7 area to provide satisfactory service through the
8 planning period.

9 And with that, I would like to
10 turn the presentation over to Peter Faith, who
11 will discuss transportation requirements of the
12 study.

13 MR. FAITH: Thank you, John.
14 I'll move the microphone down to my level. What
15 I would like to do first is briefly summarize
16 what we did as part of the transportation
17 analysis.

18 Obviously, when you talk about
19 development of this amount, transportation is a
20 major impact on how much traffic is going to be
21 added to the roadways in the area. Can
22 everybody hear me? Is this okay? Next slide,
23 please.

1 When conducting a study of this
2 type, which is basically an impact study, the
3 first task is to identify the existing
4 conditions on the roadways within the area that
5 you are looking at. The next task is to develop
6 some type of reasonable projection of what the
7 traffic levels will be once you identify the
8 land use that you are dealing with. The next
9 step is to conduct an analysis of the future
10 conditions which will tell you if the existing
11 roadway network can accommodate the projected
12 traffic volumes, and, usually, the existing
13 roadway network can not accommodate the
14 projected traffic volumes so you identify what
15 improvements will be required.

16 Next slide, please. As far as
17 identifying the existing study-area roadways, if
18 we can go back to our study-area map, the area
19 is served by a lot of roads. For example, we
20 got an interstate highway. Can I have the next
21 slide, please. That is a slide, which is a
22 little dark, of the Northway which is a limited
23 access interstate facility. Next slide. That

1 is a slide of Route 7 which is classified as
2 principal arterial. Next.

3 (Laughter.)

4 Take my word for it, I think
5 that's Sand Creek Road which is classified as a
6 minor arterial. Next slide, please. That is
7 Wade Road which is classified as a collector.

8 We go to the next slide. I'm
9 sorry. Can you back up? I am getting ahead of
10 myself.

11 For these area roadways, we
12 collected a series of traffic counts. A lot of
13 these were provided by Albany County. A lot of
14 them were provided by the Capital District
15 Transportation Committee. I don't know if you
16 can see all these numbers, but what this figure
17 illustrates is 1990 existing traffic volumes on
18 the area roadways that we analyzed. They
19 illustrate both the daily volume and the peak
20 hour volume, being the afternoon 4:00 to 5:00
21 commuter period.

22 Just to give you a brief overview
23 of the types of traffic we're dealing with, if

1 you look at Route 7 in the Wade Road area, we're
2 talking about daily volumes in excess of 30,000,
3 peak hour volumes of almost 4,000. If you look
4 at Albany-Shaker Road in the vicinity of Exit 4,
5 we're talking about, again, daily volumes of
6 35,000, peak hour volumes of just under 3,000.

7 On some of the lesser traveled
8 roads such as Sand Creek Road, we're talking
9 about daily volumes of 16,000, peak hour volumes
10 of 1500; Wolf Road, daily volumes exceeding
11 40,000 and peak hour volumes approaching 3,000.

12 This overlay identifies the
13 existing highway deficiencies that were
14 identified due to the studies done by the
15 Capital District Transportation Committee. As
16 you can see, there are a lot of them. The most
17 notable deficiencies are in the vicinity of
18 Route 7 in the Exit 6 Wade Road area; Albany-
19 Shaker Road in the vicinity of the Wolf Road
20 Exit 4 area; Watervliet-Shaker Road between the
21 Exit 4 and moving to the east; and the Wolf Road
22 area itself.

23 Now if I can have the next

1 slide. When you develop traffic volume
2 projections, which is the next step in this
3 process, there is really two key areas once you
4 identify your target land use. One is trip
5 generation, which briefly is an estimate of the
6 amount of traffic that each individual project
7 will add to the roadway network. The next step
8 is to identify where this new traffic is going
9 to be coming from. And the last step in the
10 process is to assign this new traffic to the
11 individual roads that you feel are going to be
12 traveled on.

13 Next slide, please. This is a
14 summary of the additional traffic that we feel
15 is going to be added to the roadways based on
16 the level of development that was identified in
17 the target growth scenario. As you can see, the
18 land use on the left side of the slide is the
19 same as Larry Callander presented previously.
20 The column in the middle identifies the
21 additional traffic volume in the number of trips
22 that we estimate will be generated by each one
23 of these land use components. And the last

1 column is just a percentage of the total new
2 traffic for each of these land use categories so
3 you can get a feel of which of these is going to
4 be adding the most traffic.

5 As you can see down at the bottom
6 of the middle column, we feel that almost 21,000
7 new peak-hour trips will be added on the study
8 area roadways due to this target growth
9 scenario. The majority of that traffic is going
10 to be added by the office space, which is going
11 to be adding almost 60 percent of that total.

12 What this overhead identifies is
13 the direction that we feel most of these trips
14 will be taking. I'll take it around the horn
15 here. On the Northway to the north of the study
16 area, we feel 27 percent of these new trips will
17 be oriented. 5 percent on Route 2 to the east
18 of the study area. 3 percent on
19 Watervliet-Shaker Road. 7 percent on Albany-
20 Shaker Road. 3 percent on Sand Creek Road. 26
21 percent on the Northway to the south. 7 percent
22 on Central Avenue. 3 percent on
23 Watervliet-Shaker Road from the west. And 7

1 percent on Route 7 from the west. Now, if
2 anybody added this up quickly, this adds up to
3 95 percent. The reason for that is we feel 5
4 percent of the new traffic will remain within
5 the study area and not travel beyond it.

6 Next slide. What all this means
7 is that traffic volume is going to increase
8 significantly. What this slide in this overhead
9 attempts to present is, in as concise fashion as
10 possible, the amount of traffic -- the amount of
11 the increase of traffic. I can't really see
12 some of these numbers all the way on the left,
13 but that identifies the total growth in traffic
14 over the 1990 existing conditions that will be
15 expected due to the land use in the target
16 growth scenario.

17 I see some of the bigger areas
18 that are going to be impacted are Route 7 on
19 which we expect traffic to increase 107 percent,
20 which means more than double. On Albany-Shaker
21 Road, depending on where you are, traffic is
22 going to increase between 3 and 4 times. Down
23 on Wolf Road, we expect traffic to increase

1 again to more than double. You can look at some
2 of those other numbers.

3 This overhead is basically a
4 presentation of the same information in a little
5 different format; and as you can see, the shaded
6 areas, it's kind of a weighted average, if you
7 will, of the amount of traffic increase that's
8 expected on each one of these roadways. You can
9 see the width of the shading in the
10 Albany-Shaker Road corridor in which traffic is
11 going to increase, again, 325 percent, 250
12 percent, depending on where you are.

13 Albany-Shaker Road next to Exit 4, again, has
14 significant increases. Route 7, 110 percent
15 increase, and so on.

16 Next slide. The next step in the
17 process is to conduct an analysis of the future
18 conditions. After we have identified what the
19 future traffic volumes are, the analysis of
20 future conditions is really done with highway
21 capacity analysis techniques, and our goal was
22 to maintain what we identify as a target level
23 of service, and I'll explain what a level of

1 service is in a minute.

2 Next slide, please. That's where
3 we are now. We're conducting analysis of future
4 conditions.

5 Next slide. What this is, this
6 is just a shot of the Highway Capacity Manual
7 which presents the procedures which we used to
8 do these traffic analyses. It's nationally
9 recognized and, actually, it's published by the
10 Transportation Research Board of the Federal
11 Highway Administration, and it's the way that
12 you analyze transportation needs.

13 What this exhibit shows is the
14 peak-hour traffic volumes that were used for the
15 analysis. Again, it was a compilation of the
16 traffic projection task. In the peak hour,
17 volumes in the vicinity of Route 7 in 2005 based
18 on the target growth scenario have increased to
19 over 7,000. The Wolf Road area has increased to
20 over 4,000 peak hour trips. Albany-Shaker Road
21 exceeding 9,000 trips. So you can see, there
22 has been significant traffic volume increases.

23 Next slide, please. Level of

1 service. When you conduct analyses of highway
2 conditions, the result is a level of service.
3 Now, depending on the type of location that you
4 are analyzing, there is different definitions of
5 what a level of service is. I don't really want
6 to go through this too closely. We can get into
7 it later if somebody has some specific
8 questions. But, basically, what you attempt to
9 maintain in a suburban area such as this in a
10 peak hour of operation is a level of service D.
11 That's generally viewed as a good utilization of
12 pavement out there so you don't have too much
13 payment that you don't really need, and it also
14 provides an acceptable level of delay to most
15 motorists.

16 Next slide, please. That
17 provides a little more information on some of
18 the analysis. That specifically deals with mid
19 block segments. If there are specific
20 questions, we can get into that later.

21 Next slide. Now we're to a point
22 where we are identifying what improvements will
23 be required.

1 Let me start off by indicating
2 that if you read the title block here, we see
3 this is, "Level of Improvements for the 2005
4 Target Growth Scenario Option I." We developed
5 two options to the roadway improvements in this
6 area. The reason being -- I'll get into that
7 when I talk about the new arterial roadway
8 connecting the Northway with Watervliet-Shaker
9 Road, that being one of the major
10 recommendations that we made for this target
11 growth scenario. There's a need for
12 construction of a new arterial roadway which
13 basically extends from the construction of a new
14 Exit 3 of the Northway in the Wolf Road vicinity
15 being constructed to arterial standards
16 intersecting with Watervliet-Shaker Road,
17 extending to the north to Route 7 and
18 terminating there with a grade-separated
19 interchange. This roadway would consist
20 basically of a five-lane cross section which
21 will provide two lanes in each direction and a
22 center median which would be utilized for
23 left-turn storage, similar to what exists now on

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1 Wolf Road.

2 Other major improvements include
3 widening of Route 7 within the study area
4 limits. Again, we're showing within the
5 study-area limits. Obviously, we're going to
6 have to extend further to provide a good
7 terminus. But the widening in that area would
8 provide an additional through lane in each
9 direction over and above the two that you see
10 now. So there would be three through lanes in
11 each direction.

12 It also calls for the widening of
13 Watervliet-Shaker Road east of the airport to
14 provide a five lane section in the vicinity of
15 Exit 5. The construction of a series of
16 additional service roads in the Wolf Road
17 vicinity that would provide a parallel path to
18 motorists between Sand Creek Road and Albany-
19 Shaker Road. It also includes the realigning of
20 the Maxwell Road-Albany Shaker Road
21 intersection. Widening of Watervliet-Shaker
22 Road to provide a five-lane cross section,
23 again, similar to Wolf Road. Widening of

1 Albany-Shaker Road to provide the five-lane
2 cross section, again.

3 Once we came up with the Option
4 I, we recognized that the construction of the
5 arterial roadway between Exit 3 and
6 Watervliet-Shaker Road would have an impact on
7 the environmentally sensitive area just to the
8 south of Ann Lee Pond. What we did is developed
9 a second improvement option that would as much
10 as possible avoid that area. This second
11 improvement option is essentially very similar
12 to the first one, the major difference being
13 there is no connection between -- no direct
14 connection between the Exit 3 interchange and
15 Watervliet-Shaker Road. To accommodate the
16 east-west traffic flow in the area, we're
17 calling for the reconstruction of the Exit 4
18 interchange to provide direct access to the
19 airport. We also -- based on the lack of east-
20 west roadways now, we needed to reconnect
21 Watervliet-Shaker Road through the airport. The
22 only way we can do that is to tunnel underneath
23 the north-south runway. The other improvements

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1 on the Option II for Route 7, Albany-Shaker
2 Road, Watervliet-Shaker Road, are all the same
3 as Option I.

4 Next slide, please. The types of
5 improvements required. We talked about the
6 widening of existing roadways, planning
7 additional access to the Northway, and
8 construction of new roadways. What we haven't
9 talked about is demand management or TSM or
10 Transportation Systems Management Programs.

11 Next slide. Basically what
12 Transportation Systems Management Programs are
13 -- and we're hearing more and more about this
14 lately -- are

15 Ride sharing programs, which are basically
16 car pooling, van pooling, bus pooling.

17 Variable work hour programs, which is
18 staggered work hours, in that, not everybody
19 starts at work at 9:00 o'clock or 8:30. A
20 portion of the staff will start at, say, 8:00
21 o'clock, 8:15, 8:30. That reduces the impact on
22 the roadways. Again, that's something that
23 employers have to initiate.

1 Transit programs -- encouragement and
2 designed-for transit programs, designed for in
3 terms of new development projects.

4 There is also -- I've got a bullet there
5 termed, "Implementation," which means somebody
6 has to ensure that these types of programs get
7 implemented, and there has to be some type of
8 incentive for that to occur.

9 Next slide, please. The summary
10 of the transportation analysis is that the
11 development included in the target growth
12 scenario will increase traffic volumes, traffic
13 loads significantly. Major improvements will be
14 required to accommodate the level of development
15 in the target growth scenario. And also we
16 found that an aggressive TSM program must be
17 included in the development plans for this
18 area.

19 And with that, I think I'm going
20 to turn it back over to Larry Callander, who is
21 going to talk about air quality.

22 MR. CALLANDER: Thank you,
23 Peter.

1 Again, I would just like to
2 reiterate that our analysis of these impacts is
3 based on the target growth scenario. If that
4 target growth scenario continues, if development
5 occurs at the rate which is projected in that
6 scenario, then these are the types of
7 improvements that we're looking at in order to
8 mitigate, in Peter's case, traffic impacts, and
9 that's true throughout our brief review of
10 impacts associated with this document.

11 The section I would like to talk
12 about now a little bit is air quality. The
13 Capital District generally meets federal and
14 state air quality standards which presently
15 exist. However, the major impact on air quality
16 as a result of development under the target
17 growth scenario, I think it's pretty obvious to
18 everyone now, would result from vehicle
19 emissions related to vehicular traffic on area
20 roadways, and I think Peter Faith kind of
21 highlighted what those impacts look like.

22 To evaluate the impact on air
23 quality because of these additional vehicular

1 trips which would be generated, Clough, Harbour
2 & Associates used an accepted computer model
3 which has been developed by the federal
4 government to estimate future carbon monoxide
5 levels at various intersections within the study
6 area -- carbon monoxide being the major
7 pollutant that is emitted from vehicles.

8 Slide. The model which we used
9 is the Carbon Monoxide Hot Spot Verification
10 Model which is used by the New York State
11 Department of Transportation. It's, as I say, a
12 federal model, but it's used by DOT in New York
13 State to evaluate air quality impacts on
14 traffic. The data requirements for that are
15 highlighted on that slide. I won't go through
16 each one. But it's generally a computer model.
17 Level 1 air quality analysis is a model which
18 generally considers worse case atmospheric
19 conditions, what would be the worst carbon
20 monoxide levels that you would see. And we
21 evaluated various intersections within the study
22 area.

23 Those are the intersections on

1 the overhead which were evaluated. Generally,
2 the data requirements includes a location sketch
3 to show the roadway geometry, traffic volume,
4 vehicle speed and on down through the list. The
5 results of the computer analysis for each
6 individual intersection incorporates future
7 traffic flows to determine what the impacts
8 related to vehicle emissions would be, and the
9 result is the one-hour average concentration of
10 carbon monoxide in parts per million.

11 Next slide. The intersections
12 which were evaluated, the results of the
13 computer model on each intersection are shown on
14 this slide. And what it basically shows is that
15 the level 1 carbon monoxide level of 14 parts
16 per million, that level 1 threshold is exceeded
17 for 6 out of the 11 intersections. Now, various
18 mitigation measures are suggested which could be
19 implemented to reduce this impact.

20 The first improvement which might be looked
21 at would be improved signalization, improving
22 the amount of vehicles which could move through
23 the intersection.

1 Another mitigation measure would be some of
2 the actual roadway improvements which Peter
3 Faith discussed. That would reduce the amount
4 of vehicle delays and help reduce carbon
5 monoxide levels at these intersections.

6 And the third one, again, one of those
7 measures which Peter Faith mentioned, is
8 actually to reduce the amount of traffic through
9 the implementation of Transportation System
10 Management techniques, which Peter has
11 discussed.

12 Next section I would like to
13 discuss is the section on noise in the draft
14 generic environmental impact statement. Perhaps
15 more accurately stated is airport noise. The
16 intent of this section was to evaluate the
17 impacts of aircraft noise at Albany County
18 Airport based on the "Airport Noise Control and
19 Land Use Capabilities Study," which was
20 completed by Albany County in 1981. This study
21 projected the noise levels of future flight
22 operations at the airport through 1995.

23 The draft generic environmental

1 impact statement compared the ANCLUC, or the
2 noise capability study, projections against the
3 actual flight operations for 1988 and 1989 to
4 determine if those ANCLUC projections were on
5 target with air traffic growth at the airport.

6 This next slide shows a
7 comparison of the two sets of data.

8 The first section of the chart shows the
9 total aircraft operations for 1988. This comes
10 from an FAA publication. The most recent data
11 that was available at the time was 1988. And it
12 shows that based on the ANCLUC study there would
13 be 171,000 operations. Actual operations in
14 1988 according to the FAA were 166,000. So they
15 are roughly comparable in terms of total number
16 of operations.

17 Because jet operations affect noise
18 projections to a great extent, we then took a
19 look at 1989 daily takeoff and landings by air
20 carrier jet aircraft, the air carriers being
21 USAir, United, and the others which operate jet
22 aircraft on a commercial basis. And this shows
23 that the ANCLUC estimate for 1989 would have

1 been approximately 92 jet operations per day.
2 Actual operations for an average day in 1989
3 were actually 94. So those are roughly
4 comparable.

5 And then, finally, 1989 general aviation
6 aircraft operations for jets. The ANCLUC
7 estimated about 4200 operations 1989, and on the
8 basis of the information we had available, it
9 showed that there would be roughly 1800
10 operations.

11 All in all I think you can see
12 the biggest disparity between the ANCLUC
13 estimates and actual operations is in the area
14 of the air taxi business, up in the first
15 section of that chart. It shows that for
16 comuter airlines, ANCLUC estimated 13,000
17 operations. It was actually 68,000; however,
18 they have very little impact on the noise at the
19 airport in terms of takeoffs and landings. It's
20 primarily jet aircraft that affect noise levels
21 to the greatest extent. And air taxis, they are
22 primarily operating twin engine turboprop
23 aircraft which generally have the same noise

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1 characteristics as the general aviation
2 aircraft, the single engine, twin engine private
3 aircraft which operate. If you compare those
4 two together, you will see that, roughly, there
5 is the same number of operations.

6 So, primarily, to try to
7 summarize what we did in that section is that
8 the noise levels will increase around the
9 airport but not to a significant degree because
10 of the type of aircraft being used. Primarily,
11 again, I point to the commuter aircraft. There
12 has been tremendous growth in that industry, and
13 they do not affect noise at the airport as
14 much.

15 Mitigation measures to mitigate
16 potential impacts and noise could include some
17 of the following -- I will just try to highlight
18 some of them:

19 The acquisition of land. Albany County has
20 an ongoing land acquisition program to acquire
21 residential properties around the airport that
22 are noise impacted to a great degree.

23 Another mitigation measure would be to

1 rezone land around the airport to a land use
2 which is more compatible with aircraft noise.
3 Certainly, you'll agree that residential
4 development around airports is not generally
5 compatible because of the noise generated by
6 them, and that obviously would only affect
7 future development.

8 Another mitigation would be to restrict the
9 types of aircraft which operate at the airport
10 to the less significant times of day, primarily
11 the daylight hours.

12 Another mitigation measure which I feel
13 significant to mention is suggested that the
14 operator of the airport conduct an ongoing
15 monitoring program to establish the baseline
16 data so that the ANCLUC report can be updated
17 and noise impacts can be closely tracked to
18 determine if they are getting significantly
19 worse.

20 Next slide. I would now like to
21 talk about a couple of areas in the document,
22 both recreation and municipal services. First,
23 I would like to highlight some of the

1 recreational resources that are within the study
2 area and then talk about some of those
3 additional recreational resources which are
4 recommended as a result of the target area
5 development.

6 Highlighted here in the
7 orangeish-yellow, it shows the existing
8 recreational resources that presently exist
9 within the study area. And with the exception
10 of the Albany-Colonie sports facility and Ann
11 Lee Pond, these are primarily pocket parks which
12 currently exist within the study area or are
13 located just adjacent to it.

14 Now, the recreational
15 improvements that will be required in order to
16 meet the additional demands placed on it by
17 residential development under the target growth
18 scenario would be the establishment of pocket
19 parks located within those portions of the study
20 area where significant residential development
21 is supposed to occur. And the one I will
22 highlight -- right there (indicating) is the
23 creation of a pocket park around the Stump Pond

1 area and establishing a green belt connector to
2 the Ann Lee Pond Nature and Historic Preserve.
3 Some of the other parks you can see are located
4 in areas where additional residential
5 development is projected to occur.

6 Next slide. Just briefly to
7 highlight the recreational improvements and
8 municipal service improvements that are
9 required. In order to meet existing
10 deficiencies which have been identified and also
11 to accommodate additional development in the
12 area, five new pocket parks totaling
13 approximately 27 acres are recommended to be
14 added to the area and also the expansion of a
15 municipal golf course as a result of not only
16 development in this area but also residential
17 development throughout the town of Colonie.

18 Under municipal services, I'll
19 highlight just some areas where additional
20 services will be required.

21 It's been estimated that eight new police
22 officers would need to be hired in order to
23 provide the existing level of service that

1 presently exists within the study area; and

2 It would also be necessary to expand the
3 new emergency medical service which has been
4 established in the town of Colonie.

5 Under fire protection, there are five
6 different fire districts that serve the study
7 area. Two of those fire districts have
8 indicated a need for additional equipment in
9 order to meet the additional demands placed on
10 it by the target growth development; that is the
11 Shaker Road Loudonville Fire Department and the
12 Midway Fire Department. And in addition, it is
13 important to note that since fire departments
14 are largely volunteer organizations, these fire
15 districts also indicate the need to continue to
16 attract additional volunteers to provide
17 adequate fire coverage.

18 Next slide. Generally, public
19 schools aren't considered municipal services,
20 but they are indeed public services, and there
21 will indeed be impacts as a result of
22 residential development in this area. There are
23 three public school districts which serve the

1 study area, North Colonie and South Colonie
2 Central Schools and the Niskayuna School
3 District.

4 In North Colonie, additional residential
5 development will create a need for the school
6 district to accommodate approximately 347 new
7 students as a result of development. According
8 to school district officials, this will
9 necessitate the construction of a new elementary
10 school and also expansion of the junior high and
11 high schools. It's important to note, however,
12 that North Colonie is being impacted by growth
13 in a lot of other areas, namely, the Boght Road
14 area, where there is a large amount of
15 residential development. So they are being
16 impacted as a result of other areas, as well.

17 The South Colonie School District will be
18 impacted the most by development in the study
19 area. There will be a need to accommodate 650
20 new students. The school has identified the
21 fact that they do have some excess capacity.
22 However, it will be necessary to expand the
23 Lisha Kill Middle School if this target

1 development scenario comes to fruition.

2 And, finally, a small portion of
3 the Niskayuna School District overlaps into the
4 study area. We've projected that 65 new
5 students would be going to school in Niskayuna.
6 As a result, there wouldn't be any significant
7 impact in terms of facilities. However, I do
8 note up here it's not that we've ignored
9 additional costs associated with the district.
10 We have also identified, of course, each one of
11 these will impact the school in terms of
12 staffing and materials and supplies.

13 Slide, please.

14 I would now like to introduce
15 Larry Woods, who will discuss the section on
16 economics.

17 MR. WOODS: Thanks, Larry.

18 As identified in the DGIS, and
19 I'm sure that most of you have concluded based
20 on our presentations this evening, the
21 development associated with the target growth
22 scenario is expected to have some significant
23 economic impacts carried along with it. These

1 economic impacts we realize from the demand for
2 additional capital improvements and services to
3 meet the potential development. I have a few
4 overheads just to give some illustration on some
5 of these impacts.

6 The first slide you can see what
7 we've done is we've taken total cost associated
8 with projected development and summarized it in
9 this table. We've broken it down into various
10 individual items such as water service,
11 transportation for the two options, recreation,
12 fire, police, and so on. This includes all
13 costs, capital improvements costs as well as
14 noncapital costs. The capital costs would
15 mainly be reflective of new construction,
16 construction of roadways, that type of thing;
17 where the noncapital would be services such as
18 salaries, minor equipment, that type of thing.
19 As you can see, from the totals for
20 transportation costs, option number 1 for total
21 improvements is about \$106 million; and for the
22 option 2 transportation scenario, it would be
23 about \$140 million.

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1 The next table, what we did is we
2 broke down costs further into capital
3 improvement cost versus noncapital improvement
4 costs. And again, capital improvement costs
5 include construction-related activities such as
6 new roadways, intersection improvements, new
7 utilities, waterline storage, new recreational
8 facilities, major equipment purchases for fire
9 companies such as fire trucks and renovation and
10 construction of new school buildings. Again,
11 the noncapital costs include salaries of new
12 personnel and minor equipment purchases. As you
13 can see from these totals, the noncapital costs
14 really don't amount to much when you compare it
15 to the capital costs.

16 The last table was used to
17 develop what we call our development mitigation
18 cost table. This document is included in the
19 EIS. What we have done here with this table is
20 we've broken down and designated on a per
21 residential unit and per square foot of building
22 area for nonresidential and for total
23 enplanements at the airport. We've broken down

1 costs individually for each one of those.

2 These costs reflect only
3 improvements generated as a result of the
4 development within the study area. Costs
5 include design and construction. However, due
6 to variability of costs associated with
7 administration, legal assistance and bonding,
8 these have not been included. I would like to
9 stress that it should be noted that this is a
10 first cut at estimating the development
11 mitigation costs. The DGIS and FGIS planning
12 statement, as they are progressed, it is
13 expected that development mitigation costs will
14 be further refined.

15 Just in quick conclusion, the
16 calculation of development mitigation costs is
17 an effort by the village and town and county to
18 try to offset major capital improvement costs
19 associated with the new development in these
20 times of shrinking state and federal revenues.
21 This process attempts to insure that new
22 development contributes its fair-share
23 contribution to future capital improvements.

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1 And, finally, what I'd like to do
2 is just quickly conclude. Where do we go from
3 here? As Peter Conway had mentioned earlier, we
4 are currently within this minimum -- it's
5 actually a 45-day comment period. The town,
6 village and county -- actually, the town, as the
7 lead agency, will be accepting comments through
8 October 19, of this month, and they would like
9 to stress that they welcome participation by the
10 public. If you're unable to get your comments
11 across tonight verbally, they will be accepting
12 written comments.

13 With that in mind, what I'd like
14 to do is turn the presentation back to Peter
15 Platt, who will outline the guidelines for the
16 public participation phase of the presentation
17 this evening.

18 Peter.

19 MR. PLATT: Those seats are hard,
20 aren't they? A couple weeks ago, the planning
21 board was kicking around this whole DEIS and we
22 come up with a rather tongue-in-cheek simplistic
23 idea of how to pay for this \$190 million

1 improvements. If we charged everyone taking off
2 from Albany County Airport \$3 and when they
3 landed, before they could get off the plane,
4 they pay us another \$3, we'd have \$189 million
5 in 20 years and only be a million dollars short
6 and be able to accommodate everything that has
7 been proposed tonight.

8 I think the format, we'll do what
9 we normally do. We'll have everyone that wants
10 to speak feel free to do so. We'd only ask that
11 you give us your name, if you're affiliated with
12 an organization, with a homeowner's group,
13 whatever it is, and then fire away at us. If we
14 can't answer the questions, I'm sure the staff
15 from Clough, which is Larry, Larry, Peter, John,
16 and Peter.

17 Okay. We are open now for
18 comments and questions.

19 Yes, Ma'am.

20 MS. GHANDHI: Good evening. My
21 name is Cecilia Gandhi, and I'm the president
22 of the Shaker Ridge-Vly Road Neighborhood
23 Association. All the members of our association

1 reside within the airport GEIS area, and we live
2 not very far from the airport.

3 We wish to thank the town,
4 village, and county for this opportunity to
5 comment on the airport area draft GEIS, and I'll
6 try to keep these remarks brief since we will be
7 submitting more written comments very shortly.

8 I would like to emphasize, as I
9 think Mr. Conway did, that this is a draft
10 GEIS. We fully recognize the dangers of
11 economic stagnation. I think we all do. We
12 recognize that this area will be subject to
13 further development, but we are also critical of
14 the kind of runaway development we have seen in
15 Colonie during the last ten years or so. We are
16 in full support of this GEIS effort to
17 rationally define the possible ways in which
18 that growth will or will not occur. And, in
19 fact, this Association of Homeowners supported
20 that effort even before agreement was reached to
21 draft this GEIS.

22 In recent weeks, I've heard many
23 denigrating remarks about this draft planning

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1 document. I'm sorry. However, I believe that
2 many of those comments are unjustified and that
3 the reason for this belief is simply a matter of
4 perspective. If we view this document for what
5 it is, I think we all become a bit more
6 charitable. It is a draft generic environmental
7 impact statement. It is not the final
8 document.

9 As a draft, it has merit. It is
10 interesting and educational, and we recognize
11 that any flaws and omissions have yet to be
12 worked out. The purpose of the public comment
13 period is to help insure that they are. With
14 that thought in mind, I would like to summarize
15 some of our association's conclusions to date.

16 1. We wholeheartedly agree with
17 the conclusion that the high growth scenario is
18 unacceptable. A development projection which
19 would necessitate a 10-lane Route 7 and a
20 16-lane Albany-Shaker Road, for example,
21 deserves to be rejected.

22 2. For various reasons, and
23 we'll outline them in our written comments, we

See App. 14
Response II.B.7.

1 find the target growth scenario equally
2 unacceptable. The threat to prehistoric and
3 historic sites, the fresh water wetlands, the
4 water shed, traffic and air and noise quality,
5 which it presents can never be sufficiently
6 mitigated. We are not convinced of the social
7 and economic need for the huge amount of
8 residential and commercial development presented
9 in the target growth scenario, and it also seems
10 somewhat impractical to us that so much building
11 could actually be accomplished in the short
12 space of fifteen years. Are there that many
13 construction workers in this area? Are there
14 enough building seasons in the year to
15 accommodate the actualization of these
16 projects. We very strongly request that a more
17 reasonable low-growth scenario be documented,
18 considered, and advocated in the GEIS.

19 3. Neither of the two options
20 presented for the proposed north-south arterial
21 are particularly attractive or economical. We
22 would like to see several more options
23 included.

See App. 14
Response II.B.1.

See App. 14
Response II.B.1.

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4. The sections regarding air and noise quality deserve more elaboration. Relying on hypothetical future air and noise quality studies on a case-by-case basis seems unrealistic. It is obvious that most of the target growth scenario proposed projects will never be subjects of environmental impact statements, even on a supplemental basis. They don't meet the criteria in SEQRA. We, therefore, request that level 2 and/or level 3 analysis of air quality be included in this GEIS. We also request that projections be made on the noise impacts which will result from increased traffic and projected development. Limiting the consideration of noise to that emanating from increased aircraft operations from Albany County Airport is, we feel, inadequate. While recognizing that our previous request to actually monitor airport noise levels for the study was duly ignored, we make that request again.

Also given short shrift in the draft GEIS was the presence of nighttime engine

See App. 14
Response II.I.1.

See App. 14
Response II.J.8.

1 maintenance noise. The GEIS simply states, and
2 I quote, "Albany County Airport has established
3 a policy which prohibits nighttime engine runups
4 at the airport." The fact is that the policy
5 prohibiting runups between midnight and 6:00
6 a.m. was established in 1985 and has never been
7 enforced or enforceable. The noise keeps
8 getting worse, and residents of the area are
9 increasingly resenting it. We had hoped that
10 this draft GEIS would have produced data on this
11 from some sort of monitoring program.

12 Obviously, it didn't. We again request that
13 this type of noise from the airport be monitored
14 and the resulting data be included in this GEIS.

See pp. II-182
through II-185.

15 Fifth, and finally, this draft
16 GEIS recommends development of a detailed inter-
17 municipal agreement among county, town, and
18 village for coordination of highway improvements
19 and transfer of funds from the collection of
20 development mitigation costs related to traffic,
21 water, and recreation improvements. We strongly
22 support this recommendation and would go so far
23 as to say that no future development in this

See App. 14
Response II.H.10.

1 area should take place without such firm inter-
2 municipal commitment. In addition, if any
3 traffic improvements are to be successfully
4 implemented, strong agreements must also be
5 considered not only among the municipalities
6 involved in this GEIS process but also with
7 surrounding municipalities.

8 While this is probably outside
9 the scope of the GEIS, let's face it, neither
10 Route 7 nor Route 155, for example, drop off the
11 face of the earth when the airport border GEIS
12 is reached. Any widening of roads in this area
13 will have to be continued on into other
14 municipalities. Equally important, costs to
15 those municipalities will have to be considered.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. PLATT: Thank you.

18 MRS. WEIS: I hope to put most of
19 my documentation in a written account. If you
20 want to question me on where my figures came
21 from, I'll be happy to give that. If I get too
22 bad, Mr. Platt, just signal me and I will put
23 the rest of it in writing.

See App. 14
Response II.H.10.

1 First of all, I want to
2 compliment you on the GEIS report. I find it
3 excellent. I found your maps especially
4 helpful, and your presentation tonight was very
5 well done. On your research, I give you a grade
6 A. I realize it was limited because some of
7 your inquiries didn't receive responses, but I
8 thought you did an excellent job in attempting
9 to get the material you could.

10 However, your field
11 investigations in some of the traffic and in
12 some of the environmental sections, particularly
13 on the animals and the flora and fauna involved
14 mention field investigations, but I could not
15 find them documented in the index, and I would
16 be grateful if in the final that you would add
17 them, especially in the environmental section
18 which I think was a masterful job. I don't
19 think you had time tonight to do full justice to
20 it, and I highly recommend it to anyone for
21 reading. It was a wonderful wonderful job.

22 Now, the only thing I disagree
23 with are your conclusions.

See App.14
Response II.D.4.

1 (Laughter.)

2 And I have strong disagreement.

3 Now, it also coincides with what Mrs. Gandhi
4 has said. Your build-out scenario in the target
5 growth is where I disagree, because, if you'll
6 forgive me, I believe it was based on two faulty
7 premises.

See App.14
Response II.B.1.

8 First, the way you set up the study, you
9 asked the owners what they would like to do. To
10 my mind, it was their dreams versus the
11 realities of what was possible to do, and I
12 think that skewed the conclusions.

13 Secondly, I believe there were
14 misconceptions about the airport and the area;
15 and, therefore, that the conclusions for your
16 15-year growth scenario are not supported by the
17 internal data.

18 Now, here's where I get tedious,
19 and I'll try not to, so any signal and I will
20 just, you know, write it.

21 First of all, as was documented
22 by some of the excellent newspaper reports, we
23 are no longer considered a major hub. As your

See App. 14
Response II.B.2.

1 own documents prove, we are now a commuter.
2 Your own growth studies of the taxi fares. So
3 we are not looking at a major hub any more. We
4 are a commuter airport.

5 The ANCLUC estimates were
6 overoptimistic in each respect except the air
7 taxis which you have mentioned. Air freight and
8 military traffic is expected to be about the
9 same in the previous airport study that Albany
10 County did.

11 Now, also I feel your projections
12 are optimistic in regard to the economy. The
13 airline consolidation, the problems of USAir,
14 plane occupancy has only grown from 40 percent
15 to 50 percent. There is still a lot of space
16 there, so I don't see all that growth. We might
17 face cuts in traffic controllers. We are facing
18 expanding fuel costs.

19 Also, in the airport study -- and
20 not mentioned, I believe, only referred to in
21 your section on the airport -- the majority,
22 almost 50 percent, in our earlier airport study
23 of the flights come in August. And so some of

1 the growth projections are skewed because of
2 that. I don't think we're also considering the
3 impact that Stewart Airport is having on our
4 airport, and also that Saratoga is expanding
5 and, therefore, will take some of that August
6 traffic away. So I think the airport
7 projections do not justify all the growth around
8 it.

9 If you will also notice in your
10 own figures, in 1989, the general aviation jet
11 operations were only 1,825 instead of the 4,171
12 projected.

13 Now, my major problem in the
14 entire study is I feel in demographics. I would
15 like to see you expand that. Now, for instance,
16 you projected -- one of your slides has the
17 projection of 81,000. The town itself is
18 predicting 80,000. Now, we did an excellent
19 LUMAC study and that predicted the 76,000. Now,
20 actually, for our census, we're going between
21 76,000 and 77,000 people. So you see that,
22 right away, I think it puts in question your
23 whole projection for the growth for the year

See App. 14
Response
II.A.1.

1 2005. We haven't grown as much.

2 But, more important, I would like
3 to see your demographic study. Note the kind of
4 growth that we have and how our area differs
5 from the others. Let me put it simply. We are
6 now and this I got -- there is an excellent part
7 put out by the Chamber in this morning's paper,
8 and I highly recommend it to you. I think you
9 could use a lot of that to put into your final
10 study. Mostly what it shows is that our young
11 adults coming up are a much -- they are
12 declining, as you know. The colleges in the
13 area know the declining population is going to
14 affect our colleges. But mainly, as we have
15 fewer adults even in this area than nationwide
16 -- you don't want the figures, do you?

17 MR. PLATT: No.

18 MS. WEISS: No, you don't want
19 the figures.

20 And it affects growth. All
21 right. But, mainly, we have fewer young adults
22 coming nationwide, nationwide declining. Now
23 the enrollment that we are now seeing has

1 started about '84 in the grades. We are just
2 really hitting the kindergarten peak now. So
3 that this next little boomlette will only be
4 buying cars by the end of your projection, and
5 they won't be buying homes really until
6 approximately ten years after that, with the
7 average age of matrimony increasing. In other
8 words, the boom isn't coming because the
9 population there, the demographics don't support
10 it in this area.

11 Secondly, we are an older
12 population. The people that are going to be
13 taking planes and buying homes, as our
14 population ages more significantly, the aging of
15 our population with money has been leaving this
16 state, and the ones coming back into the state
17 have less money. Therefore, the need for all
18 this office space, particularly, is not
19 necessary. We are already overbuilt in office
20 space in the area. So that's why I mean the
21 dream of what they would like to see built is
22 not in reality with the demand.

23 We are also a service economy --

1 that has been increasing 47 percent locally --
2 rather than manufacturing which gives us less
3 money to spend. Therefore, that knocks out a
4 lot of the retail. Because of the increasing
5 debt and paying for the debt, we're going to
6 have less disposable income. And if the new
7 changes in Medicare go on, since 50 percent of
8 our older population have that much of the
9 disposable income, we're going to have a lot
10 less income if we're paying more for Medicaid.
11 So even your old people will not be able to get
12 it.

13 Now, on the noise part of the
14 study, when the ANCLUC study was done back in
15 1974, your noncompliance in the area went from
16 47 percent to 57 percent. There are severe
17 limitations for growth in the area. I'll
18 mention a few. I'll give you the statistics
19 some other time. First of all, you've got the
20 height of buildings because of your approaches
21 to the airport. You have the cost of
22 development. You are projecting that 95 percent
23 of the costs for future development should be

See App. 14
Response II.H.10.

1 applied to business. I wish you luck. I'd love
2 to see it, but I don't think that they will go
3 for it, to tell you the truth. I agree with
4 you. It's logical, but I don't think they
5 will.

6 Secondly, there are water
7 problems at the airport. But, mainly, your own
8 projections show that the depth of the water
9 table in the entire area all around the airport
10 except for a small area south is from zero to 14
11 inches. In other words, whatever you do, we're
12 hitting water in the area and that makes for
13 expensive development and, I think, almost
14 eliminates your proposal to build the road under
15 the airport runway. I feel the engineering
16 costs would be tremendous for development in the
17 area because of that high water table.

18 Secondly, it was suggested that
19 the land use in airport property must be
20 compatible with the goals of the community. And
21 the community would like green space as proved
22 in our ANCLUC study.

23 Now, in the environment -- this

See App. 14
Response II.E.2.

See App. 14
Response II.D.1.

1 is in the index -- letter from Clark from the
2 Department of Environmental Conservation talked
3 about the dwindling open space and the need for
4 permanent open space, especially in relation to
5 the Albany Shaker Historical District; that the
6 open spaces are just as important as preserving
7 the buildings because that is important to the
8 whole ambiance of the Albany Shaker.

See App. 14
Response II.D.5.

9 Also in the environmental, all of
10 the stormwaters in the airport -- (whispering)
11 all of it -- empties eventually, as you point
12 out, one mile west and upstream of the intake to
13 the Latham Water District. In other words,
14 everything in that land, we're going to get back
15 in our water system. We don't filter for
16 chemicals. We test for chemicals, but we don't
17 filter for chemicals. So everything coming out
18 of that airport and developed in that area is
19 going to wind up in our water system. It's a
20 horrifying thought. Horrifying.

See App. 14
Response II.F.3.

21 "All watershed..." -- Your own
22 quote. "All watersheds drain to either Class A
23 drinking water supplies or to environmentally

1 sensitive wetlands." Also, you refer to
2 flooding problems in the area. I won't list
3 them. You don't want to hear them. I should be
4 off here soon.

5 Now, transportation. I have
6 spoken to the Capital District Transportation
7 Committee on my recommendations for this whole
8 transportation section. This also was
9 excellently done. I especially appreciated all
10 the statistics and especially your maps.
11 Basically -- I will just summarize.

12 First of all, if I may quote Mr.
13 Clark again. "It's unlikely that highway
14 improvements will withstand overcapacity very
15 long." Which, as you know, we've proven.
16 Alternate 7 is already overcapacity. We've
17 improved our roads, and they go overcapacity
18 much sooner. So building roads isn't the
19 answer. That new arterial you are projecting
20 isn't the answer, and I will tell you why.

21 If you look at your figures on
22 Route 7, where you are closest to Schenectady
23 you are roughly 35,000. As you move down, when

1 you get to Albany-Shaker -- no, it's 37.
2 Roughly, it's 37 up by Niskayuna. When you get
3 down to Albany-Shaker, you are down to 35,000.
4 Down near the end of your study area, you are
5 only down to 34,000. In other words, your
6 demand for traffic relief on 7 isn't up there.
7 Most of the traffic is just coming through. And
8 if you speak to Mr. John Poorman of the Capital
9 District Transportation Committee, you will note
10 that he notes in his analysis of the area, most
11 of our traffic is going through Colonie. And
12 most of our problems are for traffic going
13 through Colonie. So, therefore, that isn't
14 needed. The airport road isn't overextended.
15 Roughly, your own count is, I think, 14,700
16 traffic on that road. Now, your own
17 transportation section recommends that the
18 through traffic -- the earlier airport study
19 said 40 percent of the traffic went through.
20 Your study -- and that's only a short time ago
21 -- has it already up to 46 percent of the
22 traffic isn't going to the airport. It's going
23 through it. Therefore, your suggestion, which I

See App. 14
Response
II.0.9.

1 find excellent, is that you eliminate through
2 traffic, and that will take care of your traffic
3 problem at the road.

See App. 14
Response II.H.21.

4 I recommend, also, several other
5 things. First of all, in your excellent report
6 is a whole summary of, I think, 36
7 recommendations from the Capital District
8 Transportation Committee, involving a minimum of
9 money, mostly widening of some of the exits and
10 changing traffic signals. That will improve our
11 traffic conditions at very little cost, and no
12 new highways are recommended presently in that
13 particular section.

See App. 14
Response II.H.10.

14 I do think that we should give --
15 before we project any new roads give these much
16 less expensive improvements a chance and then
17 perhaps recount and restudy. I think if we do
18 that, if we stop the through traffic in the
19 airport -- and I have one other suggestion of my
20 own. I offer it in good faith. First of all,
21 if you notice your figures, Exit 5 of the
22 Northway is much underutilized compared to Exit
23 4. However, there is a problem I think there

See App. 14
Response II.H.10.

1 that isn't mentioned in your study; and that is,
2 where the western entrance to Exit 5 coincides
3 with the Exit 4 entrance. Do you follow me? Do
4 you know where I am? When you come off the
5 Northway at Exit 4 and there is also traffic
6 coming on from 5. Now, my suggestion I offer to
7 you. First of all, you close that western exit,
8 that western entrance to 5. It isn't much used,
9 but it does conflict with all the traffic coming
10 off 4. Secondly, I would keep that Exit 4 exit
11 coming out where it comes to the airport only
12 for cars. I would have all trucks exit at Exit
13 5. Exit 5 doesn't have anywhere near the amount
14 of traffic. So if you force the trucks to get
15 off at Exit 5, block the western oncoming
16 traffic there at 5 -- you still have the eastern
17 access but block the western -- then you would
18 free up that Exit 4 for all the traffic, and it
19 would eliminate a lot of the problems that you
20 have there at Shaker and Old Wolf and in that
21 whole configuration, because you are limited
22 there. You are severely limited there by the
23 bridge and by the road configurations, and I

See App. 14
Response II.H.16.

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1 think this might help you in that area.

2 I should sit down. I'll sit
3 down.

4 A VOICE: No.

5 MRS. WEIS: Your noise level a
6 few quibbles. The noise levels didn't include
7 helicopters. Now, the people on Route 7 find
8 the helicopters particularly annoying especially
9 on Sunday morning when they practice the
10 formations three in a row. So I would recommend
11 with Mrs. Gandhi that you do need, again, the
12 monitoring, and you also should include the
13 helicopters.

See App. 14
Response II.J.8.

14 I didn't see -- I might have
15 missed it. You didn't have the impacts from the
16 town buildings, and I do think that will affect
17 it all. There were some government
18 recommendations in general I found excellent,
19 and I would like to just highlight them here
20 because I think your staff did a fine job.

21 Protection of open space.
22 Archeological surveys. This is particularly
23 important. Because as you mentioned in the

1 historical section because they don't want
2 people, amateurs digging there, we don't have a
3 map of the archeological sensitive areas. I
4 understand that, but that means we don't know in
5 this area -- and it's said there are many areas
6 here that are archeologically sensitive. We
7 don't know where they are, so we don't know what
8 any of this development might turn up.
9 Therefore, it's important that we have an
10 archeological survey before any development is
11 done in this area.

See p.II-207.

12 You also recommend a map of noise
13 overlay zones. This is very important, and I
14 also endorse Mrs. Gandhi's suggestion for
15 monitoring. I'll tell you why. I was at a
16 meeting on the airport with some of the people
17 from the city of Albany, and it was pointed out
18 that some of the traffic impact, the noise
19 impacts were not as accurate because they have
20 changed some of the flight patterns; and,
21 therefore, it's very important that a new noise
22 impact study be done to monitor the new flight
23 patterns because they are affecting areas that

See App. 14
Response II.J.8.

1 they were not supposed to affect. And also
2 especially in some of the development, the new
3 homes that were developed east of Wolf Road in
4 between Albany-Shaker and Sand Creek. So again,
5 if you could please do some noise monitoring.

6 I would like to mention a quote
7 in that article from Mr. Michael Picotte. He
8 says, "Development in the '90s will be
9 characterized by caution, compromise and
10 concern." Under "Caution" he mentioned future
11 demand, time and impact fees; "Compromise" with
12 the municipalities; and "Concern" for the
13 environment. Now, when you consider all these
14 things, I think the development will be severely
15 curtailed.

16 First of all, if you look at your
17 environmentally sensitive areas in the area
18 itself, you've got the water problems around the
19 airport itself. To the north, you have wetlands
20 along the river and, again, environmentally
21 sensitive. You've got water up there. You're
22 already constrained by the roads you have to the
23 south and the traffic problems there. To the

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1 east, you have more flooding problems. So I
2 think when you consider the costs of the
3 development plus you are going to ask them for
4 95 percent of the impact fees. I agree with
5 Mrs. Gandhi. I don't think even your target
6 growth scenario is realistic for this area.

See App. 14
Response II.B.1.

7 Thank you.

8 (Applause.)

9 MR. PLATT: Mr. Mitchell.

10 MR. MITCHELL: Bob Mitchell,
11 representing the Albany Area Builders
12 Association, and I would like to add my thanks
13 for the presentation tonight. I thought it was
14 very well done. And my comments really revolve
15 around the future growth and the phasing and, of
16 course, the costs, the mitigation fee.

17 Our members of our association
18 are home builders and office builders, shopping
19 centers and things like that. I looked at the
20 last numbers that were put up at the end, at the
21 economic cost per square foot. On a commercial
22 building, I think was around \$11. A residential
23 home \$4500. And with those kind of numbers

1 being added on, the last person in is going to
2 be paying the big fees to pay for these things.
3 And because these fees are so large, we are very
4 concerned that you may turn off some of the very
5 people you are depending upon for the growth and
6 to pay for some of these improvements.

See App. 14
Response II.0.3.

7 We would like to see, number 1, a
8 phased implementation of these projects such as
9 transportation improvements, the water
10 improvements and the treatment plants.
11 Obviously, some of these things have to come
12 first. It's a chicken or egg type of
13 situation. But we feel that the major trunk
14 lines for water have to be put in. Some of the
15 road systems have to be put in.

See App. 14
Response II.H.9.
and Response
II.0.14.

16 As far as paying for these things
17 is concerned, rather than trying to collect all
18 these fees up front as individual projects are
19 approved and developed, we would like to see a
20 special assessment type of deal arranged, where
21 it is spread over the total area to be
22 developed. And possibly in phases, bonds can be
23 issued over a 20-year period of time, and the

See App. 14
Response II.0.11.

1 fees for these special assessments can be used
2 to pay for these bonds so the improvements can
3 be made all at one time in steps so we get the
4 work done in phases so that the development can
5 take place. This will also mitigate the
6 development cost so that builders and developers
7 when they come in, instead of having to pay \$11
8 a square foot for office space on the cost and
9 having to compete with existing office space
10 that did not have to pay this impact fee, it
11 will be spread over a long period of time. The
12 cash will not have to be paid up front by the
13 developer but over a longer period of time as a
14 special assessment on the land, and the town can
15 go ahead and implement the improvements
16 immediately that they need to get the first
17 phase going here with these special bonds backed
18 up by the special assessments.

19 We think that the town has an
20 exceptional plan here for future growth. We
21 feel that the growth is going to take place. It
22 may not take place as fast as you anticipate.
23 After all, we know it takes four or five years

1 to get through the planning board on any
2 project.

3 (Laughter.)

4 Seriously, I think you have a lot
5 of concerns that want to come in here, and they
6 want to do development on a spot basis. And to
7 hit them with these large mitigation fees,
8 specifically if they want to come in and may be
9 competing with somebody right next door who
10 built four or five years ago, we just don't
11 think this is going to set right, and you may
12 find that some of these people will go to other
13 places to develop.

14 And the improvements that are
15 necessary in the town right now -- because, as
16 you pointed out, almost 50 to 60 percent of the
17 people that are currently working in this area
18 go north or south at sometime during the day and
19 leave the market. Now, true, they are coming in
20 to the Town of Colonie to use the facilities,
21 the commercial facilities, the retail
22 establishments, and then they are leaving. So,
23 therefore, it's these people who are going to

See App. 14
Response II.0.11.

1 have to bear the costs, and they are going to
2 have to decide whether it's economically
3 feasible to go along and to continue this.

4 We need these highways. We need
5 the improvements. We are going to have to pay
6 for them, and we require the development to pay
7 for them. And we would seriously and strongly
8 suggest that you look to an alternate method of
9 financing these improvements that are more
10 realistic and certain than just mitigation fees.

11 Thank you very much.

12 MR. PLATT: (Indicating.)

13 MR. SIMPSON: Good evening. My
14 name is Bob Simpson. I live at 61 Mill Road.

15 I'd like to speak to you tonight
16 about noise impacts. That's the only area of
17 the draft environmental impact statement that I
18 have had an opportunity to review.

19 The point I would like to make --
20 I mean I don't want to appear overly critical.
21 But I think the area of noise impact is woefully
22 inadequate in the impact statement. I would
23 like to point out some of the areas where I

See App. 14
Response II.0.15.

1 think improvements can be made; otherwise, you
2 won't have the information that you need to make
3 informed decisions about planning and growth in
4 the town.

5 The impact statement has a number
6 of charts on expected noise levels; but as far
7 as I can determine, there are no recent
8 measurements of ambient conditions, ambient
9 noise levels. You have to know the base.

See pp. II-182
through II-185
and p. II-191.

10 There was a study done in 1981,
11 but there's nothing more recent. You need a
12 baseline from which to project impacts, and I
13 don't think you have that.

14 You have predictions of noise
15 levels by aircraft but nothing showing the
16 number of flights and noise levels they generate
17 by time of day. That's very important because
18 sleep interference is one of the primary impacts
19 from aircraft noise. And, frankly, there is no
20 discussion of that. It's very important to have
21 that correlation of flights by time of day, and
22 you don't have that in the impact statement.

See App. 14
Response II.J.8.

23 There is a statement that there

1 will be a slight increase in noise in the 1995
2 period. There is no discussion of the
3 assumption supporting that statement. In fact,
4 it's counter intuitive. You saw the figures
5 tonight on the number of "emplanements," they
6 call them. It just makes no sense to say that
7 noise levels are going to slightly increase, and
8 yet you are projecting all this additional
9 aircraft traffic. It makes no sense to me. I
10 think there's something fundamentally wrong with
11 the impact statement in regard to that
12 assessment.

See App. 14
Response II.J.8.

13 You have no data on the type of
14 aircraft, their number of flights, correlated
15 with noise level and time of day. You need to
16 see the distribution of flights between day and
17 night. The expected noise levels from those
18 flights are necessary to tell the impacts. The
19 ldn's which are the standard measurement used in
20 an impact statement could get much worse, and
21 you really don't have any way of knowing how
22 much worse they are going to be without that
23 baseline and without that distribution between

See App. 14
Response
II.J.8.

1 day and nighttime noise levels.

2 Finally, and most importantly,
3 there is no discussion of impacts on humans.
4 You present a lot of statistics. Aircraft noise
5 is known to create speech interference and sleep
6 interference, its two primary effects. It
7 interferes with people's conversations. You
8 can't hear TV in your house. It lowers property
9 values. You can't listen to the radio. These
10 are things people engage in in their everyday
11 life.

12 There is no impact analysis.
13 That sleep interference is a big thing. Sleep
14 interference has been associated with
15 stress-related diseases, hypertension,
16 cardiovascular diseases. There is no discussion
17 of that.

18 I also heard a lot about traffic
19 tonight. Now, I haven't reviewed the traffic
20 portion, but, again, I didn't hear one person
21 talk tonight, in the presenting body, about the
22 impact on humans that live along these
23 arterials. Again, these people are going to be

See App. 14
Response II.J.9.

1 experiencing increased noise. There are going
2 to be violations of the air quality standards.
3 Those violations create additional respiratory
4 illnesses, and things like that. There is no
5 mention of that in the impact statement.

See App. 14
Response II.I.2.

6 You are talking about people
7 impacting humans lives here, and somebody has
8 got to come to grips with that and address it.
9 It's just not there right now.

10 Regarding mitigation measures. I
11 know expansion is going to come. I am willing
12 to accept that. I think we have to participate
13 with you in trying to minimize impacts. But,
14 frankly, as was pointed out earlier, our
15 government is not supporting us right now in
16 that regard.

See App. 14
Response II.B.7

17 The impact statement talks about
18 an existing Albany County policy, "No engine
19 runups in the middle of the night." Anybody who
20 lives near the airport knows that that is a
21 misleading statement to say that that's a
22 mitigation measure, because, frankly, it isn't
23 enforced.

See pp. II-182
through II-185.

1 Now, I am a citizen of this
2 town. I want to be for as far as I can project
3 into the future, but I want to have some
4 confidence that this government is going to
5 protect me. Frankly, to say in the impact
6 statement that that's a mitigation measure and
7 it's not enforced doesn't give me a lot of
8 confidence that government is out there looking
9 out for my interest. I have a right as
10 everybody in this town has a right to live in a
11 healthy and safe environment. And, frankly, it
12 isn't being done right now. Something has to be
13 done about that situation.

14 I think once that situation is
15 resolved, those runups in the middle of the
16 night, you are going to develop a lot of
17 confidence on the part of the people that live
18 in the community that you are out there to
19 protect us. And we'll support what you are
20 doing, but you've got to show us that you care
21 about us, especially with respect to those
22 engine runups.

23 Another thing that I think would

1 be very effective would be a prohibition on
2 nighttime operations. That's mentioned in the
3 impact statement. I think it's an outstanding
4 idea. People need to be able to sleep. We all
5 need to recharge at night and you go to work
6 during the day. If you go to work tired, you're
7 crabby. You're crabby to your family. You're
8 crabby to your boss, a lot of conflict in the
9 offices and in families. And what's it
10 attributable to? Because you didn't get a good
11 night's sleep. It sounds very simple but that,
12 in fact, is what happens. And there are a lot
13 of illnesses caused by sleep interference.
14 There's a tremendous impact in terms of human
15 illnesses and lost wages from people who can't
16 sleep at night.

17 Finally, I want to emphasize
18 again, I am not here to oppose this thing. I
19 think the town has made a good effort, but there
20 needs to be a lot of improvement in that impact
21 statement, and I hope we can all work together
22 and do that.

23 Thank you very much.

See App. 14
Response II.J.10.

1 MR. PLATT: (Indicating.)

2 MR. CONROY: Yes, gentlemen. My
3 name is Jim Conroy, and I am employed with the
4 Center for Economic Growth as a community
5 development consultant. In that capacity, I
6 have been working with a number of major land-
7 owners who have properties within the airport
8 GEIS area. Upon review of the draft GEIS, we
9 have a few major comments.

10 Number 1. The assessment of
11 mitigation fees based on the fact that 95
12 percent of roadway improvements needed to
13 accommodate growth in the airport area, that
14 they should be attributed to new growth alone,
15 is absurd. This calculation does not include
16 sufficient allowance for existing infrastructure
17 problems and deficiencies within the area.

See App. 14
Response II.H.5.

18 There is evidence that many of
19 the transportation improvements recommended in
20 the draft are needed today to handle existing
21 traffic. In fact, virtually every major
22 intersection in the study area currently
23 operates at a failed level of service during

1 peak hours.

2 The Capital District

3 Transportation Committee has stated, as was
4 pointed out earlier, that much of the traffic in
5 this area is background traffic or through
6 traffic. Other traffic demand is generated by
7 increased passenger load of the Albany County
8 airport. Still other traffic is caused by
9 social change which has resulted in more cars
10 per family and more drivers per household. None
11 of these influences were adequately addressed in
12 the draft plan.

13 At the outset of the study, the
14 consultants recognized this in saying that
15 developing feasible improvements at certain
16 locations could not be accomplished to provide
17 adequate level of service D.

18 A new north-south arterial, Exit
19 3 off the Northway, Route 7 expansion, and
20 improvements to Albany-Shaker and Albany-
21 Watervliet Roads, and many of the other traffic
22 improvements recommended in the study are
23 required today. It's not justifiable to

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1 allocate 95 percent of these costs to new
2 development.

3 The problem will only get worse
4 if the county and town do nothing to solve these
5 longstanding traffic problems, even if no new
6 buildings are ever constructed in the area.
7 Given the cost of these mitigating fees, the
8 stagnant economy and the amount of development
9 proposed under the moderate growth scenario, it
10 is unlikely that these improvements will ever be
11 made through the implementation of such an
12 unbalanced and unfair mitigation percentage.
13 There is simply not enough demand or absorption
14 rate for the level of development necessary to
15 pay these astronomical fees.

16 The second point. The omission
17 of recent discussions about ownership and
18 development of the airport is another major
19 deficiency in the draft GEIS. The failure of
20 the study to adequately evaluate the impact of a
21 number of different development scenarios and
22 options, including the potential enlargement of
23 parking facilities, realignment of roadways, the

See App.14
Response II.B.7.

1 expansion of the terminal, is a serious flaw in
2 the entire project, which may make its findings
3 moot after a final airport construction plan is
4 implemented, specifically, when these proposals
5 included a dramatic increase in the size of
6 properties used for airport purposes.

7 Finally, the settlement upon
8 three basic development scenarios is too
9 simplistic for such a complex and important
10 regional area. Little work is evident as to
11 realistic absorption rate of either of the
12 development scenarios. The no-growth option,
13 the high-growth option, and the target-growth
14 option do not provide sufficient discussion on
15 the potential mix of these scenarios or on the
16 possibility that certain areas may be suited for
17 high growth while others are not. This study
18 does not adequately address the varied
19 development alternatives which are possible.

20 In closing, I want to say that
21 the property owners with whom I've collaborated
22 in this effort all want the airport to be
23 improved to a first class regional facility. We

See App. 14
Response III.B.1.

See App. 14
Response II.B.7.

1 support the town of Colonie in the GEIS
2 program. The improvement of the airport will
3 require considerable improvement to the existing
4 road system, and these property owners are not
5 opposed to participating in a fair allocation of
6 the improvement costs, but the plan to allocate
7 these costs included in the draft GEIS is
8 unacceptable.

9 Please accept these comments as
10 preliminary. We reserve the right to submit
11 additional written material in the balance of
12 the comment period.

13 Thank you very much.

14 MR. PLATT: (Indicating.)

15 MR. NORMAN: My name is Craig
16 Norman. I'm with Cooper, Erving, Savage, Nolan
17 and Heller, attorneys in Albany. We represent
18 several parties who own developable land within
19 this area. I'd like to make a few comments.

20 First population. I think Mrs.
21 Weis was right in saying that you do not have to
22 predict a doomsday scenario based on population
23 history in this area. The census figures are

See App. 14
Response II.A.1.

1 in. They show just 3 percent growth in the
2 entire Town of Colonie over the last ten years,
3 which is a substantial, a very substantial
4 decline over historical growth in the Town of
5 Colonie.

6 You also have to consider that
7 developers may be advancing proposals with the
8 town to simply protect their interest, protect
9 their rights in the future without any intent to
10 develop the property immediately. Also
11 developers may be advancing proposals to sign up
12 lessees, with the hope of signing up lessees in
13 order to take the leases to the bank and thereby
14 finance their developments. The lessees may
15 never appear; therefore, those developments may
16 never happen.

17 Secondly, the improvements to be
18 made in these highways, which is the primary
19 cause of the impact fees or the mitigation fee,
20 will benefit all citizens of the town as well as
21 existing businesses. Clearly, this will benefit
22 the new businesses as well, but there has to be
23 some sharing as between existing businesses,

See App. 14
Response II.B.1.

See App. 14
Response II.O.9.

1 existing residences and new residences and new
2 businesses.

3 Next, I don't think the study
4 takes into account tax revenues generated for
5 the state and county in the form of sales and
6 payroll taxes. Sales taxes, for example, on
7 some facilities within the town of people whom I
8 already represent and who already have a
9 building up would generate \$40 million worth of
10 sales. That would be \$2.8 million at 7 percent
11 sales tax. That alone would be sufficient to
12 cover a large portion of the work to be done on
13 these highways. Obviously, sales taxes are
14 revenues for the state, county, and town, and
15 they are shared among those three taxing
16 organizations. Those should be considered just
17 as any other tax. Payroll taxes similarly.

18 The mitigation fees proposed -- I
19 think a number of people have said this -- would
20 have a very serious impact on the development
21 prospects, adding between 15 and 20 percent of
22 the cost of an office building in this area.
23 Can our area afford to have this type of

See App. 14
Response II.0.1.

See App. 14
Response II.0.3.

1 restriction in this recessionary environment? I
2 think you have to consider that.

3 Next, will full credit be given
4 for all on-site development advancing the intent
5 of the GEIS?

See App. 14
Response II.0.5.

6 Additionally, I think you have
7 the legal question. How will the town proceed
8 to collect mitigation fees on behalf of the
9 state and the county? Are we going to have to
10 wait for state legislation in order to allow the
11 state to accept this type of arrangement with
12 the town or the county if the mitigation fees
13 are going to be collected on behalf of the
14 state. Frankly, I haven't heard anybody say
15 that the state is in favor of this proposal. We
16 don't know where the Cuomo Administration or
17 whatever, the state itself, stands on this type
18 of concept. Obviously, there are a number of
19 programs in the state to cause development to
20 occur within the state. I wonder what their
21 reaction would be to proposals which, in
22 essence, would have the effect of reducing the
23 amount of development within the state. Can

See App. 14
Response II.B.8.

1 that be imposed merely for the Town of Colonie
2 or will that be imposed statewide? It seems to
3 me it's going to occasion delay waiting for the
4 state to make up its mind. It doesn't seem like
5 this is going to take right off. Although I
6 know the town has the Boght Road mitigation fee
7 situation already in effect.

8 Now, I think with respect to the
9 air quality, finally, you might want to consider
10 that the state and the federal government are in
11 the process of at least proposing and in some
12 cases enacting changes in air quality emission
13 standards for automobiles. Obviously, no one
14 wants to breathe polluted air. That's one of
15 our big factors in our environment right now.
16 Auto emissions are probably the number one
17 polluter. But I think that has to be addressed
18 and is being addressed very strenuously right
19 now at the state and federal level.

20 I don't know that you can do very
21 much at the local level other than to stop
22 developments and stop traffic to deal with
23 pollution from automobiles.

See App. 14
Response II.I.3.

1 Thank you.

2 MR. PLATT: Mr. Burhmaster.

3 MR. BURHMASTER: I'm Ed

4 Burhmaster, Albany County legislator. I
5 represent the area around the north end of
6 airport. We've heard a lot of noise about the
7 airport, a lot of words spoken. The biggest
8 problem is, is the revving up of them airplanes
9 at night when they work onto 'em. One of your
10 studies, it shows we have commuter planes rather
11 than jets. The more increase was to more of the
12 commuters, which I agree with that study, but
13 that brings the problem of working on the
14 airplanes. They couldn't work on the jets, but
15 they can work on the commuter planes, and that's
16 where we get the problem with the noise. The
17 noise increased when we got the commuter planes.
18 They never work on the jets there. They're done
19 at the bigger airports. They don't have the
20 facilities here to work onto 'em.

21 Is there anybody who'd say that
22 we're not going to have this growth. I don't
23 know. I'd hope we didn't have the growth. We

See pp. II-182
through II-185.

1 have to plan for it and that's what you people
2 are doing, so I congratulate you on your study.

3 And anybody that says we don't
4 need some work on the roads, well, Albany-Shaker
5 Road, when they say they are going through
6 Albany-Shaker Road, they're not going to the
7 airport. All you have to do is drive over there
8 and see which way they are going at 4:00 o'clock
9 at night. They're coming out of the airport,
10 coming off of Albany-Shaker Road, the businesses
11 established there. Paul Cooney here, the county
12 engineer, will verify that, I'm sure. You go
13 over there at 4:00 o'clock and just try to get
14 out on Route 7; and if you're going the other
15 way in the morning, you just try to go the other
16 way.

17 So as soon as that project is
18 under way, we need the money. We need someone
19 to pay for it. Who is going to pay for it? I
20 don't know. Mitigating fees? The state and the
21 federal government is not going to do it.
22 Albany County? I suggested that if we're going
23 to turn the airport over to someone, we turn

See App. 14
Response II.B.8.

1 that road over to airport. If we can't take the
2 -- FAA says we can't take the money out of the
3 airport. Well, let's give the road to the
4 airport and then the money will not be a
5 profit. It will be a detriment. It will be
6 paying for Albany-Shaker Road, and the people
7 that cause the problem will be the users of the
8 airport.

9 So that's the way we can pay for
10 Albany-Shaker Road. Turn it over to the Albany
11 County Airport. FAA says we can't take the
12 money out and put it into the general fund.
13 Well, the airport owns the road. If we didn't
14 have the airport, we wouldn't have the problem
15 on Albany-Shaker Road; and if we didn't have
16 Albany-Shaker Road, we wouldn't have an
17 airport. So there's how we can solve one
18 problem.

19 And anybody that knows, we have
20 noise around that airport. Talking about not
21 having flights come in after 10:00, 11:00
22 o'clock maybe at night, well, if there's an
23 airplane up there, I'm sure the controller isn't

1 going to say, "I'm sorry. We're closed for the
2 night. Go onto the next airport." So it's good
3 idea, but I'm sure it doesn't work. It isn't
4 practical.

5 Thank you for your time.

6 (Applause.)

7 MR. ZADBINSKI: My name is Mike
8 Zadbinski I live at 8 Larkspur Drive.

9 I won't belabor the point. I
10 want to address the question of nighttime
11 runups, simply because I believe it was totally
12 inadequately addressed in the draft document.
13 And I have submitted some written comments, but
14 I just want to make them available to everyone
15 here.

16 Number 1, I think carriers
17 performing off-hour maintenance work at the
18 airport should be contacted, and their present
19 and future needs and requirements for such work
20 and facilities should be defined.

21 2. Just which repairs and
22 services actually require that engines be run up
23 for testing should be determined in order to

See pp. II-182
through II-185.

See pp. II-182
through II-185.

1 avoid needless and gratuitous runups.

2 3. Careful measurement of the
3 noise generated by the various maintenance
4 practices should be undertaken. This
5 information in conjunction with number 2 above
6 could then be used by planners as the basis for
7 preparing rational airport policies which would
8 restrict or otherwise regulate procedures which
9 generate unacceptable noise levels during quiet
10 hours, while allowing maintenance personnel the
11 greatest practical way for completing their
12 necessary work.

See pp. II-182
through II-185.

13 Now I will move into a section
14 that I think is of vital importance particularly
15 since we've seen that the projections for
16 propeller-driven airplanes, that is, the air
17 taxi operation, have been way up and totally off
18 base. Projected expansion of hanger facilities
19 for prop-driven planes, their design,
20 construction, location and orientation within
21 the airport, and the impact of these variables
22 on noise generation within them should be
23 discussed.

See App. 14
Response II.J.1.

1 A discussion of prospects for
2 mitigating noise by proper design of maintenance
3 facilities should be undertaken.

See App. 14
Response II.J.1.

4 Currently, runups are performed
5 out in the open. Could facilities be designed
6 which would allow maintenance to be performed
7 during the night hours while containing or
8 attenuating the noise in some way, i.e., larger
9 hanger facilities that would allow these tests
10 to be done indoors? Are there any landscape
11 techniques, e.g., plantings or modification of
12 terrain which could be employed to contain these
13 maintenance areas and isolate the noise that
14 they generate?

See App. 14
Response II.J.2.

15 My observation of noise generated
16 by prop-driven planes revealed that certain
17 models of aircraft are considerably noisier than
18 others. In light of this, I feel that some
19 discussion of this fact be included -- in
20 particular, how adjustments to the mix of planes
21 at the airport may be used to mitigate nighttime
22 noise in a manner similar to that described for
23 jet planes in Section J.

See App. 14
Response II.J.4.

1 Considerable research on
2 propeller design aimed at increasing fuel
3 efficiency and reducing noise has been
4 undertaken and continues. What would be the
5 impact of adoption of this new technology on
6 future airport operations? And do current and
7 likely future carriers have any plans to adopt
8 this technology? In a manner similar to that
9 discussed in Section J regarding jets, what
10 steps can be taken to provide incentives for
11 carriers to utilize quieter planes?

See App. 14
Response II.J.5.

12 It has been my observation that
13 atmospheric conditions play a significant role
14 in propigating noise generated at the airport.
15 This phenomenon should be examined in greater
16 detail and results and implications discussed in
17 the report.

See App. 14
Response II.J.6.

18 Without any effective physical
19 controls to attenuate ground-based noise, what
20 could be done to enforce current regulations on
21 the generation of nighttime noise? Let me give
22 you a little background on my experience with
23 the regulation of the -- of the -- of the

See pp. II-182
through II-185.

1 regulations that are currently in place. There
2 is no regulation. And the only relief, although
3 it's been, at best, a partial relief, that I
4 have been able to obtain is by calling the upper
5 level management of the offending airlines and
6 talking to them directly. They have a problem,
7 though, in that the main offenders are both
8 headquartered out of town and they can't watch
9 what is going on at the airport day-in and
10 day-out.

11 Lately, I have taken to going
12 over 3:00, 4:00, 5:00 o'clock in the morning and
13 taking down plane registration numbers and
14 providing that information and the time of
15 runups to the management. They have been
16 responsive, but they can't stay on top of it.
17 We need to look into what can be done to enforce
18 the regulations that are currently in place, and
19 I think that that needs to be addressed in the
20 draft document.

21 I think we should also seriously
22 consider what the impact of expanding the quiet
23 hours at the airport from the current midnight

See App. 14
Response II.J.7.

1 to 6:00 a.m. to say 11:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. --
2 what that impact would be on airport operations,
3 what the economic impact would be, et cetera.

4 None of these points are
5 addressed. The only comment, or the only
6 statement made in the draft document about
7 propeller-driven airplanes is that they don't
8 make as much noise as jets. Well, I think that
9 that is a totally inadequate handling of the
10 question of propeller airplane noise generated
11 during quiet hours. I think you must be getting
12 that idea that it's bothering a lot of people
13 now, and it's something that really needs to be
14 looked at both by the planning board as well as
15 the Clough, Harbour.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. PLATT: (Indicating.)

18 MR. MONTEIRO: Thank you. My
19 name is John Monteiro and I am co-chairman of a
20 group in Colonie and I work on waste for an
21 environmental services group, and I'd basically
22 like to give you some feedback I guess on the
23 draft piece.

1 First of all, let me say that we
2 are pleased to see the town, the county and the
3 village undertake this study. We think it's a
4 great opportunity for us as residents and also
5 folks who are concerned about what happens in
6 our town to look at a major area in our town and
7 have input in terms of what will happen in that
8 area versus a sort of piecemeal process that was
9 ongoing where somebody would just come in to the
10 planning board at any given time and present
11 their proposal. So for that, we thank you very
12 much. The first thing I would like to say, I
13 guess one of the speakers prior to me, and I'm
14 not sure who it was, talked about a moderate
15 scenario. I don't think there is a moderate
16 scenario. I mean I don't call 7 million square
17 feet of office space a moderate scenario.

18 I think we also stand with some
19 of the other speakers today that, to us, both
20 scenarios are also not acceptable for a number
21 of reasons, a number of which have already been
22 stated. We feel that the impact that even the
23 target scenario would have in the area,

See App. 14
Response
..II.B.15.

1 especially now hearing the objection of the
2 folks that would be building this regarding
3 mitigation fees, I think would be potentially
4 dramatic not only on our taxes as residents --
5 and we are also concerned about that.

6 As far as the impact on the
7 environment, we are encouraged by the section
8 that was prepared in the draft GEIS. However, I
9 guess this is both questions and also
10 statements. LUMAC is referred to in the draft
11 document. It was also referred to in a
12 presentation today. A number of the
13 recommendation made by LUMAC have never been
14 accepted by the town board, so I'm not sure how
15 they are referred to in what context.

See App. 14
Response
II.B.9.

16 In addition, they also spoke
17 during the presentation about the watershed
18 legislation that's in place in the town. I
19 don't know if you notice or not, but that is no
20 guarantee that development will not occur within
21 100 feet of a stream. Recently, the town was
22 approached, and there is a committee for
23 variance. It was approached by the Michaels

1 Group, and they were allowed to develop well
2 within 100 feet of a stream. So that is not a
3 guarantee that that land there will be
4 protected, as well.

5 I think that the loss of open
6 space in that area is certainly detrimental to a
7 town which over the last ten years has lost
8 significant areas, and I think that we really
9 need to look at an open space plan in the town
10 versus just the green belts that you recommend.
11 Those are basically buffer zones, and I have
12 been to enough planning board meetings to know
13 that those were always required on developers,
14 to a certain extent. We would like to see
15 something bigger than that. We would like to
16 see an actual open space plan.

See App. 14
Response II.D.1.

17 Somewhat confusing -- and maybe I
18 just didn't pick it up in reading the document,
19 but you did an excellent job in pointing out
20 what the mitigation fees would be on developers.
21 But as a resident of this town, I have no idea
22 what the cost will be on me as a taxpayer in
23 terms of, once these improvements are done and

1 and they're deeded over to the town, it now
2 becomes my responsibility out of my pocket to
3 improve it and to maintain it, and I guess more
4 so the maintenance of these improvements. What
5 is that going to do to me as a taxpayer?
6 Because it is my understanding that is not going
7 to come out of the mitigation fees. I would
8 like to see some projection in terms of what
9 would be the cost of maintaining this
10 infrastructure over maybe a projected study
11 period. I think that that's important,
12 especially given the kind of volumes you are
13 anticipating to travel these roads.

See App. 14
Response II.0.16.

14 I guess -- and I'm going to be
15 brief because it's getting late. The GEIS, as I
16 understand it, is a tool. I would just leave, I
17 guess, Mr. Platt and members of the planning
18 board with this in mind; that once a final
19 document is developed and everybody has had
20 their say and, hopefully, there is a product
21 which is acceptable to everyone -- whether it be
22 the folks that are here who are interested in
23 developing, the residents that are concerned

1 about what's happening to our town, the people
2 that live near the airport -- once that is done,
3 I hope that the planning board and the town will
4 adopt it and follow it and stick to it.

See App. 14
Response
II.B.7.

5 In the past, we've had planning
6 tools and, unfortunately, they have not been
7 used, and I hope that that will not happen with
8 this.

9 Thank you.

10 MR. PLATT: (Indicating.)

11 MR. BERGNER: My name is John
12 Bergner. I'm a past president of the Coalition
13 of Homeowners and president of Eastern League.

14 I have two comments and then two
15 questions on the thing.

16 My first comment is we definitely
17 do need development because one of the reasons
18 the town tax increase coming up this fall is 12
19 percent is there hasn't been enough commercial
20 development to override that, and we have always
21 relied on expanding growth to keep the taxes
22 low, and that's why they are going to start
23 increasing.

See App. 14
Response
II.B.7.

See App. 14
Response II.0.15.

1 My second comment is I agree with
2 someone from the Business Council that a special
3 tax district should probably be established in
4 that area because that way the maintenance of
5 the roads and the infrastructure could also be
6 handled through the special tax district if it
7 was established with that clause and not just
8 established to pay off the original things. If
9 you did establish one, you would have to find
10 some way that you could draw the line to exclude
11 the houses that are buried in the middle of that
12 area, because they could never afford to pay
13 something like a special tax district on the
14 thing, or maybe there's other ways of doing it.
15 There are many ways that you can establish a
16 district.

17 My two questions are on
18 transportation and possibly if the engineer for
19 transportation could answer them tonight, that
20 would be good; and if he couldn't, then --

21 One was on your Watervliet-
22 Shaker Road tunnel, tunnel under
23 Watervliet-Shaker Road. I looked at the study

1 and the like, and it seems to me that the
2 Northway at sometimes approaching capacity --
3 and many of the people who work with me no
4 longer would ride the Northway. They use Route
5 9 because they can't stand the Northway
6 anymore. I work in downtown Albany. It seems
7 to me that if you put a tunnel reconnecting
8 Watervliet-Shaker Road, the traffic that does
9 not go onto the Northway -- you are blocked to
10 go to the west, unless you're Schenectady bound;
11 most of the traffic is Saratoga bound -- will be
12 dumped onto Route 9. Route 9 during rush hour
13 is already a mess. So it seems to me the tunnel
14 would improve traffic in the airport area and
15 just move the problem over to Route 9.

16 And the second technical question
17 I have is, you are recommending a six-lane Route
18 7, which I can see where from your projections
19 the traffic would need a six-lane Route 7, and
20 you have also stated that Exit 5 is underused.
21 The one question I have is, if you look on the
22 airport, Sicker Road was cut in two by the
23 expansion of the northwest runway. Due to noise

See App. 14
Response II.H.25.

1 abatement, all the buildings and all the land
2 around Kelly Road -- or is it Kelly Avenue? I'm
3 not quite certain -- is owned by the county.
4 All the land between the dead end of Sicker Road
5 and Kelly Avenue is owned by the county. If you
6 were to connect Sicker Road to Kelly Avenue,
7 Kelly Avenue connects to Old Niskayuna Road
8 which goes down to Exit 5, you would have a two-
9 lane service road south of Route 7. You
10 wouldn't have to pay the extraordinary costs of
11 land acquisition for widening Route 7 to six
12 lanes. And I was curious why that was never
13 considered or appears to have been looked into.

14 MR. CONWAY: To be honest with
15 you, we have a stenographer here and all the
16 comments are being taken down. I think we need
17 some time to take a look at that in order to
18 fully address -- to give you a responsible
19 answer. I don't think we can do that at this
20 point here tonight. Obviously, it's just been
21 brought to our attention. We would like to
22 spend a little time to look at it.

23 MR. BERGNER: I had mentioned it

See App. 14
Response II.H.19.

1 at the original hearing when they were doing
2 the --

3 MR. CONWAY: Scoping?

4 MR. BERGNER: Scoping session,
5 yes. That's why I was curious about it.
6 Because all the land there is already owned by
7 the county because of noise abatement, even
8 though there are buildings there. And it was in
9 the paper. I guess they are leased to county
10 employees or something, currently. They are
11 owned, all the land, all the houses and the
12 like. So there would be no land acquisition
13 cost, and then you would have a two-lane service
14 road from Albany-Shaker Road all the way to
15 Northway Exit 5.

16 MR. CONWAY: It's something we're
17 going to have to look into.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. PLATT: (Indicating.)

20 MR. CONDELL: My name is Bob
21 Condell, Neighborhood Association, also County
22 Coalition of Homeowners Associations.

23 I'd just like to say this. These

1 men up here on the board are here every Tuesday
2 night as well Mary Brizzell, who is here every
3 Tuesday, as well as Kevin Smith, as well as this
4 lady here, the stenographer. All I'm asking is
5 let's give them a good round of applause,
6 please.

7 (Applause.)

8 MR. PLATT: (Indicating.)

9 MR. WESTCOTT: My name is Bill
10 Westcott. I'm the Executive Vice President of
11 the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of
12 Commerce.

13 With a few exceptions, we haven't
14 done a very good job of asking questions which
15 is what Chairman Platt has suggested we could do
16 at the outset here. I have a question, but
17 first I'd just like to make a comment.

18 I think that the target scenario
19 that we have been talking about certainly is
20 sufficient to strike terror into the heart of
21 any environmentally conscious resident of the
22 Town of Colonie, and it is not, apparently, a
23 realistic scenario upon which to build all these

1 calculations.

2 Is there consensus within Clough,
3 Harbour at this point or within the board that a
4 scenario between the "no growth" and the "target
5 growth" scenario needs to be evaluated?

See App. 14
Response III.B.1.

6 MR. CONWAY: I think that will be
7 looked at during the 30-day comment period.
8 It's one of those comments that's several times
9 been raised during the night, and I believe it's
10 something that we'll have to evaluate and take a
11 look at.

12 MR. WESTCOTT: Okay. Thank you.
13 I certainly encourage you to do that. The
14 Chamber of Commerce is interested in growth.
15 It's really one of things that we stand for, but
16 we're interested in moderate growth, and we're
17 interested in growth which can help to pay for
18 infrastructure which is needed, not a situation
19 which creates a concern and a degree of anxiety
20 which would levy fees that would discourage the
21 very growth which could help to pay for the
22 needed improvements.

23 Thank you.

1 MR. CONWAY: Thank you.

2 MR. PLATT: Is there anyone
3 else?

4 MS. HILLARD: Corrine Hillard.
5 My question is to Mr. Callander. Is it
6 "Larry"?

7 MR. CALLANDER: Right.

8 MS. HILLARD: The land use map
9 has us listed as open space and brush, and we
10 have a farm on the end of Wolf Road Watervliet-
11 Shaker. We have been there for 65 years. So I
12 don't know where your men were when they were
13 mapping. They weren't doing a very good job.

See Exhibit
II-B-1

14 MR. CALLANDER: Whereabouts is
15 that location?

16 MS. HILLARD: Old Wolf Road right
17 next to the Latham Water District, both sides of
18 the road.

19 MR. CALLANDER: And it's
20 indicated as --

21 MS. HILLARD: It's indicated as
22 "open" and "brush". It's a farm. It's been
23 there for 65 years. Also the section on Old

1 Niskayuna, part of it is listed as "farm," but
2 it extends to Watervliet-Shaker Road.

3 MR. CONWAY: Thank you.

4 MR. PLATT: (Indicating.)

5 MR. TRIBBLE: John Tribble.

6 Currently, I'm president of the Town of Colonie
7 Coalition of Homeowners Associations. We're
8 going to submit our remarks in writing next
9 week. Tonight, my comments are primarily my
10 own.

11 I, like a lot of other people,
12 have been troubled by the target scenario,
13 because it isn't a target. As you look at the
14 description of how it was arrived at, it was
15 arrived at by eliminating what were considered
16 to be speculative projects. One wonders why the
17 authors of the document didn't refer to it as "A
18 most likely scenario." And the fact that they
19 called it "target" rather than "most likely,"
20 makes me wonder. Maybe they didn't think it was
21 most likely. Was it just a "likely" scenario
22 instead?

23 As I go through the document and

1 I look at how we are depending on that target as
 2 a measuring stick against which we are going to
 3 measure the various impacts, the question that I
 4 come up against is, "Shouldn't we have within
 5 the recommendations some explicit
 6 recommendations as to how we are going to
 7 achieve that target or that norm?"

See App. 14
 Response
 II.B.12.

8 I think there may be a tendency
 9 to want to get on with the process to get ahold
 10 of what we're going to do with those mitigation
 11 fees, and I think that's premature at this
 12 time.

13 I think, instead, we need to pay
 14 a great deal of attention to the material in the
 15 report in Section 3, pages 18 to 24, that focus
 16 on how we control growth within the area. There
 17 are some specific suggestions there. They are
 18 given as suggestions rather than
 19 recommendations, and there were some of them
 20 that I would like to see us proceed with very
 21 quickly in terms of taking them as
 22 recommendations -- in particular, the rezoning
 23 of the undeveloped land into a large-lot

See App. 14
 Response
 II.B.10.

1 residential kind of zone and the implementation
2 of the historic district ordinance.

3 Those are things that I think the
4 town should be moving on very, very quickly and
5 that, before the process proceeds too much
6 further, we arrive at what would be considered a
7 "most likely" scenario.

8 MR. PLATT: Yes.

9 MS. CONROY-LACIVITA: My name is
10 Diane Conroy-Lacivita, and I am director of the
11 Shaker Heritage Society.

12 I just want to make a couple of
13 comments. First of all, I want to say that the
14 Shaker Heritage Society looks upon planned
15 development as being positive, and we are
16 willing to go along with this area, but I would
17 like to make a couple comments on the GEIS.

18 First of all, we are acknowledged
19 in the beginning for our input. We were never
20 asked orally or in writing for any input; for if
21 we were asked or had been contacted, you would
22 have found out how detrimental the proposed
23 expansion of Albany-Shaker and Watervliet-Shaker

App. 14
Response II.K.2.

1 Roads would be to our site.

2 Our interpretation of the Shakers
3 is dependent upon a contiguous site, and that
4 being the orchard, the graveyard, the Ann Lee
5 Pond, the pastures and the Tripp family site
6 buildings. If the proposed expansion is to go
7 through Watervliet-Shaker Road and Albany-Shaker
8 Road, it's in essence going to cut our site in
9 half.

See App. 14
Response II.K.1.

10 Right now, our primary mission is
11 educational, that being that we have over 10,000
12 people come to our site annually, and we
13 interpret how the Shakers once lived. If we are
14 unable to bring people across the road to show
15 them the orchard, the pond or the graveyard, in
16 essence, we're cutting our programming in half.

17 The Shaker Heritage Society would
18 hope that other options for the expanded
19 roadways would be looked at.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. PLATT: Yes, ma'am.

22 MRS. DAMMER: My name is Deborah

23 Dammer. I live at 31 Vandenburg Lane.

1 First of all, I apologize that
2 this presentation this evening was the first
3 time that I have heard about this report, but I
4 didn't feel that I could really leave without
5 making at least a couple of comments. And if
6 they are naive, I apologize.

7 First of all, with respect to the
8 traffic levels, the report indicates that the
9 level that you shoot for is level D, and I
10 believe the speaker said that's generally what's
11 acceptable to the motorist. The charts that you
12 showed on the wall indicated that D is the
13 equivalent of long traffic delays. I am only
14 one motorist, but it doesn't seem to me that
15 that's at all acceptable.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.17.

16 Another comment with respect to
17 transportation. You have talked specifically
18 about the need for aggressive Traffic Systems
19 Management because of the significant increase
20 in volume of traffic that will occur as a result
21 of the improvements, and I wonder specifically
22 about the issue of variable work hours.

23 I work on the State Office

1 Building Campus. We have 11,000 employees
2 there. To the best of my knowledge, virtually
3 all of those employees enjoy some form of
4 variable work hours already. If you expect to
5 rely on aggressive TSMS, I think you need to
6 know whether or not and to what extent those
7 programs are already in existence.

See App. 14
Response II.H.26.

8 The last is an issue of specific
9 concern to me given where I live, and that is
10 with respect to noise. And I would appreciate
11 it if at some point somebody could explain to me
12 how it is that my house is now in what is zoned
13 as incompatible land use, and what the
14 implications of that are for my husband and the
15 other people who live on Vandenburg Lane?

See App. 14
Response II.J.9.

16 Thank you.

17 MR. PLATT: Ed.

18 MR. BURHMASTER: In that study
19 there, the fire departments are finding out that
20 (inaudible). We had a meeting this summer and
21 they was wondering why they weren't contacted.
22 I called Clough, Harbour, and they said that
23 somebody would contact them. Already cover the

See App. 14
Response II.M.2.

1 biggest part of that airport area in fire
2 protection.

3 About the tunnel under
4 Watervliet-Shaker Road, way back when we shut
5 that off, I think you will find a resolution to
6 that fact -- it was put in by someone to
7 through-tunnel that road. At that time, the
8 engineers said we couldn't because of the water
9 problem. I can see that. But since then, I've
10 been to O'Hare, and you can drive out of the
11 parking lot and you can see planes going right
12 over your head on bridges. So the runway could
13 be bridged across and you would be running the
14 airplanes up so you wouldn't have to go down in
15 the water, and you could stay at the same
16 grade. So it is a practical matter and should
17 be done.

18 What created all the the problems
19 around the Shaker Road and Old Wolf Road area is
20 because of people coming down from the
21 northwestern part of our town, which is now the
22 growing part of the town. You have to go down
23 there to get on the Northway, to go to

See App. 14
Response II.H.10.

1 Watervliet or if you're going to the arsenal to
2 work or you're going to Troy, and some go to
3 Cohoes to work.

4 So it is a good idea to look at
5 that tunnel situation at Watervliet-Shaker Road
6 because that should never have been cut apart,
7 and that will just create a problem at both the
8 intersections, Old Wolf and Watervliet-Shaker
9 and Albany-Shaker and Old Wolf.

10 We really could create one of the
11 biggest problems that the town ever had.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. FLATT: Is that it? Okay.
14 Thank you all for coming. The board has been
15 grappling with this for almost a year now. We
16 were quite surprised by the initial census
17 figures that the town has only grown somewhere
18 between 2 1/2, 3 percent a year as far as
19 population goes. It's also a fact that I
20 believe the automobile population is increasing
21 roughly 3 to 4 percent a year, so if you
22 multiply that over ten years, you've got 30 or
23 40 percent more cars than you had back in 1980.

1 I have been told that the
2 population of the town on any given business
3 hour of the day approaches approximately a
4 quarter of a million people. If the population
5 of the town is 75,000, 76,000, we have to
6 provide at least basic services of police and
7 paramedical protection and things like that.
8 The airport is certainly a big draw in our
9 community from the outlying areas. But I think
10 also another factor is that the average number
11 of people living in a dwelling in town is I
12 believe going under two per dwelling, if I am
13 not mistaken -- 1.7, 1.8, maybe 2.1, or
14 something like that.

15 There are many, many factors that
16 give us this perceived growth; that if we're
17 talking in terms of just population growth, it's
18 just not there, taking Albany County as a whole.
19 It's grown substantially in Saratoga County;
20 but, unfortunately, Saratoga County is basically
21 a bedroom community and everybody gets up in the
22 morning and heads south, goes home in the
23 evening at 5:00 and heads north.

1 I think on both sides, there has
2 been some undue criticism of both developers and
3 builders and likewise the developers and
4 builders have learned to do their homework and
5 realize that they are going to have to share in
6 mitigating fees at present and in the future.

7 The balancing act is it's just
8 not going to happen that somebody is going to
9 pay \$11 a square foot to put up an office
10 building and even think that he is going to be
11 competitive with an office building that's
12 already up or is located in a different area of
13 the county. The same thing for paying \$4500 for
14 a residential lot. I mean that's the worst case
15 scenario that Clough, Harbour has given us, but
16 I think it's going to be the job of this board
17 and working with the county and village to bring
18 these figures down to something that everyone
19 can live with and still be competitive. I don't
20 think we are looking to develop a no-growth
21 scenario here. That is going to be an
22 interesting challenge, but --

23 (Applause.)

1 -- but that's something this
2 board is going to have to face. I don't think
3 we're looking for large-lot ordinances any
4 more. We just went to 18,000 feet. And to say
5 we're going to go to the acre lots in the Town
6 of Colonie, I mean that's just being
7 ridiculous. Because we're not in Knox. I often
8 refer to hill towns. That's not a slam against
9 them, but they are just much more less-populated
10 than we are.

11 We do want to keep younger people
12 here, too. We don't want them all to go, and
13 Mrs. Weiss referred to the aging of the
14 population in the town. I hope that's not
15 true.

16 So, Peter, Kevin, would you just
17 briefly outline how this written comment period
18 where that falls into the whole structure of the
19 GEIS and where we go from here?

20 MR. CONWAY: Kevin can assist
21 me. I believe the written comments will be
22 directed to Engineering and Planning Department,
23 addressed to Mary Burke. We will receive all

1 written comments up to October 19, and each and
2 all comments will be addressed in the final
3 generic environmental impact statement.

4 As Chairman Platt indicated, we
5 will be working closely with the Town of
6 Colonie, the Village of Colonie and Albany
7 County to address many of the issues that were
8 raised here tonight. It is a very complex
9 project. It's a comprehensive project that we
10 put together here over the past year and a half,
11 and we appreciate the comments that were raised
12 here tonight.

13 MR. PLATT: Any other questions?

14 (There was no response.)

15 With that, the meeting will be
16 adjourned.

17 (Whereupon, at 9:50 p.m., the
18 hearing was adjourned.)

19
20
21
22
23



New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
The Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Empire State Plaza
Agency Building 1, Albany, New York 12238-0001

January 3, 1991

Ms. Mary Burke
Senior Planner
Town of Colonie
272 Maxwell Road
Latham, New York 12110



Dear Ms. Burke:

Re: SEQRA
DEIS for Albany County Airport
Town of Colonie, Albany County
90PR2570

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) has received the section of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) regarding cultural resources for the Albany County Airport study area.

Based upon this review, the archeological component of the DEIS provides appropriate discussion and guidance. One correction is needed, however, regarding the explanation of OPRHP's archeological sensitivity map (p. II-187). The key to that map is: circles identify zones sensitized by the New York State Museum file date; squares identify zones sensitized from OPRHP site files; stippled zones identify overlapping sensitivity. The notion that circles are prehistoric zones and squares are historic zones of sensitivity is a complete misconception.

See
p. II-200.

In reference to historic structures, it is the OPRHP's opinion that an excellent job was presented in identifying known historic/architectural structures such as the National Register listed Town of Colonie Multiple Resource Area and the Watervliet-Shaker Historic District. However, there are properties within specific project area has not been professionally surveyed for historic and architectural significance. We recommend that all buildings or structures more than 50 years old within or adjacent to this area be identified and forward to our office to be evaluated for historic and/or architectural significance. We have included our Structure/Building Inventory Form and instructions to assist in this identification.

See
App. 14
Response
II.K.3.

Please note that if any State Agency is involved in this undertaking, it is appropriate for that agency to determine whether consultation should take place with OPRHP under Section 14.09 of the New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law. In addition, if there is any federal agency involvement, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's regulations, "Protection of Historic and Cultural Properties" 36 CFR 800 require that agency to initiate consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO).

See
App. 14
Response
II.K.4.

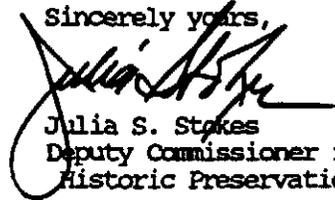
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau • 518-474-0479
Urban Cultural Parks • 518-473-2375

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Agency

Ms. Mary Burke
January 3, 1991
Page 2

If you have any questions or need additional questions, please call
Linda Harvey-Opiteck of our Project Review Unit at (518) 474-0479.

Sincerely yours,



Julia S. Stokes
Deputy Commissioner for
Historic Preservation

JSS/LHO:tr

Enc: 50 Blue Forms
Blue Forms Instructions





61 Mill Road
Latham, NY 12110
October 18, 1990

Town of Colonie Planning Board
Engineering & Planning
Services
227 Maxwell Road
Loudonville, NY 12211

Re: Project No. 1912-01 - Comments on Draft
Environmental Impact Statement for Airport
Expansion

Gentlemen:

The following represent my comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) prepared by Clough Harbour and Associates for the airport impact study area. These comments relate specifically to Section J on pages II-166-179 of the DEIS and concern the impact of aircraft noise on individuals within the study area and beyond.

The DEIS Lacks Sufficient Data to Evaluate the Effects of
Noise on Residents

The DEIS has charts on expected noise levels within the study area. These data were apparently developed during a noise survey taken almost 9 years ago. There are no recent measurements reported that would confirm that the data are valid for today's conditions. Considerable development has occurred in the area since 1981 and the ambient noise levels have undoubtedly increased since then. There was an attempt at the public meeting before the Town Planning Board on October 2nd to demonstrate that the 1981 data are still valid by comparing data on predicted versus actual number of aircraft flights from the 1981 study. The presenter focused on jet aircraft stating that these were the only source of concern. In fact, any resident of the area can confirm that non-jet flyovers are a major source of noise.

See App. 14
Response
II.J.8.



Additionally, several of the 1981 study's predictions versus actual results for number of flights were exceedingly off. Moreover, it cannot be assumed that aircraft will necessarily produce the same sound levels today or that they are necessarily quieter today without specific study of the type of aircraft in use at the airport and their noise characteristics.

Accordingly, the only reliable method to ascertain ambient noise levels in the study area is to conduct a new noise survey. Further, without knowing the distribution of flights between day and night time and correlating that with the measured noise levels from a new study, it is impossible to reliably predict impacts on residents.

There is a statement in the DEIS that there will be a slight increase in noise in the impact area in the 1995 period. There is no discussion of the assumptions supporting that statement. In fact, that conclusion is counter-intuitive considering the addition of new sources of noise in the study area since 1981, including increased air traffic which is alleged by some to support the need for airport expansion.

See App. 14
Response
II.J.8.

The DEIS Fails to Discuss Impacts of Noise on Humans

It is well established that audible noise can cause sleep interference, speech interference as well as contribute to stress which is related by medical authorities to illnesses such as hypertension, cardiovascular disease, etc. Sleep interference is probably the most severe impact that can be expected from increased aircraft noise. Sleep interference is known to begin at levels in the neighborhood of 35 dB(a) or lower.

See App. 14
Response
II.J.9.

The DEIS implies that an Ldn of 65 is acceptable in the study area. There is absolutely no basis for this assumption, especially in view of the scientific data on sleep interference.

See App. 14
Response
II.J.9.

The DEIS should be revised to include a statement of the number of incidents of sleep interference that can be expected in the study area on an annual basis.

While some may scoff at the significance of sleep interference, one need only to recollect how one feels after a night of interrupted sleep. Residents of the study area can be



expected to experience this on a continuing basis. Economically the impacts from sleep interference can be measured in lost worker productivity and lost wages attributable to absence from work. None of this is discussed in the DEIS.

See App. 14
Response
II.J.9.

Also, speech interference is ignored. It will occur both inside and outside residences during aircraft takeoffs and landings. Speech interference occurs at levels of 50 dB(A) and higher at normal conversation distances and this level will be experienced throughout the study area during aircraft flyover.

The DEIS would also be improved markedly by comparing ambient noise levels with the International Standards Organization's recommendations on noise exposure for humans.

The DEIS' Discussion of Mitigation Measures is Misleading

Certain statements in the mitigation measures section of the DEIS are misleading. For example, it is asserted that Albany County has established a policy which prohibits night-time engine runups. If there is such a policy, it most certainly isn't enforced. For example, during this past week I was awakened twice by noise from engine runups at 2:00 am on one occasion and at 4:00 am on another. Anyone who lives near the airport can verify engine runups continue notwithstanding the County's policy. It is wrong to suggest that local government is protecting its citizens today when in fact, the policy is not enforced. The credibility of local government could be enhanced considerably if this policy were enforced. I, therefore, recommend that the DEIS be modified to recommend that the County and Town develop regulations prohibiting engine runups during night-time hours between 10:00 pm and 7:00 am.

See p.II-179.

See App. 14
Response
II.J.7.

I also recommend a prohibition on night-time aircraft operations. People need to sleep to function effectively at home and in work environments. Without a ban on aircraft flights, including jet and other type of aircraft, between the hours of 10:00 pm and 7:00 am, people in the study area are not given a fair opportunity to live in a reasonably acceptable environment.

See App. 14
Response
II.J.10.

Finally, I would strongly encourage the Town to obtain the services of an expert who can provide advice for the conduct of a noise survey of the impact area as well as analyze the data



that should be obtained to determine the expected impacts on humans attributable to increased noise levels. Without this information, governmental officials will not be able to make informed decisions relating to further development in the study area.

See p.II-186.

If clarification of these comments is needed, I can be reached at 786-0764.

Thank you in advance for considering these comments.

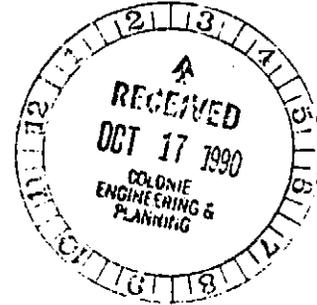
Sincerely,

Robert A. Simpson

Robert A. Simpson

THE TOWN of COLONIE COALITION of HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS

ALBANY COUNTY, NEW YORK



October 11, 1990

Mary Burke
Engineering and Planning Services
Town of Colonie
272 Maxwell Road
Latham, NY 12110

RE: Comments and Recommendation for the Airport DGEIS

"Target Growth Rate"

The concept of "target rate of growth" in this report must be clearly understood. It is not a desirable rate which we wish to achieve. It is instead a reasonable measuring stick, a norm, against which the impact of airport area development could be measured.

See
App. 14
Response
II.B.1.

The methodology described in the report reflects that it has some elements of a "most likely" scenario, but the authors of the report seemed unwilling to use that terminology. That unwillingness leaves us with the impression that it is a likely scenario, but not necessarily the most likely.

See
App. 14
Response
II.B.1.

It should be noted that the suggested mitigations do not directly address the question of achieving the "target rate of growth." There are no suggestions for limiting growth to the "target rate." There is no impediment to the speculative projects which were eliminated in moving from the "high growth scenario" to the "target growth scenario."

See
pp.III-22
through
III-37

Mitigation in the No-growth Scenario

The law mandates that the alternative of a no-growth scenario be considered. This alternative proposes as a mitigation the purchase of 3,320 acres at a cost of \$200,000,000. Since this would effectively curtail development there would be no viable funding source for such a purchase. The alternative is unreasonable, but does point one viable way to restrict or control growth

See
App. 14
Response
III.B.6.

Section III suggests that one possible way of controlling growth is the "public acquisition of properties". This alternative should receive careful consideration.

See App. 14
Response
III.B.6.

Transportation Alternatives

Members of the Coalition question the magnitude of the traffic estimates. Even the "target rate of growth" seems overly optimistic. Neither of the two options presented

THE TOWN of COLONIE COALITION of HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS

ALBANY COUNTY, NEW YORK

Airport GEIS
Page 2

for the proposed north-south arterial are particularly attractive or economical. The Coalition would like to see additional options receive serious consideration.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.22,
II.H.17,

An option we feel has merit is to scrap the arterial, widen Albany Shaker sufficiently from Route 7 to the Airport access, close Albany Shaker between the Ann Lee Home and the Cemetary and the Ball Park, build a road of sufficient width between the Ball Park and the County Jail that would intersect with Watervliet Shaker west of the Ball Park. The portion of the Albany Shaker closed could be turned under and returned to the Ann Lee Farm.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.17.

The Coalition strongly supports the DGEIS recommendation that a detailed intermunicipal agreement among county, town, and village be developed for the coordination of highway improvements and transfer of funds from the collection of development mitigation costs related to the DGEIS. No future development in this area should take place without such firm intermunicipal commitment.

See App. 14
Response
II.B.8.

If any traffic improvements are to be successfully implemented, strong agreements must also be established among the municipalities. The narrow scoping of the Airport GEIS to the 8,000 acres surrounding the airport excludes consideration of the broader regional transportation problems. EG. Route 7 and Route 155 do not end at the edge of the airport study area. Any changes in road widths would likely extend beyond the study area. It is important to consider the cost that these municipalities would have to bear.

See App. 14
Response
II.B.8. &
p. II-259

Environment - The Green Belt - and Stump Pond

The Green Belt is a vital element of the overall mitigation plan. A determination needs to be made on how it will be brought to fruition - will we restrict the cutting of vegetation in these areas; will we prohibit the building of structures in the areas; will we purchase this land to provide for a permanent preserve? During the course of the summer the Village of Colonie Planning Board exempted one project from the Airport GEIS. Their negative declaration seemed to ignore what was, by that time, a known conclusion of this report, that support would be given for a Green Belt through the area of stump pond. To effectively bring off the green belt public land acquisition may be a necessity.

See App. 14
Response
II.D.1.

THE TOWN of COLONIE COALITION of HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS

ALBANY COUNTY, NEW YORK

Airport GEIS
Page 3

Noise

The sections of the report regarding air and noise quality deserve more elaboration. Relying on hypothetical future air and noise quality studies on a case-by-case basis is unrealistic. Since projects within the study area may be exempted from even supplement Environmental Impact Statements, it is important that this issue be dealt with fully.

See App. 14
Response
II-J-1 &
pp.II-188-
191.

The Coalition recommends that a Level 2 and/or Level 3 analysis of air quality be included in the Airport GEIS. The limitation of noise impacts to aircraft operations is not sufficient. Projections should be made for the noise impacts which will result from increased traffic and projected development.

See App. 14
Response
II.I.1 &
II.J.11

Mitigation strategies for "quiet time" noise management need to be enforceable and effective. References in the report to current regulation, which do not work, are inappropriate. The GEIS should include actual data based on a monitoring program on which more specific recommendations can be based.

See
pp.II-185,
II-191.

Economics

The GEIS needs to include an accurate assessment of the costs and anticipated revenues derived from the projected development. Given the nature of the commercial development in the area there will be a substantial generation of sales tax revenues. A reasonable estimate of these should be included along with revenues from new property taxation. However, the estimate should take into account the fact that new revenues within the Study Area may have been achieved through the movement of business into the Study Area from elsewhere in the Town and/or the County. These new revenues to the Study Area are not new revenues to the Town and/or County and should be netted out of the sales tax revenue estimate.

See
p.II-251
and App. 5

Achieving an Optimal Level of Growth Somewhat Below the "Target Rate"

There may be a tendency to focus on the \$ associated with mitigation fees - to worry about whether or not \$12 per square foot is a reasonable cost. These worries are premature.

See
App. 14
Response
II-B.13.

The first question to be addressed is what level of growth do we want to achieve and which of the measures suggested on pages III-16 to III -24 will be implemented.

THE TOWN of COLONIE COALITION of HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS

ALBANY COUNTY, NEW YORK

Airport GEIS
Page 4

A lower rate of growth will mean that the impact fees will be spread over fewer projects (ie. higher fees). A reassessment would be done at this stage to determine which of the suggested mitigations could be eliminated.

The Coalition makes the following recommendations:

1. Establish a public land acquisition program for the protection of historic sites and the establishment of the permanent greenbelt.
2. Change existing zoning within the Historic District to large lot residential.
3. Implement the Historic District Ordinance.
4. Zone all the Undeveloped zoned lands in accordance with the LUMAC land use recommendations.
5. Consider alternatives to the building of a north-south arterial.
6. Establish an intermunicipal agreement for the coordination planning and funding of highway improvements in the area.
7. Consider seriously all options for preserving green space in the area.

Sincerely yours,

John A. Tribble
President

Testimony on the Draft GEIS for the Airport Area
October 1, 1990

Ladies and Gentlemen, my name is James Conroy and I am employed with the Center for Economic Growth as a Community Development Consultant. In that capacity, I have been working with a number of major land owners, who have properties located within the Airport GEIS study area.

Upon review of the draft GEIS we have a few major comments:

The assessment of mitigation fees, based on the fact that 95% of roadway improvements needed to accommodate growth in the airport area should be attributed to new growth alone, is absurd. This calculation does not include sufficient allowance for existing infrastructure problems and deficiencies. There is evidence that many of the transportation improvements recommended in the draft are needed today to handle existing traffic. In fact, virtually every major intersection in the study area currently operates at a "failed" level of service during peak periods.

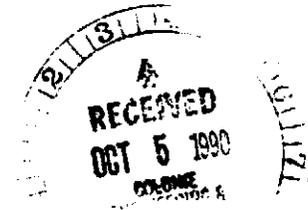
See App. 14
Response
II.H.5.

The CDTC has stated that much of the traffic in this area is "background" traffic or through traffic. Other traffic demand is generated by the increased passenger load of the Albany County Airport. Still other traffic is caused by social change which has resulted in more cars per family and more drivers per household. None of these influences were adequately addressed in the draft plan. At the outset of the study the consultant recognized that "developing feasible improvements at certain locations could not be accomplished to provide an acceptable level of service D".

A new north-south arterial, Exit 3 off the northway, Route 7 expansion and improvements to Albany-Shaker and Albany- Watervliet Roads and many other traffic improvements recommended in the study are required today! It is not justifiable to allocate 95% of these costs to new development. The problem will only get worse if the county and town do nothing to solve these long standing traffic problems; even if no new buildings are ever constructed in the area. Given the cost of these mitigation fees, the stagnant economy and the amount of development proposed under the moderate growth scenario, it is unlikely that these new improvements will ever be made through the implementation of such an unbalanced and unfair mitigation percentage. There simply isn't the demand or absorption rate for the level of development necessary to pay the astronomical fees included in the study.

The omission of recent discussions about the ownership and development of the airport is another major deficiency in the draft GEIS. The failure of the study to adequately evaluate the impact of a number of different development options including the potential enlargement of parking facilities, realignment of roadways and expansion of the terminal is a serious flaw in the entire project which may make its findings moot once a final airport construction plan is implemented. Specifically, when these proposals include a dramatic increases in the size of property used for airport purposes.

See App. 14
Response
II.B.14.



The settlement upon three basic development scenarios is too simplistic for such a complex and important regional hub. Little work is evidenced as to the realistic absorption rate of either of the development scenarios. The no-growth option, the high-growth option and the target-growth option do not provide sufficient discussion on the potential mix of these scenarios or on the possibility that certain areas may be suited for high growth while others are not. This study does not adequately address the varied development alternatives which are possible.

See App. 14
Response
III.B.1.

In closing I want to say that the property owners with whom I collaborated in this effort all support the concept of the GEIS program. They want the airport to be improved into a first class regional facility and realize the improvement of the airport will require considerable improvement to the existing road system. These property owners are not opposed to participating in a fair allocation of the improvement costs -but - the plan to allocate those costs included in the draft GEIS is unacceptable. Please accept this comment as a preliminary one. We reserve the right to submit additional written material in the balance of the comment period.

See App. 14
Response
II.B.14.

RECEIVED
OCT 5 1990
COLONIE
ENGINEERING &
PLANNING

VILLAGE OF COLONIE

ALBANY COUNTY

NEW YORK

GENERAL OFFICES

V GE HALL
UNDER ROAD
ALBANY, N. Y. 12205
518 - 869-7582

October 18, 1990

Lawrence Woods, AICP
Clough, Harbour & Associates
3 Winners Circle
Albany, New York 12205

Re: Airport Area DGEIS
Village & Town of Colonie
Additional Comments

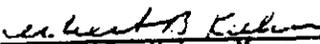
Dear Mr. Woods:

This letter contains an additional comment on the DGEIS to supplement those in my letter of September 20, 1990.

The DGEIS suggests a pocket park just north of the Village's Sunset Boulevard Neighborhood (see Exhibit II-L-1 and page II-206). The Village has no interest in a pocket park at that location. We do not expect any additional residential growth in the service area and feel existing residences in the Village are served adequately. We also feel that access to, and maintenance of such a facility might raise problems for the Village. On the other hand we would welcome any use of Wetland A-10 as permanent open space and buffer between the Village and commercial or highway developments.

See
App. 14
Response
II.L.1.

Sincerely yours,


Herbert B. Kuhn, Mayor

c: Peter Platt, Chairman Planning Board
Robert Mitchell, P.E. Director
(T) Colonie Engineering & Planning Services
Laberge Engineering & Consulting Group Ltd.

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OCT 18 1990

CLOUGH HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES

COOPER, ERVING, SAVAGE
NOLAN & HELLER

ATTORNEYS & COUNSELLORS AT LAW

39 NORTH PEARL STREET
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12207
(518) 434-8131 - (518) 449-3100
Facsimile (518) 432-3100

515 Madison Avenue
28th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10022
(212) 644-8758

120 Market Street
Amsterdam, N.Y. 12010
(518) 842-0220

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER
1888 - 1938
WILLIAM VAN RENSSELAER ERVING
1925 - 1940
B. JERMAIN SAVAGE
1910 - 1952

MARK F. WATKINS
THOMAS W. PETERSON
DAVID A. DELLEHUNT
MADELINE KIBRICK KAUFFMAN*
HENRY C. COLLINS
PAUL A. LEVINE**
JEFFREY L. POERSCH+
MARILYN J. RAMOS+
JOANNE E. FRAGOMENTI

JAMES G. BRENNAN
MARK I. HELLER
HOWARD C. NOLAN
RICHARD H. WEINER
KRISTINA A. BURNS
FRELINGH SMITH
THOMAS A. CALLAGHAN
TERRANCE P. CHRISTENSON
MICHAEL A. KORNSTEIN
SUSAN CARROLL PICOTTE
ROBERT G. WAKEMAN
CRAIG H. NORMAN
DAVID H. WILDER

DEFOREST C. PITT
EDWARD MURRAY
DONALD A. CAMPBELL
OF COUNSEL

*also admitted in
Massachusetts

*also admitted in Pennsylvania
**also admitted in District of Columbia
+also admitted in Connecticut

October 19, 1990

RECEIVED

OCT 22 1990

Ms. Mary Burke
Town of Colonie
272 Maxwell Road
Latham, New York 12110

CLOUGH HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES

Dear Ms. Burke:

Our firm represents a number of clients who have developable property within the area encompassed by the Airport Area Draft Generic Environmental Impact Study. I spoke at the public hearing held and, as a supplement thereto, I wish to make the following comments and observations:

1. The study fails to take into account tax revenues generated for the State and County in the form of payroll and sales taxes from the new development. An auto mega dealership could generate 40 million dollars in sales, with 2.8 million dollars in sales tax. A few such projects would be more than sufficient to cover the total cost of all the improvements in this area without the necessity of the proposed mitigation fees.
2. The study fails to distinguish between office and retail developments. Office developments probably generate far more peak hour traffic than retail. Perhaps there should be some differentiation in the amount of mitigation fees imposed in these different categories.
3. Previous proposals have involved mitigation fees based on trip generation. This creates an incentive for a developer to build a project generating fewer trips. The study proposes a method which would not do this. I think this should be considered.

See App. 14
Response
II.0.1.

See App. 14
Response II.0.2

See App. 14
Response II.0.2

4. The mitigation fees proposed would have a serious impact on development prospects, adding between 15 and 20% of the cost of a building. Given the obvious recessionary environment, can our area afford to have this type of restriction? The economic section of the report deals strictly with the economic effect on the municipalities involved, without considering the economic effect on the businesses, and, consequently, the populace.
5. The study should also state whether full credit will be given for all on-site developments advancing the intent of the GEIS.
6. How will the Town collect mitigation fees on behalf of the State and County? It does not appear that enabling legislation is in effect. Therefore, if the Town adopts the study's proposals, a further moratorium may, in effect, be declared until the State and County pass enabling legislation, which itself is doubtful.
7. Since the roads in the area are already over capacity in many cases, an equalization formula must be devised to impose some of the cost of new roads alleviating an existing troublesome situation upon those who created it, i.e., the current residences and businesses.
8. Both the State and the Federal Government have recently imposed new air quality standards upon the manufacturers of automobiles. This should significantly alleviate the air quality problems found at sites in the area.

See App/ 14
Response II.I.3.

See App. 14
Response II.0.5.

See App. 14
Response II.H.1
and Table II-H-2.

See App. 14
Response II.I.3.

Finally, one of our clients has asked us to express his incredulity that an area such as ours, with a long history of economic problems, would consider institutionalizing impediments to development of this magnitude, whereas many areas, such as the sunbelt, provide incentives. Neither of us is sure that this proposal is consistent with the needs of our State, or area, or with public policy (at least the expressed public policy).

Very truly yours,

COOPER, ERVING, SAVAGE,
NOLAN & HELLER

By: 

Craig H. Norman

CHN:sc

cc: Clough Harbor Associates

CHARLES T. MALE, INC.
3010 TROY ROAD
SCHENECTADY, N.Y. 12309



October 12, 1990

Mary Burke
Engineering & Planning Services Dept.
272 Maxwell Road
Latham, New York 12110

Re: Albany Area GEIS - Mitigation Fees

Dear Mary:

On behalf of Charles T. Male, Inc., I attended the information meeting at Town Hall on Oct. 2nd. Without more detailed study than I have had time to review the GEIS, I cannot address the specifics and magnitude of costs on the various infrastructure items. However, one important fact was shown very clearly. The most expensive and costly component is transportation.

It certainly appears from the statistics of traffic counts on major highways that a significant percentage of traffic is pass-through traffic. Very high counts are entering the study areas from both Schenectady and Saratoga Counties and almost equal numbers are leaving the opposite sides. Reversing of this occurs at the end of the day.

In my opinion it is not fair or equitable to levy mitigation fees to pay costs of improvement for the high percentage of pass-through traffic. One newspaper article says that the future mitigation fee for homes in the study area, could range between \$6,000 and \$7,500 per housing unit. Another article gives the number at \$4,500 per unit. I respectfully request that the philosophy of mitigation fees be considered to look only at the incremental costs of infrastructure improvements required by the increased development within the study area. Even then certain areas will probably be charged a disproportionate share of the cost.

See App. 14
Response II.H.1.

CHARLES T. MALE, INC.



October 12, 1990
Mary Burke
Page -2-

In any event the fees should not reach a magnitude wherein the future owners of these homes are penalized unfairly and, in the best interest of the Town, not stop orderly development of the Town.

Very truly yours,

Charles T. Male, Inc.

by:


Kenneth J. Male
Secretary

KM:dsl

CORRESPONDENCE

Laberge

ENGINEERING &
CONSULTING GROUP LTD.

ENGINEERS, ARCHITECTS, SURVEYORS & PLANNERS
FOR INDUSTRY, COMMERCE & GOVERNMENT
OFFICES IN ALBANY, PLATTSBURGH & UTICA

September 11, 1990

RECEIVED

SEP 14 1990

Lawrence Callander, AICP
Clough, Harbour & Associates
3 Winners Circle
Albany, New York 12205

CLOUGH HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES

Re: Airport Area DGEIS
Village & Town of Colonie, NY

Dear Mr. Callander:

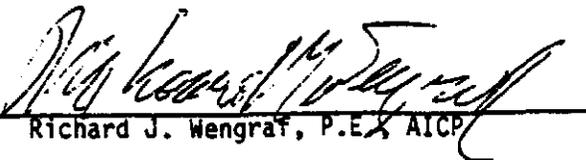
During our review of the Airport Area DGEIS, we found the following points which you might want to clarify or correct:

1. Robert Graf is no long Chairman or member of the Village Planning Commission; the new Acting Chairman is Christopher J. Dennis, Jr. See References.
2. Project #3 on Map II-B-4 and #2 on Map III-B-1 should be shown as being in the Town, not the Village; also, why is Project #1 on Map II-B-4 (motel expansion) not shown on Map III-B-1? See Exhibit II-B-4.
3. Shaker Run Apartments is now proposed for 184 apartments, not 192 (Tables II-B-2, II-B-3 and III-B-1). See App.14 Response II.B.3.
4. Map II-D-5: you show an "Existing Town Watercourse Protection Area" along Shaker Creek in the Village; the portion in the Village is protected by agreement between the Village, NYSDEC and Shaker Run; you may want to correct the map and related discussion. See p.II-66 App. 14 Response II.F.2.
5. Margaret Schwarz is Village Planning Coordinator, not Village Clerk; the Village Clerk is Carol A. Hendrick. See References.
6. We are not aware of any agricultural use in the Village (p. II-6, bottom). See pp.II-6.
7. The potential for conflicting land uses because of incompatible zoning between Village and Town is reduced by Wetland A-10 which acts as a buffer. There is one small area of potential conflict: the business zone in the Town west of the Northway and north of Sand Creek Road is surrounded by residential zoning in the Village; this has been brought to the attention of LUMAC and an informal promise made to correct this (Map II-B-2). See pp.II-7, II-8.

8. Why should Village storm water management plans conform to Town practices? Are Village practices inadequate? Probably a moot point since virtually all the Village's portion of the Shaker Creek watershed is developed except Shaker Run which went through an intensive NYSDEC review. See p.II-64 and App. 14 Response II.F.2
9. Some of the "other costs" in Table II-0-4 are annual costs and should not be added into the total without capitalizing them. See App. 14 Response II.O.12: See App. 14 Response II.O.8.
10. Mitigation fees are uniform for all types of dwelling units; is this based on research or was this adopted for the sake of simplicity? See App. 14 Response II.O.13
11. It seems that part of the increased demand for golf will come from people who work in the study area, not just residents; the golf course mitigation fee - if it is retained - should reflect this. See App. 14 Response II.O.14
12. It appears that the water mitigation fee will result in the subsidization of existing customers of the Latham Water District. Present water rates are designed to cover operating costs as well as the amortization of the existing system; as proposed, new customers would pay both for the new system through mitigation fees as well as contribute to the cost of the existing system through regular water rates. See App. 14 Response II.B.7
13. "The continued growth of the Capital District economy is a function of how well each municipality encourages economic development..." (p. III-28), should probably be re-written; municipalities have primarily a reactive or negative role. See App. 14 Response II.B.7

If you have any questions or comments, we hope you will call.

Very truly yours,
LABERGE ENGINEERING & CONSULTING GROUP LTD.

by 
Richard J. Wengraf, P.E., AICP

RJW:bb
c: Hon. Herbert B. Kuhn, Mayor

Laberge

ENGINEERING &
CONSULTING GROUP LTD



ENGINEERS, ARCHITECTS, SURVEYORS & PLANNERS
FOR INDUSTRY, COMMERCE & GOVERNMENT
OFFICES IN ALBANY, PLATTSBURGH & BULFINGTON

October 3, 1990

*saved
Handle this
please
Kuhn
10-5-90*

Honorable Herbert B. Kuhn, Mayor
Village of Colonie
Colonie Village Plaza
Two Thunder Road
Albany, New York 12205

Re: Review of Airport Area DGEIS
Report on Public Hearing

Dear Mayor Kuhn:

Attached is a copy of my note to the files reporting on the public hearing of 10/2/90. I was assured by Chairman Platt of the Town Planning Board that your comments would be carefully considered. The comments at the hearing raised some basic issues about the whole report which will require more time to resolve than the thirty (30) days SEQRA allows, unless an extension is given. You may urge Mr. Platt to grant such an extension if you happen to see him or talk to him.

We have identified an additional point that could affect the Village and on which you might want to comment before October 19, the official comment deadline:

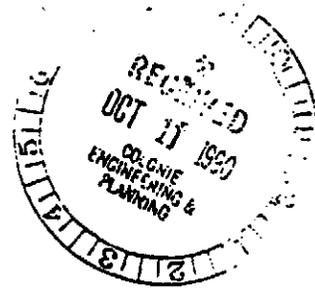
The DGEIS suggests a pocket park off Sunset Boulevard neighborhood. Other residential growth in the potential service area appears hampered by the existence of the wetland, the proposed arterial road, and proposed commercial zoning (see attached map) as well as airport noise. Because of the wetland, it may not be possible to find a suitable site at all. We also wonder whether the Village has any interest in such a park, how access would be provided, and who would maintain it.

See
App. 14
Response
II.L.1.

As part of our review of the Airport Area DGEIS, we checked on the status of the small piece of the Town on Sand Creek Road, west of the Northway (marked in blue on the map). This land is now zoned to permit commercial uses. This is a conflict with the Village which we pointed out at the Land Use Management Advisory (LUMAC) meetings. At the meeting, we were promised LUMAC would recommend residential zoning for this land. Apparently this fell through the cracks and no recommendation for zoning change is contemplated.

See pp. II-7,
II-8.

October 3, 1990
Honorable Herbert B. Kuhn, Mayor
Page Two



If you would like to pursue this matter, we have been advised you may want to write to Supervisor Field (copy to Ms. Mary Burke, Engineering and Planning Services Department), asking him to initiate the re-zoning to a residential zone compatible with the adjoining development in the Village.

We are of course, as always, ready to discuss this letter and its attachments with you at your convenience.

Very truly yours,
LABERGE ENGINEERING &
CONSULTING GROUP LTD.

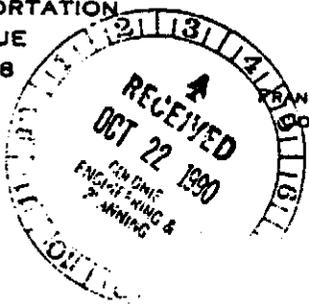
by 
Richard J. Wengraf
Chief Planner

RJW:wc
enc.
c: Carol Hendricks, Village Clerk



STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
84 HOLLAND AVENUE
ALBANY, N.Y. 12208

JOHN E. TAYLOR, P.E.
REGIONAL DIRECTOR
October 19, 1990



BENJAMIN E. WHITE
COMMISSIONER

Mr. Peter Platt, Chairman
Town of Colonie Planning Board
272 Maxwell Road
Latham, NY 12210

Re: AIRPORT DGEIS

Dear Mr. Platt:

We have reviewed the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) for the Airport Area of Colonie, New York prepared by Clough, Harbour & Associates. We commend the Town of Colonie, Albany County, and the Village of Colonie for considering the needs of one of the fastest growing sections of the Capital District, through a coordinated approach that identifies the services needed to sustain that growth. We agree with the overall premise of the study that, even with moderate growth, the area will experience severe impacts to the transportation system which must be addressed in a logical and phased manner; however, we also believe that the following comments should be addressed.

The Study correctly recognizes a list of existing deficiencies and needs previously identified by the Capital District Transportation Committee; these should be addressed before other improvements can be considered. However, no general consensus has been reached by the municipalities involved that these recommended improvements should be constructed, or how they are to be paid for. Since these improvements are precursors to future improvements, a recommendation for how they could be funded should have been included in the discussion.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.5.

It appears that the Target Growth Scenario forecast by the DGEIS may be on the high side, and that this may affect the scale, or at least the timing, of needed improvements. Preliminary 1990 Census tabulations indicate that the growth of population for the Town of Colonie is lower than that assumed by the Study. In addition, the growth of jobs in the target area is twice that projected by CDRPC. It may be that the CDRPC forecasts are too conservative for this attractive area, but a lower growth scenario could have been examined and alternative transportation improvement proposals developed for that level of growth.

See App. 14
Response
II.A.1 & II.B.1

We strongly endorse the implementation of TSM strategies as an alternative to some capital construction, but we believe that a 25% reduction in peak hour demand may be an overly optimistic estimate of what can be achieved by TSM strategies. The study acknowledges that the private automobile currently is by far the primary means of transportation in the study area, and the Capital District, and yet the effectiveness of the Study's recommended capital construction plan counts on an aggressive TSM program to achieve a reduction of 25% in (additional) peak hour traffic demand. The TSM strategies are defined in only the most general terms, and no estimate of the costs for implementing them has been developed.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.6.

To date, CDTC has achieved only modest success in its efforts to promote ridesharing. Reports from other areas of the country suggest that ridesharing is most likely to succeed when large employment centers are targeted. Increased transit service to the study area is unlikely unless a way can be found to support service to the major suburban communities of employees. Bus pools and van pools are relatively untried in this area, but they and an aggressive staggered work hour program would require an agency to take the lead to coordinate their overall effectiveness; they also are unlikely to be effective with small employers. Other TSM strategies need to be better defined and endorsed by the affected municipalities. We suggest that without a more convincing assessment of the chances of success for potential TSM measures, the capital improvement alternatives identified by the DGEIS should also be evaluated against realistic success rates for TSM strategies.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.6.

We have technical concerns about the design and spacing of the recommended new interchanges on I-87. It is not readily apparent that the interchanges would satisfy all applicable geometric and interchange spacing standards; some further examination of these matters is warranted. Further, our recent experience with other proposals suggests that the FHWA may have concerns about creating new interchanges providing only partial access as shown in Option 2 (Exhibit II-H-4), and that these concerns would also need to be addressed. We would also like to point out that we have no plans to widen the I-87 mainline, and so a widening should not be assumed for the purposes of the study.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.7 &
II.H.8.

Both Option 1 and Option 2 include providing three through lanes on Route 7 between the Northway and the Schenectady County line. We are currently in the final design phase of a project that will provide five lanes (two through lanes in each direction and a continuous left-turn median) on Route 7 between Wade Road and St. David's Lane. This project, to be let in February of 1991, is the result of thorough consideration of needs and possibilities in this

Mr. Peter Platt
October 19, 1990
Page 3

corridor. It's important to acknowledge the significant difficulties that would be faced by any future widening of Route 7 beyond that which will be provided by the current project; additional widening of this corridor would require the dislocation of many existing residences and businesses, and could be prohibitively costly in right-of-way takings.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.4.

Extensive additional development in the study area could significantly alter existing surface drainage characteristics, and these changes must be adequately provided for. In this regard, we have a concern about the box culvert conveying Shaker Creek under Route 7. If future development sufficiently changes drainage conditions, a major redesign and reconstruction of the culvert to accommodate new drainage patterns and major storms may be necessary.

See
pp.II-79,80,83

We support the concept, advanced in Section H, that a single agency coordinate and implement the transportation improvement plan recommended by the DGEIS. However, we believe that the Study should have developed a phased implementation plan designed to accommodate the growth identified. Such a plan would provide a logical guide for us and for review by the other involved municipalities.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.9.

Finally we strongly support the recommendation of the DGEIS for the consideration of a Transportation Development District (TDD). The Study recommends a number of major capital improvements which will be necessary not only to attract and new businesses and residents, but also to benefit existing residential and commercial uses within the Study area. Since funding sufficient to totally implement the recommended improvements will very likely not be available from Federal or State sources, a Transportation Development District to help pay for these improvements must be given very serious consideration. At this time, special State enabling legislation is required to establish a TDD; we are available to discuss this matter with you in more detail.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.10.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Airport Area DGEIS. If you have any questions concerning these comments, please call Joanna Brunso or me at 474-6215. We look forward to working with you in the future on this important matter.

Yours truly,



RICHARD W. CARLSON, P.E.
Director, Planning & Program Management
Region 1

RWC/JMB/dah

Mr. Peter Platt
October 19, 1990
Page 4

cc: John Taylor, Regional Director, Region 1
John Poorman, CDTC Staff Director
Frederick G. Field, Jr., Town Supervisor, Town of Colonie
James J. Coyne, County Executive, Albany County
Herbert Kuhn, Village Mayor, Village of Colonie



Corporate Offices:
PINNACLE PLACE • SUITE 200
MCKOWN ROAD Off WESTERN AVENUE
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12203-3409
518-489-3276, TELEFAX 518-489-3553

October 3, 1990



Mary Burke
Town Of Colonie
Planning & Engineering Dept.
Maxwell Road
Latham, New York 12110

RE: DGEIS Airport Area

Mary:

It is our opinion that the proposal made in the DGEIS for the airport area could result in the Town of Colonie tying itself into an "Economic Stranglehold."

The issues as presented must be evaluated on the facts with some common sense:

1. The DGEIS says that 95% of the highway improvements be attributed to new development.

FACT: Anyone can see if not one square foot additional were built that the present highway infrastructure presently needs major updates just to get to LOS D. In fact, probably 50-75 million dollars right now!

COMMON SENSE: Even some of the anti-growth people in the audience at the hearing realize that highway improvements are needed now without any growth. We are also in a development recession that might last several years. The roads need major fixing now!

See App. 14
Responses
II.0.4 & II.0.9.

2. Impact Fee/Special Taxation suggestions that 95% be attributed to new construction:

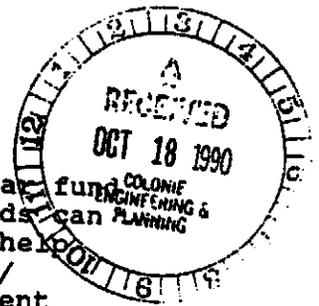
FACT: The impact fee rates, etc. as proposed if paid up front by new development will render the airport area uncompetitive to other Capital District areas which don't have improvement assessments. In fact, it becomes "Catch 22."

See App. 14
Response
II.0.3.

COMMON SENSE: Special taxation measures such as an enplanement tax paid by all using the airport will raise the funds yet still keep the area competitive. A list of our suggestions for taxes/fund sources is as follows:

See App. 14
Response
II.0.11.

Builders • Developers • Consultants • Managers



1. Enplanement tax
2. Utilization of the federal airport 8.0 billion dollar fund to improve all roads around the airport. These funds can be granted for off airport improvements where they help with services to/from the airport. Our congressman/senators could take this proposal to FAA and President Bush on our behalf.
3. Sales tax for purchases/services in Colonie
4. Special district tax
5. Airport fee/tax
6. Hotel tax for the area to visitors
7. Taxes on other permitted projects, though not in the area as users of the airport area service.
8. Property taxes revenue
9. State, Federal, County funding
10. Fuel/gasoline/oil tax
11. Airport parking fee tax as most parking use is by non-Colonie patrons
12. Cigarette/Alcohol surtax for purchases made in Colonie
13. Linkage fee to developers for higher zoning or intensity
14. Other sources to be identified as part of this GEIS study to create a base of sources of funds so the infrastructure can be completed in a rapid and cost efficient manner on an equitable shared basis

It is our firms contention that everyone must pay their fair share. That includes new development, people using the roads as they presently exist, all area property owners, persons using the airport services from out of our area, etc. This should be done through taxation and bonding, not impact fees. Impact fees generally make an area uncompetitive if other areas are not using them also.

We feel that a fair proposal will get everyones cooperation in this regard. The long term growth of the Town of Colonie is at stake with the issues involved. The danger in a proposal that is not fairly shared by everyone is probably, "Economic Stranglehold."

We would appreciate if our comments in this letter are addressed in the final GEIS. Thank you!

Sincerely yours,
Bethlehem Construction Corp.

Vincent M. Wolanin

Vincent M. Wolanin, President/CEO

pc Fred Field
Peter Platt
Sue Tatro

TOWN OF COLONIE

MEMORIAL TOWN HALL

NEWTONVILLE, N. Y. 12128

Telephone 783-1435



RS. JEAN S. OLTON
Town Historian

October 19, 1990

Engineering/Planning Dept., Town of Colonie
Maxwell Road
Newtonville, NY 12128

Att: Mary Burke, Planning Coordinator

Re: Planning for the development of the Airport area.

Dear Mary:

The economics of Tourism and Visitation to Cultural Sites of Historic Interest are being stressed in all areas of our country as well as in foreign countries.

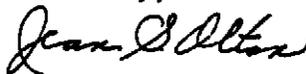
Having heard some of the comments at recent public meetings regarding the GEIS Draft Study, I would like to re-emphasize the importance of our own nearby Shaker Historic District, particularly the segment owned by Albany County. This portion includes the Ann Lee Pond, most of the Shaker Creek and the wetlands surrounding them; the Shaker Cemetery; the Shaker Orchard and the open space surrounding those bodies of water and the several remaining buildings of the 1800's, built by the Shakers of the Church Family. These buildings include the Meeting House, the Elders House or Ministry, the old Laundry, the Barn, the Creamery and former Tannery.

We hear a great deal about the economic benefits of development around the airport. It would be highly detrimental to the whole project if these buildings and open space were not preserved. (The buildings are presently occupied which constitutes a very acceptable adaptive use). Through our publications and other educational activities for both children and adults promoted by the Shaker Heritage Society and the Historical Society, the public is becoming more aware of the significance of having the site of the founding of the Shaker Sect in the midst of our community. The National Register of Historic Places, as well as the State, has recognized the significance of this District, re: their historic value, their archeological value.

I would like to go on record as requesting that our local government put into effect the enabling legislation to further protect this valuable site.

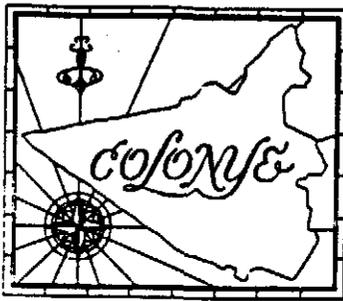
See App. 14
Response ..
II.K.4.

Sincerely,


Jean S. Olton

cc: Fred G. Field, Jr. Town Supervisor
Mary Brizzell, Deputy Supervisor
Members of the Town Board
Diane LaCivita, Shaker Heritage Society





Historical Society
Founded 1871

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE TOWN OF COLONIE

MEMORIAL TOWN HALL

NEWTONVILLE, NEW YORK 12128-0508

518 - 783-1435

October 19, 1990

Engineering/Planning Dept. Town of Colonie
Maxwell Road
Newtonville, NY 12128

Att: Mary Burke, Planning Coordinator

Re: Planning for the development of the Airport Area.

At our recent regular meeting, the Trustees and members of the Historical Society of the Town of Colonie voted unanimously (50 persons present) to endorse preservation of the Shaker Historic District as a local historic landmark.

We wish to emphasize the importance of this site, which has been on the National and State Registers of Historic Sites since 1973. It has also been recommended in the Land Use Management Survey and Plan which was completed almost two years ago, and is awaiting action by the Town Government.

In view of the emphasis on development of the areas nearest the Airport facilities, we are especially concerned about the buildings, open space and wetlands in the vicinity of the Church Family buildings.

Since we have such a unique site in our midst and in the center destined for economic growth, it should be noted that people from all over the country and world come to visit Shaker Sites. Thousands of local school groups and adults have visited the site and others nearby in the last few years. Making a real effort to preserve and protect the Shaker Site could only be of benefit to all.

See App. 14
Response II.K.4.

Sincerely,

William Scheib
Members of The Historical Society
Town of Colonie

WS/k





October 19, 1990

Ms. Mary Burke
TOWN OF COLONIE
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
272 Maxwell Road
Latham, New York 12110

Reference: COMMENTS FOR THE DRAFT GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STUDY

Dear Ms. Burke:

Please accept the following comments, issues and questions to be considered and addressed as part of the GEIS.

- 1) The GEIS seems to be a very thorough analysis of projected growth, the impacts of the projected growth and the improvements necessary to allow the projected growth. The GEIS, although identifying many methods and options to regulate growth, does not appear to be a tool to identify or establish a minimum or maximum level of future growth, and or a tool to control growth. With the GEIS as a base of information, who (how and when) do the growth controls and/or regulations become introduced?
See App. 14
Response
II.B.10
- 2) The acceptance of GEIS should not be interpreted as the final resolution of the issues addressed (i.e. the quantity and location of future growth, the mitigation measures require by future growth, the establishment of new zoning and/or preserve districts, etc.). The resolution of these items are the responsibility of the community and the governing bodies of the community. Is it an accurate assumption that much more work must be done by the Planning Department prior to resolution of items addressed in the GEIS? What is the plan by the Town for these next steps?
See App. 14
Response
II.B.8.
- 3) It seems odd that with \$190 million worth of mitigation measures proposed in the study, that nothing is being proposed to be done to improve the existing sanitary sewer system (or lack of existing sanitary sewer systems in areas such as Old Wolf Road). Why hasn't a comprehensive plan for sanitary sewer been addressed - a project by project analysis has not been successful in the Old Wold Road area in the past, how will it be successful in the future?
See App. 14
Response
II.G.2.



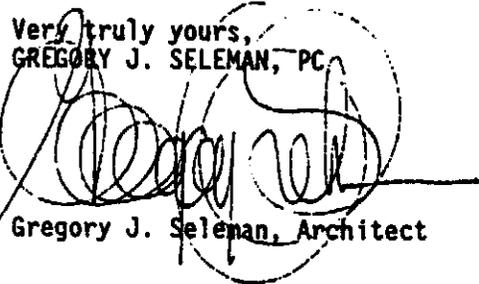
4) Regarding the scenic views identified in the GEIS - how do the inclusion of these ten (10) photographs affect future development on the lands identified in the photographs? Who officially accepts the views to be classified as scenic - what is the criteria of a scenic view?

See
App. 14
Response
II.B.11.

5) Who, how and when will the "real" target growth be established? See App. 14 Response
Exec. Sum. 5.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the above questions.

Very truly yours,
GREGORY J. SELEMAN, PC



Gregory J. Seleman, Architect

GJS/vcb





BRITISH AMERICAN

198 British American Boulevard, Latham, NY 12110
(518) 786-6000 Fax (518) 786-1134



October 17, 1990

Mr. Peter Platt
Chairman
Planning Board
Town of Colonie
c/o Engineering and Planning
Services Department
272 Maxwell Road
Latham, New York 12110

Dear Mr. Platt:

British American appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Study prepared by Clough Harbour for the Town, County and Village. Our comments are as follows:

1. Our calculations indicate that the mitigation fees, if implemented as set forth in the study, will negatively affect the competitiveness of developers in the office market, effectively pricing such office space out of the marketplace. Because economic conditions have changed since the study was initiated and this area of the country is in an economic downturn, every advantage is needed to stay competitive. Each dollar of impact fees means a 15 cent per square foot increase in the rental rate. Such an increase could be a determinative factor in whether a developer obtains a tenant or not.
2. The target growth future used by the study is unrealistic in that it posits a growth rate not supported by absorption rates seen in the past. While future development in the area is to be expected, it will more than likely not be at the rate predicted by the target growth future. It is important to remember that the new space being built is primarily for tenants moving within the area, not new businesses coming into the area. In fact, the growth rate in the Capital District over the past ten years has only been 1.8%. Raising the costs of renting space through mitigation fees will further impair efforts to bring new businesses into the area.
3. As the Town of Colonie has grown over the years, it has also changed in character from a primarily agricultural community to a suburban residential and office market. As the Town changes in character, different standards

See App. 14
Response
II.0.3.

See App. 14
Response
II.A.1 & II.B.1



...er services must apply. For example, there is going to be more congestion on the Town's roads. To make the improvements required to replicate road conditions of 10 or 15 years ago would be prohibitively expensive. We must determine what standards are acceptable given the character of the Town today and take steps to meet them.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.30.

4. Even assuming a standard that would allow for more congestion and greater population density, existing conditions in the Town are not close to meeting today's needs, and those areas must be addressed first. To require new businesses and new homeowners to pay for redressing problems which exist today is an unfair charge on them. In addition, since the benefits of the improvements will accrue to the entire community, not just the newcomers, it is unfair to require them to pay for everything.
5. In considering potential growth for the future, it would be useful to remember that the moratorium that was placed on expansion while the Town, County and Village undertook the GEIS will have a disheartening, dampening effect on growth that will linger far beyond the end of the study. Developers and businesses are avoiding this area in the Town and will for some time until the effect of the mitigation fees becomes clear. Costly mitigation fees will also lower the economic value of the land of existing landowners, making it more difficult to develop and lowering the return to be expected on the property.
6. Finally, the tax rate for the residential community in the Town will go up, as it has this year, because of a reduction in commercial growth caused by the impact fees. The business community has paid the bill for Colonie's growth to date, by paying taxes which allow the Town to provide services while keeping the residential tax rates low. Now businesses are being asked to pay directly for services which they have paid for and continue to pay for indirectly through their taxes.

See App. 14
Response II.0.4.

See App. 14
Response
II.0.3.

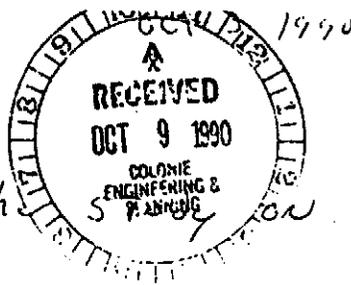
See App. 14
Response II.0.5.
II.0.4.

Once again, we would like to express our appreciation for the opportunity to comment on the study and look forward to some resolution of these issues in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.

Sincerely,

BRITISH AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT

Charles W. Poe, Jr.
Vice President



① to The committee for The
AIRPORT PLANNING.

I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THE FINDINGS
OF THE STUDY. I HAVE AN INTEREST
IN THE FUTURE OF THE AIRPORT AREA AT
3 LEVELS. AS A RESIDENT LIVING 1/2 MI.
SOUTH OF THE AIRPORT. AS A BUSINESS
PARTNER AT 136 WOLF ROAD AND AS A
LAND OWNER AT 313 OLD WOLF ROAD THE FINDINGS
AND DECISIONS WILL AFFECT ME TREMENDOUSLY.
IF YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHARGING
SUCH EXORBITANT FEES FOR DEVELOPMENT
GO THROUGH, IT WILL LOWER THE VALUE
OF MY PROPERTY AT 136 WOLF ROAD AND
AT THE SAME TIME RAISE THE COST TO
START A NEW BUSINESS AT 313 OLD WOLF ROAD.

See App. 14
Response
II.0.4.

IS IT RIGHT FOR THE PEOPLE IN OUR
SMALL AREA AROUND THE AIRPORT TO HAVE
TO PAY FOR ALL THE IMPROVEMENTS TO
ROADS THAT WILL BE USED BY PEOPLE IN
A 100 MI. RADIUS TO GET TO THE AIRPORT.
ARE WE SUPPOSED TO PAVE THE WAY FOR
THE VERY WEALTHY WITH LARGE LAND HOLDINGS
IN THE AREA AROUND THE AIRPORT AND THEIR
FRIENDS IN THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT TO HAVE
THEIR WAY, WHILE RUINING THE LIVING QUALITY
OF OUR TOWN.

See App. 14
Response
II.0.10.

TOWN OF COLONIE

272 MAXWELL ROAD

LATHAM, NEW YORK 12110

ENGINEERING & PLANNING SERVICES DEPARTMENT
TELEPHONE 482-0248



Robert S. Mitchell
DIRECTOR

October 9, 1990

Larry Callander
Clough, Harbour & Associates
III Winners Circle
P.O. Box 5269
Albany, New York 12205-5269

Dear Larry,

Enclosed for your information are comments which I have received to date with regard to the Draft GEIS for the Airport Area.

In addition, please address the following comments from Robert Mitchell and Mike Lyons of this office:

- 1.) In the Section II. - Transportation, page 119, number 6, reference is made to Route 7. This should be Route 5. See p. II-126.
- 2.) Map II-M-1, School District Boundaries, is incorrect. See Exhibit II-M-1.

If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Mary Burke
Senior Planner

cc: Peter E. Platt
Susan M. Tatro

enc: 3

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OCT 11 1990

Clough Harbour & Associates

An Equal Opportunity Employer

STATEMENT ON THE DRAFT GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT
STATEMENT

The draft statement gives the appearance of being a thorough study, including many interesting and informative charts and maps and is comprehensive in scope. Those who worked on this project should be commended for their efforts and the thoroughness of their study.

There are, however, some points in the document which are cause for misgiving. This document will deal with what we regard to be some serious shortcomings.

Perhaps the most important of these deals with the premise which underlies the analysis of the degree to which the area around the airport is to be developed. To describe the "high growth" in terms of all of the current development proposals now on the drawing board creates an entirely erroneous impression. New proposals are likely to surface at any time so that, within the time period of the study, there will probably be additional proposals for development. Consequently, "high growth development" is a misleading label at best.

See App. 14
Response III.B.8.

Even more misleading is the term "target growth development." A target is a goal of some sort and suggests a desirable point at which one seeks to arrive. To be meaningful, there must be some way in which it may be reached and it must have been deliberately selected as something which is in fact to be wished. This "target" has been culled from among the development proposals by deleting those which have been deemed "unrealistic", and there is no recommendation for any means by which this "target" may be achieved. As to its desirability, the study points to "inevitable" damage to transportation, air quality, animal habitat, wetlands, historic sites, as well as the expenditure of hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars. This target hardly seems worth shooting at.

See App. 14
Response II.B.1.

We also wonder whether the estimate of passenger growth at the airport took into consideration the effect of the opening of Stewart Airport. People living south of Albany may find it an attractive alternative to Albany Airport. Indeed, there may be more Albanians lured to Stewart than ever were to New York City's other three airports in the past. We realize that the development of the airport is not subject to control by the Town, but we wonder to what extent the figure given by the draft is realistic in the face of recent developments.

See App. 14
Response II.B.6.

The apparent omission of any way in which the Town may

influence the course and pace of development to keep it within limits which residents can accept, is particularly disturbing. We realize that the airport and County property are beyond the control of the Town, but the purpose of the study is to deal with those things which the Town can control or, at least, influence. Hopefully, the Town will find the means to influence the development around the airport to avoid the damage projected in this study.

See App. 14
Response
II.B.12.

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COLONIE
ENGINEERING &
PLANNING

Michael Zabinski
8 Larkspur Drive
Latham, New York
12110
(518) 783-7430
September 10, 1990

Town of Colonie Planning Board
272 Maxwell Road
Latham, New York
2110

I am writing with regard to the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement, prepared by Clough Harbour and Associates, which assesses the impact of airport expansion upon the surrounding community. As a resident of Latham for the last five years, I wish to offer my comments and experiences on certain aspects of airport expansion I believe to be inadequately addressed in the draft document.

Specifically, my concern is with nighttime noise arising from fixed base operations and maintenance of propeller driven aircraft at the airport. Much attention is lavished on the problem of noise generated by jets upon takeoff and landing, and while I share in this concern and am occasionally bothered at night by noise from this source, it is for me and my family of lesser concern than the noise generated by propeller aircraft maintenance at night. This phenomenon is not considered in the document. Clough Harbour's only comment on the noise generated by prop driven planes is to state that such planes do not generate as much noise as jets upon takeoff and landing (see Section J, p. II-170), and this is certainly true. They do, however, generate a considerable amount of noise when "runup" at night. As the document noted, the number of air taxi operations has increased dramatically over the last nine years. In fact the rate of increase is some 500% over that projected for 1988, due, no doubt, to the deregulation of the industry in the early eighties and the consequent movement by commuter lines often employing smaller prop driven planes into markets abandoned by larger, jet serviced carriers. Should it continue, this trend, in conjunction with airport expansion, can only be expected to result in further increases in the number of flights by prop driven planes. Certainly, this increase in traffic will have to be met with a corresponding increase in facilities to service and maintain these planes. Since maintenance must necessarily be performed while the plane is not in use, usually at night, I can only expect that as a result of expansion, the incidence of nighttime runups will increase along with the increase of flights if ameliorative measures are not found and implemented.

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ALBANY

In support of my concerns, let me provide you with background. A little over two years ago two new commuter airlines began operation at the airport, Business Express, an affiliate of Delta Airlines, and Trans World Express, an affiliate of TWA. Since that time, we have been almost continually bothered by nighttime runups, even though such practices are specifically prohibited by airport regulations (so noted in the draft document). Enforcement of the noise abatement program as it relates to nighttime runups is non-existent. Numerous complaints to Mr. Masko both in person and by phone have been ineffective: he was evidently either unwilling or unable to correct the situation. His advise was to call the tower whenever I was bothered by runups. Numerous complaints to the tower were met with the response that it was Albany County's responsibility to correct the situation. In other words, all I got was bureaucratic shuffle. Letters to the FAA were similarly full of platitudes, but lacking in any results. It was not until I began going to the airport at 3, 4, 5, 6 AM, recording the registration numbers of offending aircraft, and complaining to the upper level management of the offending carriers that I began to get some relief. Nighttime runups ceased almost immediately, and we remained free from disturbance for a couple of weeks. Gradually, however, the runups reappeared, first 5 minutes early (5:55), then 10, 20, 45 minutes early, etc. This, of course, was followed by more complaints, improvement, gradual return, and so on. I believe that management of the offending carriers, both of which are headquartered out of state, is sincere in their determination to abide by airport policy, but find it difficult to monitor their remote operations. In any event, I don't feel that I should be responsible for policing operations at the airport, and I also feel that I should be entitled to a period of quiet at night. Evidently so did Albany County and the FAA, both of whom implemented, (but apparently feel no responsibility to enforce), the prohibition on nighttime runups.

I recognize that the purpose of the GEIS is not to solve problems that currently exist at the airport, but to define and anticipate the future impact of expansion on the surrounding community. However, before expansion proceeds, I feel that some consideration of noise generated at the airport but not associated with takeoffs or landings, is appropriate and necessary. To that end, I would recommend that the following aspects be considered and included in future drafts and the final document:

1. Carriers performing off hour maintenance work at the airport should be contacted and their present and future needs and requirements for such work and facilities should be defined.
2. Just which repairs and services actually require that engines be runup for testing should be determined in

See pp.II-182-185.

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TRAINING

to avoid needless or gratuitous runups.

3. Careful measurement of the noise generated by the various maintenance practices should be undertaken. This information, in conjunction with 2 above, could then be used by planners as the basis for preparing rational airport policies which would restrict or otherwise regulate procedures which generate unacceptable noise levels during "quite hours" while allowing maintenance personnel the greatest practical leeway for completing necessary work.

See p.II-182..

4. Projected expansion of hanger facilities for prop driven planes, their design, construction, location and orientation, and the impact of these variables on noise generated within them should be discussed.

See p.II-182-185.

See App. 14
Response II.J.1.

5. A discussion of prospects for mitigating noise by proper design of maintenance facilities should be undertaken. Currently, runups are performed out in the open. Could facilities be designed which would allow maintenance to be performed in the night hours while containing or attenuating the noise (eg. underground test facilities or larger hangers to permit indoor testing).

See App. 14
Response II.J.1.
& p.183.

6. Are there any landscape techniques (eg. plantings, modification of terrain, etc.) which could be employed to contain these maintenance areas and isolate the noise they generate?

See App. 14
Response II.J.2.

7. When considering the problem of noise generated by jets, it is generally recognized that the greatest concern is amplitude. In other words, the noise is intensely loud. However, the duration of the intense noise generated during any given takeoff is relatively transient, with most takeoffs lasting 30-45 seconds. The problems with noise generated during runups, by contrast, appear to be due to the frequency of the noise generated, that is the quality or pitch of the droning produced, as well as the duration of the runup. It is not uncommon for a runup to last 10-12 minutes. Although relatively few runups may be performed in a given period of time, this relatively long duration of noise makes measurement problematic, since it is not amenable to time weighted averaging techniques commonly used to measure noise generated by jets. Some discussion of the quality of noise generated by prop driven planes, as well as the long duration of noise generated during prolonged runups should be included in the report.

See App. 14
Response II.J.3.

8. My observations of noise generated by prop driven planes has revealed that certain models of aircraft are considerably noisier than others. In light of this, I feel that some discussion of this fact be included, in particular, how adjustments to the mix of planes at the airport may be used to mitigate nighttime noise, in a manner similar to that discussed for jet planes in Section J.

See App. 14
Response II.J.4.

9. Considerable research on propeller design aimed at increasing fuel efficiency and reducing noise has been undertaken and continues. What would be the impact of adoption of this new technology on future airport

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ENVIRONMENTAL

operations? Do current or likely future carriers have any plans to adopt this technology? In a manner similar to that discussed in Section J regarding jets, what steps could be taken to provide incentives for carriers to utilize quieter planes?

10. It has been my observation that atmospheric conditions play a significant role in propagating noise generated at the airport. This phenomenon should be examined in greater detail, and results and implications discussed in the report.

11. Lacking any effective physical controls to attenuate ground based noise, what could be done to enforce current regulations on the generation of nighttime noise.

12. What would be the impact of expanding "quiet hours" at the airport from the current midnight - 6 AM to 11 PM - 7 AM (remember, this noise is not due to takeoffs or landings, and as such, expanding quiet hours should not interfere with actual traffic flow).

The quality of life enjoyed by the people of Colonie is one of the Town's most valuable assets. It is the attribute which makes people want to live here. I realize that airport expansion is important for the well being of the tri-county region, and I am not opposed to a sensible, well considered upgrade of the airport. But my experience with even the limited expansion experienced by the airport in recent years has not been favorable. Before we jump into expansion with both feet, let's be certain Colonie residents not shoulder the burden of airport expansion disproportionately. It may take a little longer and cost a little more to do the job right, but such an approach is vital if we intend to keep Colonie a place where people want to live. And keeping Colonie a place where people want to live is the best guarantee I can think of to insure the continued economic health of the community.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft GEIS.

Sincerely,
Michael Zahra

- cc: William Clarke
- James Coyne
- Fred Field
- Robert Graf
- Thomas Jorling
- Robert Mendez
- Jay Sherman

See App. 14
Response
II.J.5.
& p. II-185.
See App. 14
Response II.J.6.

See p.II-180.

See App. 14
Response II.J.7.
II-185.



SHAKER HERITAGE SOCIETY

Shaker Meeting House, Albany-Shaker Road, Albany, N.Y., 12211 (518) 456-7890

October 17, 1990



Mary Burke
Engineering & Planning Office
Town of Colonie
272 Maxwell Road
Latham, New York 12110

Dear Ms Burke:

The Shaker Heritage Society's Mission Statement is as follows:

Founded in 1977, the Shaker Heritage Society is dedicated to the education of the public about the Shakers and their influence on the region, preserving the integrity of the Shaker Historic District and rehabilitating the 1848 Shaker Meeting House as an interpretive center.

Preservation of the integrity of the Shaker Historic District is crucial to our mission of educating the Community about the Shakers and their culture; without an intact historic district it would be difficult for us to meaningfully interpret the site, or for the public to understand and appreciate it.

We are concerned that both of the development alternatives for roadway improvements studied in the GEIS destroy the integrity of the historic district and the Church family site by splitting it with major roadways. These will make it hazardous to tour the site and difficult if not impossible to understand the site and its buildings in their historic context.

See App. 14
Response II.K.1.

This is the site of the first Shaker Settlement in America, as well as the burial place of the founder, Ann Lee. As such

America's first Shaker settlement

it is of great significance from both historical and architectural viewpoints, and it has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of the Interior. This significance is well documented in the historic section of the GEIS¹. It is of interest to many historians and scholars both nationally and internationally. Among the over 10,000 visitors to tour the site this past year were a crew filming a special on the Shakers for the BBC, and writers from the National Geographic Society, which featured the site in an article in their journal.

See App. 14
Response II.K.4.

The Shaker Heritage Society considers that preservation of the Church family site consisting of Shaker buildings, fields, the orchard, Ann Lee Pond, and the Shaker cemetery is of primary importance; a map showing this part of the historic district in more detail is enclosed. The impact of roads through the site is a negative one, since they tend to split the contiguous site into isolated elements, and the historic district would be best preserved if traffic can be directed around the site, not through it.

See App. 14
Response II.K.1.

The critical segments of roadways we are talking about are (1) on Albany Shaker Road where it passes by Ann Lee Pond, then turns north towards the Albany County Nursing Home (shown on the attached map) and (2) Watervliet Shaker Road from the intersection near Ann Lee Pond to the Shaker Cemetery.

1. The GEIS, p. II-183-184 states that the district is significant in the areas of architecture, commerce, invention, religion, and social/humanitarianism. It notes that "a critical element... is the continuing existence of a historic environmental context," thus, "...the open space...have a crucial visual impact on the remaining structures."

These roads cut up the Historic District now, but traffic usually flows slowly, as it did historically, because there are several hazardous intersections, and the roads are not wide. Both alternatives examined by the GEIS enlarge these roads greatly, and, (also as noted in the GEIS itself) will have a significant and adverse impact on the integrity of the Historic site. This impact will not be improved by the suggested "mitigative measures".

See App. 14
Response II.K.1.

An alternative: we note that the airport access road bypasses both dangerous intersections and the historic district, and connects the sections of Albany Shaker Road above and below (n & s) the Historic District. Enlarging this road has all the benefits of enlarging Albany Shaker Road without hurting the historic district at all. It would even help to alleviate an existing bad condition. Similarly, a bypass from Watervliet Shaker Rd. behind Heritage Park which connected to the northern end of the airport access road would alleviate more traffic pressure on the hazardous intersections, and would easily connect the east and west sections, improving traffic flow, and reducing the bad effects of the traffic on the historic district.

See App. 14
Response II.K.1.

This alternative would improve the bad impact of roadways on the historic district, rather than destroying the historic district, would seem to be a lot less expensive than the alternatives studied, and would dramatically improve access to Heritage Park as well.

We are upset that the sections of the GEIS seem to have been

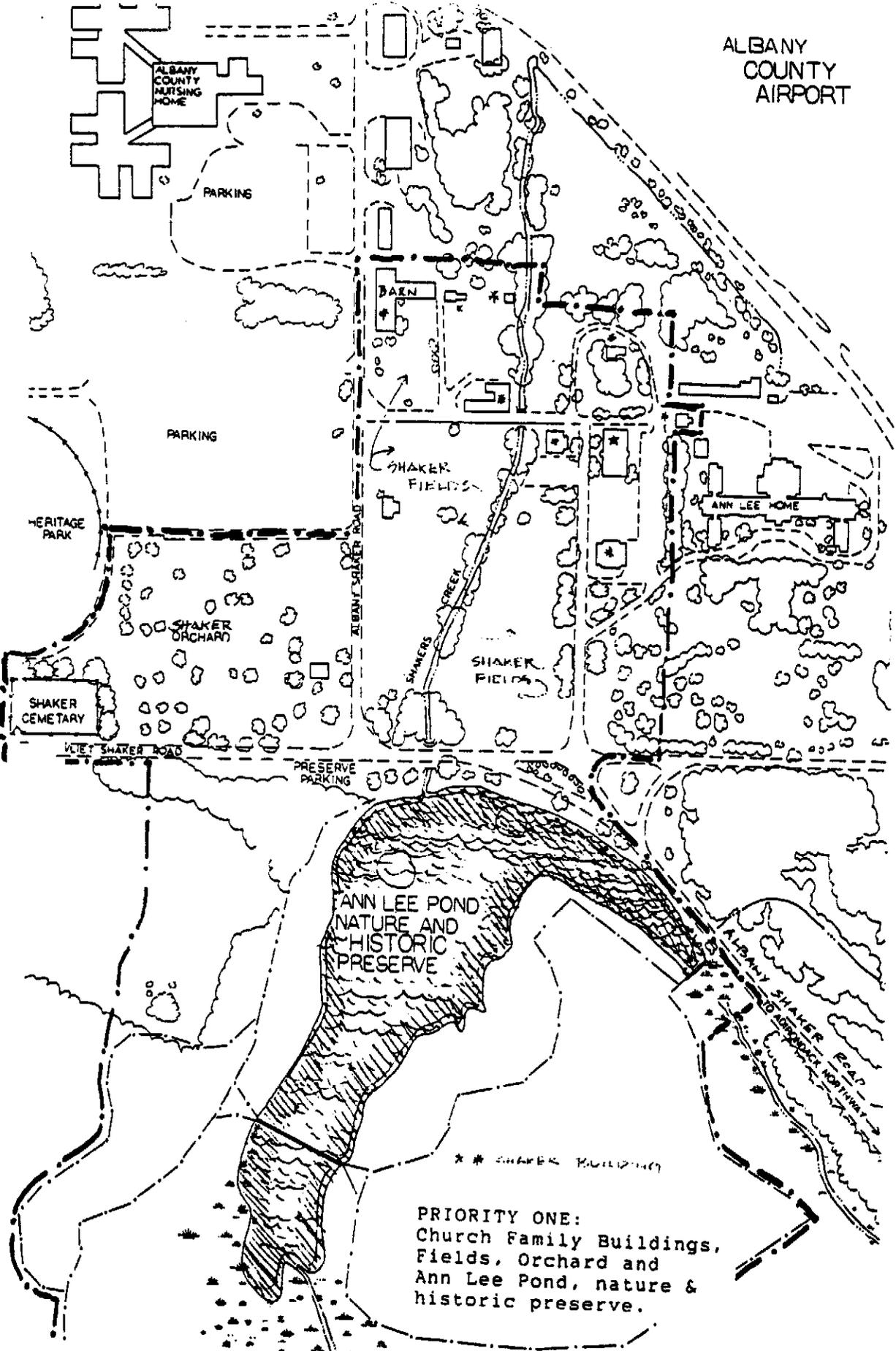
done in isolation. A major concern of highway improvements ought to be to eliminate any bad impact on valuable historic resources, yet here none of the obvious alternatives which would avoid the problems have been studied. Far from improving the situation with respect to the historic district, both alternatives exacerbate existing problems, and would have a devastating effect on the Historic District.

Sincerely,

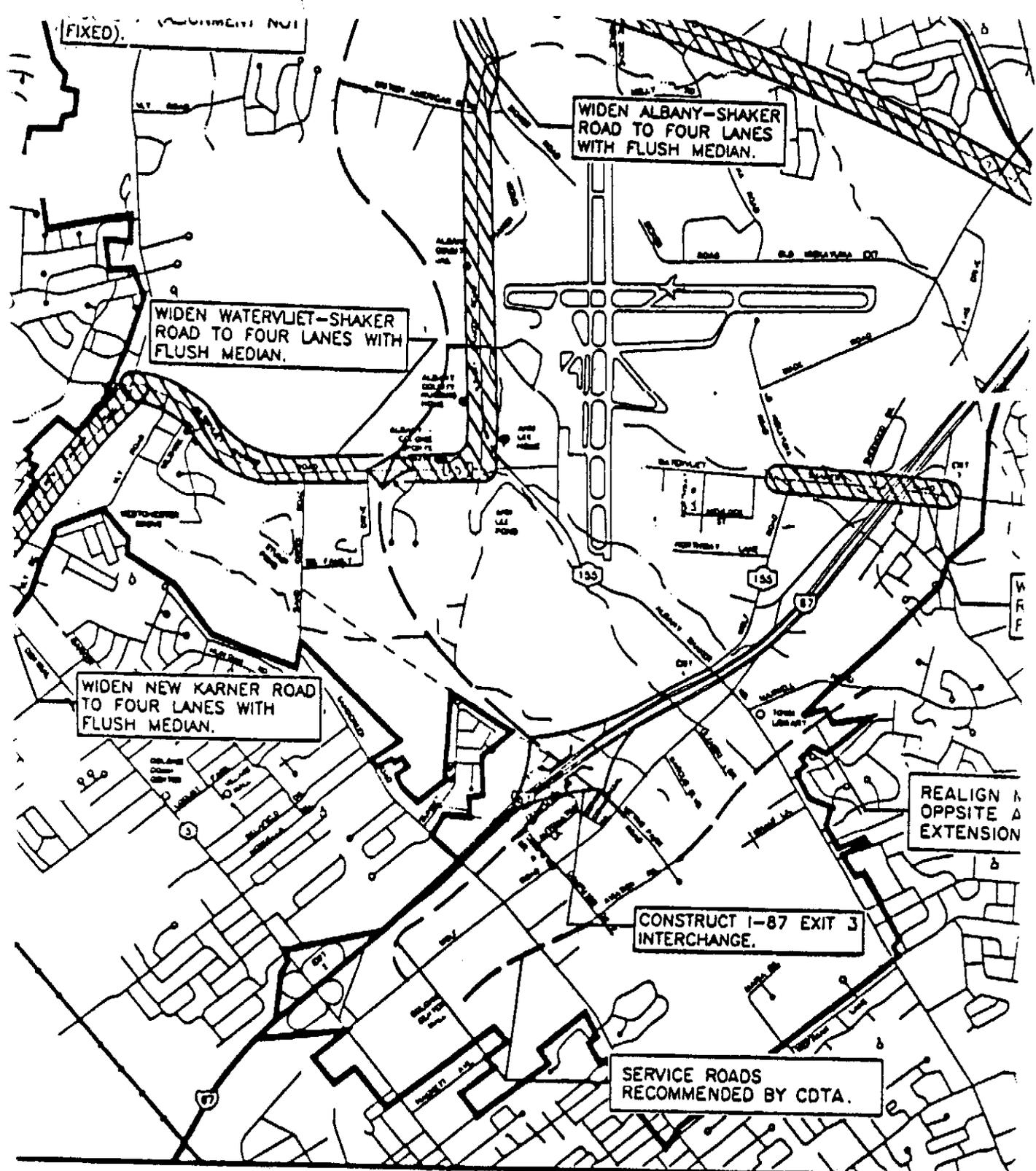
Shaker Heritage Society,
Site Committee

RR:amh

ALBANY
COUNTY
AIRPORT



PRIORITY ONE:
Church Family Buildings,
Fields, Orchard and
Ann Lee Pond, nature &
historic preserve.



HA **CLOUGH, HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES**
 ENGINEERS & PLANNERS
 2 BRANDY BROOK ALBANY, N.Y. 12209

**LEVEL OF IMPROVEMENTS
 OPTION ONE
 2005 TARGET GROWTH SC**

NO.

AIRPORT AREA GEN



PURE WATERS DEPARTMENT

108 WADE ROAD
LATHAM, N.Y. 12110

JOSEPH J. CHIEFARI
DIRECTOR

DAVID C. MCMORRIS
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

785-3702
785-3716

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Mary Burke, Sr. Planner, EPSD
FROM: David McMorris, Pure Waters Dept.
DATE: 19 October 1990
SUBJECT: Albany County Airport Area - Draft GEIS

The Pure Waters Department has reviewed the above subject report and find it to be acceptable as drafted.

Dave

DCM/gh



**Response to Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Airport Area
Submitted by Rita Weis**

To facilitate review my comments will follow the format of the GEIS Report: Summary, Specific Sections with recommendations and an Index at the end.

Summary

The overall impression is one of excellence. The graphics are outstanding. Research is Grade A and the writing clear and concise.

The target growth scenario is much too ambitious for the same reasons the build-out was rejected: (a) cost and source of funding (b) geological limitations (c) legal restrictions (d) environmental concerns.

See App. 24
Response II.A.1

Misconceptions can be corrected by updated facts and a reexamination of data in the report, especially in the Index.

Airport

Albany Airport has not developed as a major hub but is a feeder base of commuter destination. The conclusion, voiced at the public informational meeting, that the ANCLUC estimate of 171,504 operations was almost reached by the actual figure of 165,759, reflecting little change misses the mark. Air Carrier figures declined by over 6,000, General Aviation by over 54,000 while Air Taxis went up 500%, 68,122 instead of the 13,624 expected. General Aviation jet operations were only 1,825 instead of 4,171.[1]

Airport expansion has slowed(2) and might even decline more because: (1) airline consolidation (2) the troubles of its major line, U.S. Air[3] (3) plane occupancy of only 40%, 50% at peak[4] (4) mounting fuel costs (5) competition from Stewart and Saratoga (6) economy.

See App. 14
Response II.B.2.

If air controllers are cut, a decline in passenger boarding will be dramatic.[5]

Demographics

Table II-A-2 predicted a Colonie population of 81,250 in 1989 growing 99,677 in 2005,[6] "the 1990 census preliminary report showed 76,292 people in the town and its two villages".[7] Even adding the 672 counted in the challenge, the population is still less than 77,000. This is 4,000 below the projected 1989 estimate.[8] This raises serious doubt about the accuracy of the projection for 2005. "The average number of persons per housing unit dropped in the past decade from 2.9 to 2.56".[9]

See App. 14
Response II.A.1

An important omission in the study is the implication of the makeup of the population. Nationally there has been slow growth in the working age population due to the "absorption of baby boomers and arrival of the baby bust generation".[10]

"In the Capital District the proportion of the population under age 18 is even lower than the national average. Also, the Capital District's population is older than the national average".[11]

"Albany County is growing older, and is expected to age through the year 2010 and beyond. In 1990 the Albany County population aged 60 years and over will comprise fully 19.3% of the entire county population. The elderly, particularly the older elderly, are increasingly living alone".[12] Therefore, the occupancy ratio may continue to decline.

The increase in the birth rate, now occurring, has begun to impact the lower grades. South Colonie has opened two elementary schools in two years.[13]

In ten years they may be impacting economic growth and in 20; home purchases, beyond the time frame for this study. Until then population figures should be stable.

The economic effect of these figures are direct. The slow growth in the working age population resulted in a decline in economic growth, from 2% in the 1970's to 1% in the 1980's and now to only .6% because of: fewer household formations and less residential construction and its concomitant results, less demand for furniture, equipment, etc. The older population means less demand for consumer goods.[14]

Other economic forces which affect the reality of the development proposed are: (1) Debt burden, public and private. Consumer debt climbed from 372.3 billion to 790.6 billion while savings declined from 7.5% to 1.8% from 1981 to 1987. Installment debt rose 16%. The savings rate is recovering to 5.1%.[15] (2) The shift to a service economy instead of a manufacturing one means lower incomes.

See App. 14
Response II.A.2.

The Environment

The executive summary on page 3 mentions that 3,320 acres or 39% of the 8,500 acres in the study area are still undeveloped. Mr. Peter Conway, at the public informational meeting, mentioned that 34% would be developed leaving only 5% of the area for green belt areas.

Such development would be directly opposed to the goals of the people of Colonie as defined in the LUMAC Study: (1) Protect and conserve Historical Sites (2) Conserve key open spaces and environmentally sensitive areas. (3) Maintain active agricultural lands.

See App. 14
Response
II.B.15.

In regard to the latter, the study mentioned four ways this could be accomplished.[16] Only preferential assessment appears to be presently practical if the feeling expressed by the

farmers are to be considered.[17]

Insufficient research has been conducted on rare plant and animal species. The report states: "Based on correspondence with Burrell Buffington of DEC and field investigations, no state or federal rare or endangered mammalian species inhabit the study area".[18]

Not exactly. What Mr. Buffington's letter said was: "site specific or comprehensive surveys for plant and animal occurrences have not been conducted...we cannot provide a definitive statement on the presence or absence of species, habitats or communities".[19]

See p.II-40,II-55.

The field investigations mentioned have not been documented and are unavailable for consideration. Inclusion in the final draft would be helpful. See App. 14 Response II.D.4

The mitigation measures on pp. 47 to 49 are also well thought out. Strict site clearing, tree preservation, site inspections and the two for one tree replacement hold promise. Specific ecological studies hold promise but require legislation, the need for a municipal plan for the Ann Lee Pond is a point well taken; cooperation between the affected municipalities is imperative. In regard to the pond, the fishing possibilities were mentioned in the text but disregarded in the Appendix 7, Full Environmental Assessment Form.

The section on Aquatic Ecology was fascinating. The delineation of legal possibilities raises new hopes for protection of environmental areas. The Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act (pg. 52) as to the responsibility of property owners to the U.S. Corps of Engineers would seem a major hurdle to development of most of the area involved. The no net loss policy (pg. 53) would further inhibit development. Best of all is the statement on page 54 "In order to protect the existing ecological communities in the Study Area it is important that contiguous undeveloped parcels be preserved".

This was underscored in the letter to Mary Burke from William J. Clark, D.E.C.[20] His point is that the cost of development may outweigh the benefit since "open space / natural areas are a rapidly dwindling resource in Colonie, particularly around the Airport / Wolf Road area. This makes the establishment and maintenance of permanent open space greenbelt areas a vital necessity".

His nucleus would include: Ann Lee Pond, Watervliet Historic District, several hundred acres of freshwater wetlands associated with Ann Lee and Stump Ponds as well as the Shaker Creek and its Headwaters, the Shaker Creek corridor, Mohawk River Wetlands, Shaker Creek tributary on the east side of the

Airport and Avis Drive, the Shaker Ridge Country Club and a portion of the 100 year floodplain.

See
App. 14
Response
II.D.5.

This doesn't leave much to develop.

Section E Ground Water

Here again severe impacts should hinder development. A seasonal water table depth of 0 to 14 inches completely surrounds the Airport except south of the west runway to the Northway.

All of the area west to Sand Creek (including Stump Pond to its limit) and north to Route 155 is a recharge area; east of Sand Creek (South Family to Ann Lee Pond) and north of 155 on Albany Shaker Road to the jail are both recharge areas Exhibit II E-2.

Section II page 60 Stormwater Flows "the entire Shaker Creek drainage area is approximately 7,600 acres of which 6,100 acres lie within the Study Area".

Page 62 "Stormwater run-off resulting from rain and snowmelt drains off paved surfaces at the Airport, enters Shaker Creek at various points and eventually enters the Mohawk River approximately one mile west and upstream of an intake structure to the Latham Water District's filtration plant". "Watersheds drain to Class A drinking water supplies or to environmentally sensitive lands". (pg. 8)

Given these facts any building in the area should be required to identify areas that will require excavation below the water table and the land use which could have the potential to store contaminants on site". (pg. 56)

The cost of protecting the water table should be an anticipated cost of development in the entire area and may make a project unprofitable. If not, the community will have to pick up damage control costs which I find an unacceptable alternative.

Page 82 also identifies flooding areas which make building impractical:

- 1.) Old Wolf and Watervliet Shaker Road
- 2.) Old Wolf and Albany Shaker Road
- 3.) Albany Shaker Road near Ann Lee Pond
- 4.) Shaker Creek from the Airport to Route 7

See App. 14
Response II.E.2.

It also makes road improvements more expensive.

Some recommendations in the environmental section are more practical than others, but all are worthy of consideration. Some would require legislation. The suggestions to involve all levels of government has special merit. The Ann Lee Pond area was mentioned but the same arguments could be made for the entire Airport area. An environmental committee for that

purpose would be my first suggestion. Others in the GEIS report of special merit are:

- 1.) Overlay District
- 2.) Greenbelt selective purchase money from developers
- 3.) Conservation easements
- 4.) Strict site clearing and tree preservation (already in progress in Colonie)
- 5.) Two for one tree replacement
- 6.) Specific ecological studies
- 7.) Reduce densities allowable near greenbelt areas

The major recommendations to protect the environment would effectively preclude any further development in the immediate vicinity of the Airport.

On page II-53: Net loss policy which "requires a developer to obtain a wetland disturbance permit to create a comparable amount of new wetland area".

On page II-54 connection of wetlands: "In order to protect the existing ecological communities in the Study Area, it is important that contiguous undeveloped parcels be preserved." History supports this idea as the Shakers piped water from Stump Pond and all are connected at the water table level.

Once lost, never recovered. The help available from the USDA Soil Conservation Service of the Federal Government at no cost should be obtained.

See App. 14
Response
II.D.5.

Utilities

The total cost of supplying water as outlined in Section II, page 61 of \$25,524,300 would make the cost per dwelling unit or square foot of commercial space high but it would be fair to assess it to new development. New sewage and water capacity are being applied to Route 7 and should be apportioned to any new development in the area.

Niagara Mohawk's claim of capacity available is suspect. The company already cuts the residential capacity at busy times especially the Christmas Season. Second, they are pursuing a timed rate service to stretch the capacity they already have. Any new expenses should be assigned to expansion properties.

See App. 14
Response
II.G.1.

Transportation

Exit 3 development and the arterial from Route 7 to Wolf Road are unacceptable on these counts:

- 1.) No solution to traffic problems
- 2.) Environmentally devastating
- 3.) Cost

New roads do not solve traffic problems. Alternate 7 is at capacity at peak hours, Route 7 is being widened and will still not meet the demand. "Route 7 improvements...will not be sufficient to accommodate an additional throughlane". (Transportation, II-133) Yet this through traffic is what should be accommodated. Consider the traffic count (Map II H-1 "1990 Existing Traffic"):

- 1.) Route 7 west of Albany Shaker Road Daily - 35,719
- 2.) Route 7 east of Old Niskayuna Road Daily - 34,477
- 3.) Route 7 east of Wade Road Daily - 33,179

Only 2 1/2 thousand cars are leaving Route 7, most are going through. Wade Road only carries 3,717 cars so the arterial and Wade Road widening are both unnecessary. Exit 3 is likewise impractical. It would bring traffic to the busiest area of Wolf Road. (41,741 Map II H-1 "1990 Existing Traffic") Much of Wolf Road traffic is self generated, 31,654 from Route 5 and 35,719 west of Albany Shaker Road. The interchange at Wolf and Albany Shaker Roads works well except for the Maxwell Road connection; the planned service road might remedy this. Instead of Exit 3, have all truck traffic exit at Exit 5 and close the western on ramp at 5 to facilitate this. Exit 5 is under utilized and this would move car traffic faster.

See App. 14
Response II.H.16.

The second reason against the arterial and Exit 3 is the environmental damage to Ann Lee Pond, the watershed area and Shaker Creek "it is in clear conflict with the State's Freshwater Wetland's Law".[20]

Third is the cost in terms of land and money (II pg. 147) 107 acres ROW \$125,598,000.

Recommended is the suggestion to "limit traffic on the Airport Access Road to Airport related traffic only "since 46% of traffic is through traffic".[21]

The study (Transportation), pg. 119, includes a list of improvements to improve traffic flow at much less cost than new construction. Prudence would dictate that they be finished. If problems were still unsolved, new construction would have a better understanding of which areas would be subject to heavy transportation assessments.

See App. 14
Response II.H.20.

I endorsed all the recommendations but feel #3,4 and 8[21] involving Watervliet Shaker Road should be given priority because the new town buildings will severely impact this area. Another idea is that British American should pay for the two improvements at their road. These have been conveyed to CDTC.

Air Quality

Page 163. The carbon monoxide levels (14ppm) are exceeded at six

intersections already with the worst 24.1ppm at Wolf Road and Central Avenue.

Besides traffic mitigation measures, of which varied work hours, mass transportation and vans for employees are promising; lowering traffic volumes by curtailing the projected development may be our sole option. The soaring oil prices and depression like conditions may also drop traffic counts.

Noise

Noise restrictions also reduce the possibility of development in the Airport Area. On II-166 these areas are: Buhrmaster and River Roads to the north, Watervliet Shaker, Karner Road and east of Wolf Road between Sand Creek and Shaker Road.

Residential construction would be difficult; deed restrictions mentioning the damaging noise levels would be mandatory.

Business or retail buildings would require extensive and expensive insulating techniques.

New noise testing should be done before any more conclusions can be reached since plane patterns vary, the types of planes have changed and helicopters were not included in the previous study.[22] Citizen input should be included. Any notification of when testing was being done would negate the accuracy of such testing.

See App. 14
Response II.J.8,
p.II-184, II-185,
II-191:

The mitigation measures mentioned on pps. 174, 176 and 178 are excellent: (a) Noise overlay zone (b) Ordinance for buyers of homes in 651dn (I would prefer lower standards for any young couples since infants are especially susceptible) with noise impacts in the deeds (c) Prohibit night operations and especially (d) an ongoing monitoring program.

Two unfortunate factors make this last item especially important: (1) Plane overloading which keep the plane lower and noisier over residential areas (2) Rogue pilots or lost ones who fly unacceptable routes at low altitudes, especially in the summer over swimming pools.

Historic and Cultural

This section was outstanding for its depth and cooperation of all contacted parties.

Two comments deserve special emphasis as again severely limiting development.

- (a) II-187: "the entire Study Area is considered a highly sensitive archaeological area".

(b) II-195: "survey by archaeologists should be required for all development proposals within the Study Area".

Two mitigation measures (pg. 189) require Town action immediately:

- 1.) Refine boundaries of Watervliet Shaker Historic District (map shows differences).
- 2.) Enactment of an ordinance for a Town Preservation Committee.

See App. 14
Response II.K.4.

Fiscal Impacts

Besides the declining economy, the study itself proves that legal environmental restrictions, ground water, health risks, traffic overload, noise impediments and cultural concerns make even the limited target development scenario much too ambitious.

The conclusion of applying 95% of costs to future development is sound but would be difficult to implement and make profitability almost impossible for any developer.

See App. 14
Response II.0.11

If overlays are developed for green space, aquifers, traffic overloads, noise areas and historic areas, the truth of my conclusions would be apparent. Please put them in the final draft.

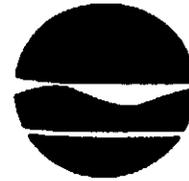
See App. 14
Response
II.B.16.

Footnotes

- 1.) GEIS Section II, Noise pg. 169 Table 2.
- 2.) Times Union, Wed., August 15, 1990
Section B-3 by Bill Schackner.
- 3.) Times Union, Tues., September 4, 1990
Section B-10, Reprint from the Washington Post by Martha Hamilton.
- 4.) Albany County Airport Updated Airport Layout Plan and Land Use Study, Section 5 page 7.
- 5.) Times Union, Friday, September 7, 1990
Section B-1 by Bill Schackner.
- 6.) GEIS Section II page 3 Table II A-2.
- 7.) Colonie Spotlight, September 26, 1990 Volume II #22 page 1
by Sal Prividera.
- 8.) Ibid.
- 9.) Ibid.
- 10.) Times Union, "The Chamber", October 2, 1990 page 6 John H. Ortega quoting from Blue Chip Economic Indicators.
- 11.) Ibid.
- 12.) Abstract of Proposed Plan for Aging Services 1991-1992, Albany County Department for the Aging and Handicapped, page 2.
- 13.) South Colonie News, South Colonie Board of Education, May 1990 page 2.
- 14.) See Footnote 10, page 8.
- 15.) Ibid.
- 16.) GEIS, Section II, page 14.
- 17.) Times Union, Sunday, October 7, 1990 Section C page 5.
- 18.) GEIS, Section II, page 34.
- 19.) GEIS, Index, letter to L. Callander from B. Buffington, Wild Life Resource Center.
- 20.) GEIS, Index, Correspondence from W. Clark, DEC, December 21, 1989.
- 21.) GEIS, Section II, page 133 CDTC Studies.
- 22.) GEIS, Section II, Noise Page 169.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

2176 Guilderland Avenue, Schenectady, NY 12306
Telephone (518) 382-0680



October 23, 1990

Thomas C. Jorling
Commissioner



Mr. Peter Platt
Chairman
Colonie Town Planning Board
272 Maxwell Road
Latham, NY 12110

Re: Albany Airport-Areawide GEIS

Dear Mr. Platt:

The GEIS prepared for this study area represents a very important and significant step to look forward towards the future in order to plan for it as well as standardize some key development performance standards such as stormwater control, erosion/sedimentation control and the preservation of mature and natural trees. As I stated in my December 21, 1989 letter the stakes here are high: what is the character that the community wishes to maintain for the future. What do people really envision this section of the Town of Colonie to look like in 15 years and beyond? I have specific concerns with the GEIS which I will enunciate below, but a more general concern is that while I fully support the effort made, I find the study has limited itself to essentially only a couple of growth scenario alternatives. And unfortunately, the two scenarios looked at (high growth and target growth) do more to react to development trends rather than control them.

See App. 14
Response
II.B.1.

Continued growth is certainly inevitable and within limits even desirable. However, no low growth scenario was developed in the GEIS which might have found a conceivably more appropriate balance between development needs and community character/natural resource needs. For example, the highway improvement projects discussed under the target growth scenario are not only staggering in terms of total cost (over a \$100 million) but several of the improvements such as widening of roads in certain sections (Albany Shaker Road in front of Ann Lee Pond) or new arterials (north-south) as well as the Exit 3 option would also exact a tremendous environmental and community character cost as well. In contrast to many of the proposed highway improvement projects, the impacts associated with these several high impact highway projects would be significant and profound and unfortunately this document does not describe in enough depth all of their impacts nor make a compelling case to justify their need, nor give a serious look to other reasonable alternatives. For example, instead of spending \$25 million on a north-south arterial or \$22 million (est.) on an airport tunnel what if those monies were programmed into TSM strategies so that as one

possibility viable low cost mass transit alternatives could be made available and a system of incentives and penalties set up to promote its use?

See App. 14
Response
II.B.1.

The difficulty is that in merely reacting to development trends, essentially the community accepts the proposition that there is no limit on growth and in fact, it is quite likely that given the lack of developing and implementing alternative ways of moving people around the highway improvements that are proposed under the GEIS will become obsolete and necessitate additional costly improvements in the future. Thus not only are some important opportunities foregone for protecting some of the town's more important remaining natural resource amenities, but in effect what few resource amenities are not affected by these proposed plans are likely to be devoured in the future by development and additional "necessary" public infrastructure improvements.

See App. 14
Response
III.B.3.

I can appreciate that a lot of time and effort has gone into the preparation of this document and that one of the key questions was how many alternate growth and development scenarios should the document look at. There are a number of good ideas in the document for protecting natural areas, strengthening and standardizing development performance standards as well as meeting infrastructure needs which I can support wholeheartedly and will discuss below. Unfortunately, by limiting some of the options (for example, highway options 1 or 2) this has obscured some very important possibilities for effectively dealing with the competing demands between growth and environmental protection. My specific comments are as follows:

1. I strongly suggest adding consideration of a low growth scenario for the study area. I offer this suggestion knowing that it is quite likely from the standpoint of land owners and developers that the target growth scenario already represents a low growth scenario. However, by not looking at a low growth scenario and evaluating its pros and cons and impacts vs. the impacts of the high growth and the target growth scenarios discussion has been short circuited on whether the community might find such low growth to be more desirable in terms of both less cost for infrastructure improvements as well as more preservation of the open space and natural amenities which make Colonie a desirable place to live. I would suggest a low growth scenario that looks at half the development levels of the target growth scenario.
2. In addition to the analysis of a low growth scenario the GEIS should go one step further and look very seriously at the concept of mandatory clustering and in-fill development in the sections of the study area which already constitute the essentially urbanized commercial and/or residential centers of the community (for example Wolf Road). Increasing the density of development is obviously a problem if again as a reaction to current trends we assume that affordable and convenient mass transportation is out of the question and therefore we have to plan everything around one vehicle per person on the road system particularly at key, crucial, congested times of the day.

See App. 14
Response II.B.1.

Yet the experience in urban cities demonstrates that far more people can be accommodated in far less space if infrastructure and transportation needs are met in a way that fosters alternatives such as mass transit, car-pooling, van-pooling (also mass transit), walking, biking, etc. Wolf Road could be more intensively developed with in-fill development between existing buildings (accomplished with the transfer of development rights from the Greenbelt/Greenway areas (which would be preserved) to these in-fill areas) if coupled with: a substantial portion of the proposed road improvement monies are programmed towards acquiring and maintaining mass transit vehicles and facilities (for example, a combination fleet of both buses and vans similar to the S.T.A.R. flexible pickup/dropoff system geared to the destinations of riders and their density in the some of the outlying areas), on-site car parking is reduced, parking fees increased and mass transit fares are held low through subsidies so they would be extremely affordable and competitive with driving a car. Strategies such as these would offer a very real possibility of focusing development on the Town's prime office and commercial center without creating grid-lock on Wolf Road (which is where it appears to be headed based upon current trends with or without the highway improvements proposed in the GEIS) and would have the advantage of preserving the open spaces which are irreplaceable, unique and necessary. The in-fill development coupled with the expenditures of substantial sums for mass transit/multiple transit alternatives would provide the critical mass necessary to entice, if not, force people out of their cars and get us out of the vicious circle of more highways, more cars with no real longterm alternative solution to deteriorating and unacceptable levels of service and higher levels of air pollution.

See
App. 14
Response
III.B.2

3. In Exhibit II-B-5 (LUMAC future land use) the rezoning proposals would not as far as I can tell achieve the target growth scenario (nor a low growth or cluster developments/infill scenario. I am puzzled why Colonie, which has a very far sighted Land Conservation Zone, has not yet chosen to expand it outside of the Mohawk River Flood Plain, to encompass additional very crucial and important natural areas such as, for example Ann Lee Pond/Stump Pond and their associated wetlands among other areas. The other development tool discussed such as the farm land and open space overlay district, selective public acquisitions, transfer development rites and conservation easements I strongly support and agree could be very effective tools for Land Conservation if they are implemented. However, as long as the underlying zoning allows for development of a certain type with certain density there is an inherent conflict between it and other environmental protection requirements overlying the zone (i.e. Freshwater Wetlands regulations). Thus no matter how limited the actual site may be for development, a presumption is created that a Landowner is entitled to get his return based upon the permitted uses and maximum density and in the zoning ordinance. Further, property assesment is based more often that not upon that potential maximum buildout found in the zoning.

See
App. 14
Response
II.B.4

I am pleased to see on Map II-D-5 a proposed greenbelt that I feel would go along way to putting in place a cumulative long range approach to open space set asides on individual projects and more importantly would help to maintain a viable presently functioning eco-system of wildlife and open space. In November of 1989 I suggested a greenbelt of far larger proportions than this and am enclosing that letter and map again in the hope that a larger area can be given some reconsideration. While it would be desirable from an environmental standpoint if all of this larger suggested greenbelt area were kept in its present open space character, without public acquisition of all these properties that's an impossibility. However, by having a greenbelt zone, this would allow for requiring development to be clustered in a manner that allows some use of these properties but also allows for the creation of a far larger greenbelt than what has been depicted in the GEIS to be created as individual projects come up for review and decisions. For example, based upon agreements reached in the approval of the one building for Ashfield Associates/Columbia Development Corp. at Airline Drive, a portion of the open space green belt has been created which is of a far larger extent than is shown on II-D-5. Similarly, the wetlands in that vicinity are far larger than is depicted on the map which extend onto the Westbury Woods and the former Tri-Cities Industrial Park sites. These wetlands will have an effect in severely limiting the amount of developable property on both sites. It is also puzzling that the Shaker-Ridge Country Club and Memory Gardens Cemetary are not included as part of the greenbelt given the desirability from a number of standpoints to maintain those properties in an open space character (for example, the golf course is a noise impacted area off the west end of the east-west run way and should remain in an open space character not only for that reason, but also for its recreational open space amenities that it provides to the area.

See App. 14
Response
II.D.1.

4. On Page II-10 it is stated that some of the farms in the area will remain undeveloped over the next 15 years. Given the cost of land, development pressures and lack of land use protection there is a very real possibility that in the absence of no other controls or incentives these properties could very well be developed.

See App. 14
Response II.B.5

5. On Page II-13 the projection of the loss of 32% of the open space and 40% of the active agricultural lands (or over 1000 acres of existing wildlife habitat) we judge to be a significant and profound adverse effect which a greenbelt helps to mitigate. However, in order for the greenbelt to be ecologically viable it does need to be enlarged as discussed above (and in my letter of 11/12/89). In addition the design of highway improvements is going to become extremely important so they do not isolate and cut up the different parts of the greenbelt. (For example, wildlife crossing a 4-lane flush median highway is much more difficult than crossing a 2-lane highway). The purpose of the greenbelt is to prevent individual parts of the habitat from becoming cut off,

- isolated, and ultimately degraded so it continues to function as an ecologically viable whole. In addition, on the issue of habitat, we suggest that Exhibit II-D-4 (Potential Wildlife Habitats) is in fact an extremely useful map and tool which should be used for identifying the areas or opportunities for creating or adding on to the greenbelt.
6. Exhibit II-C-4 and table II-C-1 should identify all hydric soils which have the potential for meeting a definition for federally regulated wetlands which will place additional restrictions on development.
7. The discussion on the airport development plans needs a lot more detail. For example, the improvements discussed in Table II-B-5 should include a map identifying the location of all these proposed improvements, as it is difficult if not impossible to evaluate (nor does a GEIS attempt to) the environmental impacts of these improvements. I agree with the statement that more site specific SEQR analysis and determinations are going to need to be done for the specific projects as they come up (page II-21.) I have a difficult time understanding how SEQR has been satisfied even at the generic level when these improvements are presented as givens with no discussion of environmental impacts. For projects of potentially significant impact there is no look at less impacting alternatives to accomplish airport improvements. In addition, the statement on page 2-32 that lands within the airport are excluded from any consideration as habitat should be reconsidered. With proper management we see it as entirely possible the airport lands could be managed for short grass species and habitat while still meeting the safety objectives and requirements necessary for airplane take-offs and landings.
8. Exhibit II-D-4 - The entire parcel of Shaker Run is identified as an area of low potential habitat. This does not appear to be justified since some 60 acres of it are wooded freshwater wetlands and the land along Shaker Creek has the same character of open farm land and hedgerows on the adjacent Columbia Development Corp. property. The wetland lying between Sunset Blvd. and Interstate 87 has similarly been omitted and should be considered either medium or high potential habitat as well. In addition, the areas where two colonies of Blue Lupine potential Karner Blue habitat have been found on the southern edge of the Westbury Woods property is also in my estimation incorrectly classified as habitat of low potential. This should be upgraded to medium or high potential.
9. Exhibit II-D-3 may be in error. For example, I find it hard to believe that bedrock is less than 5 feet below the surface of Ann Lee Pond.
10. We agree with the stringent guidelines regulating fill and development on steep slopes.
- See App. 14
Response II.D.1
- See App. 14
Response II.D.2
- See App. 14
Responses
II.B.14.
& App.12
- See Exhibit
II-D-4
- See Exhibit
II-C-3
- See App. 14
Response
II.C.1.

11. On Pages II-56, 57 there is basically no discussion about protecting the town's important aquifer resources. Recharge areas are the places to focus on for protecting aquifers. Other communities have gone so far to control what they consider inappropriate uses over aquifers through the use of an Aquifer Overlay Protection Zone. I have enclosed a copy of Schenectady County's regulations in that regard. Given the continuing vulnerability to the Mohawk River and the Latham Water District intake to spills and other contamination events such as Albany Airport deicing, the Town of Colonie should seriously consider taking significant steps to protect this vitally important resource. This vulnerability may end up restricting future growth unless reliable supplemental water sources are available for use when needed.

See
App. 14
Response
II.E.1
 12. Exhibit II-D-1 (Vegetative Communities) - The wetlands lying between Sunset Blvd. and the Northway could not be considered in any sense of the word developed lands. Also, I would argue that if nothing else another category may be needed since the Shaker Ridge Golf Course, for example, which is considered to be a wildlife habitat of potentially medium value, should not be in the same category of developed lands as for example, Colonie Center Mall.

See Exhibit
II.D.1
 13. On Page II-36 in the statement regarding freshwater wetlands and their regulation, it should be added that the state law also regulates activities within the 100 foot adjacent area as well. In addition, some consideration should be given as to whether or not Colonie should consider regulating wetlands smaller than 12 1/2 acres. Finally on 2-53 the federal no net loss policy is not quite accurately stated. The federal government has to follow a procedure evaluating projects whereby a project sponsor has to demonstrate that he has avoided the wetlands. If he can not avoid the wetlands completely, he must minimize his encroachment into them. Only in those circumstances where the encroachment into the wetlands is both unavoidable and will cause a relatively minor impact then is the discussion of mitigation or replacement of wetlands become appropriate.

See pp.II- 42,
II-58.
See p..
II-59.
- On Pages II-50, 51 as well as II-87 we agree with the discussion on the need for stringent storm water runoff controls and standards both not only so that flooding at the airport doesn't worsen but also to protect the water quality of Shaker Creek, and Ann Lee Pond and the Mohawk River (a drinking water source for Colonie and Cohoes). We feel the only change is needed to require at minimum a 50 year, 24 hour storm retention standard which we have required on two recent projects that have come before us. The Department of Environmental Conservation has guidelines in which is considering a 100 year retention standards. We are unclear if or when they will be put into effect. The 50 year standard we feel at this point is a reasonable compromise unless a project proposes to fill in substantial areas of wetlands in which case
- See
App. 14
Response
II.F.5.

even though the project may not ultimately be approvable, for purposes of project design the developer would have to incorporate a 100 year standard in his application. All of these retention basins should be of the design of what are called wetland ponds which support a variety of wetland habitat which have the effect of acting as natural treatment basins for pollutants and settling basins for settlement.

14. On Page II-189 there is discussion about protecting historic and archeological resources. I would add that we have been successful in one recent projects around Ann Lee Pond of getting one developer to work in cooperation with the Shaker Historic Society to design a structure that will be far more compatible with the Shaker buildings on the area than more modern designs.

App. 14
Response II.K.4.

15. Section H table II-H-2 lists a number of short term transportation improvements. The cost projections of \$9-17 million appear to be a more realistic and affordable approach to implementing real improvements for the area than options 1 and 2 which I will discuss later. It is clear, based upon these proposals (and from driving in the area) that the focus should be on intersection improvements, particularly in terms of signalization and turning lanes. Far more than anything else these intersection improvements would provide more immediate benefits as well as with the exception of improvements 16 and 18 not result in any severe impacts to the environment or significant change in the visual scenic character of these highways. My concerns with improvement 16 and 18 is the potential damage they might do to existing mature trees particularly those in front of Ann Lee Pond. Widening the highway at that point by the pond in the manner depicted on the CDTC study upon which this GEIS recommendation is based would completely change the character of that area. Therefore some care and sensitivity is needed for the improvements made at that intersection. I do not understand the desire to close off the airport access road to through traffic. It more than anything else has provided the safety valve to allow traffic traveling along Albany Shaker Road to bypass what would otherwise be an extremely crowded intersection in front of Ann Lee Pond. My suggestion is that we can't afford to not have the airport access road continue as a bypass for Albany Shaker Road. The highway there is four lanes and to attempt to configure it so that all traffic has to run past the main terminal would not only require an expenditure of scarce transportation monies but seems like it would be promoting an even bigger bottleneck and current problem of traffic congestion in front of the terminal. Also, I strongly suggest an alternative working assumption that with either a low growth scenario or a mandatory cluster/in-fill scenario as discussed above, the short term improvements could in fact satisfy most of the long term road improvement needs as well.

See App. 14
Response II.H.5,
II.H.20.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.21.

See App. 14
Response
III.B.2.

16. Long range transportation options 1 and 2 contain elements which make a lot of sense and could be built without the substantial funds of \$100 million+ (e.g., widening New Karner Road) but also unfortunately contain proposals which are extremely costly and will be extremely damaging to the environment and the character of the community. I am encouraged that another alternative has been found to more efficiently move traffic between the Northway and the Airport which has been identified as a prime transportation need for quite a while now. No discussion was given though, that this would also severely impact active agricultural lands. However, from the standpoint of the state's wetland law this clearly would be the preferred and approvable alternative.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.22.

I am troubled by the overall analysis of transportation needs and how best to meet them under these options. For example, the necessity for the north-south arterial still has not been explained adequately in either the GEIS or the CDTC report other than to suggest, in effect, that because we have two east-west arterials Central Avenue and Route 7 we therefore need two north-south arterials i.e. the Northway and the north-south arterial and this is the only way to meet an unquestioned desired level of service D. Presuming that Albany Shaker Road is widened between Route 7 and the Airport, I quite frankly have not seen any compelling justification for adding another four lane arterial in that same vicinity unless as the report states later on the intent is to set the stage for a new crossing of the Mohawk River as an extension of the north-south arterial. Such a crossing would severely impact state wetlands along the Mohawk River and thus could not be presupposed at this location if in fact the funds ever became available for such an expensive project to be built. In addition, there may be more environmentally acceptable and less expensive alternatives for moving people between Saratoga and Albany Counties.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.17.

As is the case with many traffic improvements putting in a substantial new highway (i.e. an arterial) in one location may simply transfer the traffic bottleneck from one location to another. In this case, the bottlenecks are increasingly becoming Route 7, Route 5, and Interstate 87. The unwritten assumption I must assume is that somehow Interstate 87 will ultimately be widened to 4 lanes in each direction coupled with the explicit recommendation that Route 7 will be widened from 4 to 6 lanes. Quite frankly, it is unclear to me how widening Route 7 to 6 lanes could be accomplished without substantial impact to businesses, homeowners and the environment along that highway with a likely outcry against such a project. A similar highway, Route 5-Central Avenue, which has more traffic than Route 7 is not to my knowledge proposed to be widened to 6 lanes. The widening of I-87 besides being tremendously expensive, would involve potentially significant impacts to wetlands as well as residential neighborhoods and commercial businesses.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.7,
II.H.23.

The point made is that several of the GEIS transportation improvements embodied in Option 1 and 2 (e.g. 6 lane Route 7 Exit 3 N-S arterial) rely upon the questionable assumptions that environmental, fiscal and/or physical constraints can be overcome not only for these specific projects but also for the future projects (e.g. Northway widening, new Mohawk River crossing, Route 5 widening (?)) which would be deemed necessary to solve additional traffic bottlenecks. While the total costs (environmental, community, fiscal) of the proposals in the GEIS are staggering it is equally clear that they are only the prelude to far greater costs in the future as transportation improvements simply react to existing trends in an effort to reach the ever receding goal of the level of service (LOS) D.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.24.

Some other specific concerns that I have are that the tunnel under the airport for option 2 while convenient, appears to be totally unnecessary. If new exit 4 in fact is approved, then why would east-west traffic need to use the tunnel when they could come down the Northway or Old Wolf Road and get onto Albany Shaker Road (via Exit 4) and head east along Watervliet Shaker Road? Therefore, by eliminating the tunnel both options 1 and 2 are comprable in cost. (Incidentally, on page II-40 the cost in table II-0-4 for option 2 is overstated by some \$6 million.)

See App. 14
Response
II.H.17.

See Table
II-0.4.

Since the short term transportation improvements will have already been completed and implemented, I suggest an option 3 be considered which coupled with a low growth or cluster/infill scenario would consist of exit 4 being constructed, the airport access road remaining open to through traffic, Albany Shaker Road being widened to 4 lanes from the Airport north to Route 7, New Karner Road from Central to Albany Shaker being widened to 4 lanes, the Wade Road/Old Niskayuna and Sand Creek Road improvements also being completed. This will allow for the ellimination of the environmentally impacting and unnecessary north-south arterial as well as the unnecessary and expensive east-west airport tunnel. This would provide transportation improvement projects on option 3 at a more affordable price of under \$50 million and allow for the commitment of the remaining \$50 million (assuming that the same per unit transportation impact mitigation fee is levied or other fiscal resources are made available) to be applied to the transportation systems management mass transit techniques.

See App. 14
Response
III.B.1.

17. In Section O the analysis regarding costs and revenues of development is a decent start. Unfortunately the caveat that no capital improvements are included in the governmental costs nor certain unspecified recurring expenses needed to maintain governmental services is missing I think is a serious flaw. Unless they have been accounted for somewhere else in the analysis, it is quite possible, even likely, that development costs could outweigh the revenues received based upon current

tax rates and state or federal aid formulas. In addition, the formula worksheets need more explanation. One can follow it only up to step 6 before the formulas are presented without adequate explanation.

See
App. 14
Response
II.0.7

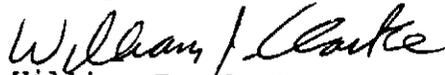
18. On Page II-21 I agree with the statement that future specific actions will have to be subject to site specific SEQR determinations of significance and possible environmental impact statements depending on their scope and impact. In section 7 page 7-1 future SEQR actions in the study area, I would caution that the key to future determinations on individual projects is the significance of their environmental impacts. I say this because in some cases some site specific projects, for example option 1 long range transportation improvements, would have a significant environmental impact and given there is a environmentally less impacting alternative such as exit 4 coupled with the need to consider all other reasonable alternatives we would see a supplemental environmental impact statement having to be prepared for that project. The same could be true for airport improvements if in fact there are ones proposed which would have significant environmental impacts as the GEIS did not evaluate their impacts nor consider any other options than what was in the Airport plan (we have no information whether this plan has gone through the EIS process). For transportation improvement projects or airport improvement projects which would not have significant impacts, for example improving the intersection of Sand Creek and Watervliet Shaker Roads or rebuilding without substantial expansion the airport terminal, these may not have significant environmental impacts which would then qualify them for negative declarations.

See App. 14
Response
III.B.6.

I feel the GEIS is an important effort and a critical one for the community to define where it is going in the future. My comments, both critical and positive have been made constructively to try not only to make this a better document but also to constructively raise the alarm bells that the Town and Village/and Albany County Colonie is at an important cross roads. The decisions made regarding how the Airport develops commercial/residential development is controlled, transportation needs are handled and open space habitat areas are protected (or lost) will determine the future of this area. The Department of Environmental Conservation's jurisdiction over this area is limited to such areas of jurisdiction as certain environmentally sensitive areas, mining, water supply and to controlling the discharge of pollution. Therefore, I recognize and will reiterate that it is the local governments who are going to have to have the lion's share of responsibility for determining the future of their communities. I recognize the target growth scenario probably represents in your view and the other members of the Planning Board an important compromise to try to deal with competing interests. I would urge that there are other, in my estimation, equally effective scenarios which can accomodate the variety of

interests in the community and protect the character and amenities of a community in which thousands live, work, recreate and travel through. The choices are hard, however, the stakes are high.

Sincerely,



William J. Clarke
Regional Permit Administrator
Region 4

cc: J. Magee
F. Field
H. Kuhn
M. Fitzimmons
P. Cooney
M. Schwarz

18WC9/til



October 18, 1990

Ms. Mary Burke
Senior Planner
Town of Colonie
Engineering and Planning Department
272 Maxwell Road
Latham, New York 12110

Re: DGEIS (Airport Area)

Dear Ms. Burke:

Per our recent telephone conversation, Colonie Work on Waste (CWOW) offers the following comments on the Airport Area Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) as a matter of public record and for consideration and inclusion in the Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement.

I. METHODOLOGY USED

The DGEIS describes two potential development/growth scenarios within the study area: High-Growth and Targeted Growth. Upon review of the study's initial findings by the various municipalities involved, the High-Growth scenario was determined to be unacceptable. Based on this determination, the decision was made to focus the study on the impacts of a less ambitious development scenario. The Target Growth scenario represents a reduction of approximately 40% in commercial/industrial development (from 12,730,780 square feet to 7,388,674 square feet) and a 26% reduction in the number of housing units (from 2,080 to 1,583 dwellings). The DGEIS states that "as a result of Targeted Growth scenario, a major reduction in the projected level of residential and commercial development in the study area was realized." Although there is some reduction, the Targeted Growth scenario reflects a 5+% growth in dwellings, well above the current 1 to 2% growth projected for the entire Town of Colonie.

See App. 14
Response
II.A.1

The methodology used to develop the Target Growth scenario is, in our opinion, based on subjective evaluations which discounted "projects which appeared to be of a highly speculative nature." Moreover, the DGEIS assumes that "certain lands would remain undeveloped. These include all New York State Department of Environmental Conservation regulated wetlands, existing public and private lands used for recreational purposes, several active farms, cemeteries and the Ann Lee Pond Natural and Historic District", and that population will grow at a

highly likely far above that experienced by similar size communities in the
the United States.

6. COMMENTS ON METHODOLOGY SECTION

1. SUBJECTIVE EVALUATION OF POTENTIAL OF PROJECTS

CWOW believes that the utilization of subjective evaluation criteria to determine the feasibility of projects, seriously affects the credibility of the findings of the DGEIS. As See App. 14 with any analysis, the foundation for the study should be based on Response II.B.5 & objective criteria. Therefore, we strongly recommend that III.B.7 the study incorporate the potential impact that development of all currently undeveloped land will have. To state that certain parcels of land will not be developed because they are working farms is at best highly speculative. If that was the fact, the Town of Colonie would still have an abundance of farms.

2. POPULATION GROWTH TRENDS

The population growth trends used to justify the need for development and/or pressure to develop the study area are inaccurate. Preliminary Census data shows that the Town of Colonie has not experienced the amount of growth expected. The DGEIS projects the population of the Town of Colonie (including the villages) at 81,250 in 1989 and 99,677 in 2005. According to initial Census counts, the population in the Town of Colonie is currently approximately 76,000. This reflects a much slower rate of growth than that projected in the DGEIS. Based on the current rate of growth it is extremely unlikely See App. 14 that the population in the year 2005 will reach the DGEIS projections Response II.A.1. Given this fact, the population's expected growth does not support the study's assumption that development will occur in the magnitude of the Targeted Growth scenario.

One point worthy of mention is that the Capital District is below the national average when we look at population under the age of 18, and well above the national average when it comes to older population. These facts will result in slower economic growth as labor force participation rates will decrease resulting in an employment growth of less than 1% per year. Since economic growth is directly correlated to employment growth, we can expect to see economic growth in our area struggle to reach 2%. Given this, the DGEIS appears to be incorrect in the economic growth assumptions and, therefore, in the need for development.

3. TYPE OF PROJECTS

We question the logic used to arrive at the number of dwellings to be constructed. Although there are several large projects proposed for the study area, the number of dwellings is not realistic since the area is not suitable for residential development. Albany County as implemented a buy-out program designed to purchase residences affected by the noise generated by airplane traffic. Given this, it is unlikely that the area would experience a 5+% growth in the number of

dwellings which is well above the current projected growth of 1 to 2% projected for the entire Town of Colonie, including villages. It is, however, more likely that the area will experience pressure in commercial development since this type of use/occupancy does not present the same difficulties with regard to noise levels and can better assume the costs associated with the projected impact fees.

See
App. 14
Response
II.A.1 &
II.B.1.

Regarding the area of enplanements, we believe that the projected doubling of enplanements is overly optimistic. Current data indicates that enplanements at the Albany County Airport has not increased at the rate projected.

See
App. 14
Response
II.B.2

II. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The DGEIS indicates that the study area will experience substantial environmental impacts. CWDW believes that the Targeted Growth Scenario will have severe impacts in this ecologically sensitive area. In addition to the impact on the various plant and animal life forms, we believe that the study is overly optimistic in terms of the impact on air quality, given the fact that certain roadways in the study area have been known not to meet air quality standards (hot spots) in more than one occasion.

See
App. 14
Response
II.B.15

A. COMMENTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL SECTION

1. UPDATE THE WETLANDS MAP FOR THE TOWN OF COLONIE

The study should include a survey of properties in the study area to determine if Wetlands exist in this area. Given the low water table in this area, and a greater understanding of wetlands and their importance to the ecosystem, the Town's official Wetlands Map should be updated to include any additional areas considered to be Wetlands within the study area.

See
pp.II-58,
II-59.

2. IMPACT ON MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE SYSTEMS

One of the foremost problems facing municipalities is how to deal with solid waste. The ability to manage municipal solid waste is critical to a community's economic growth, quality of life, and environment. Given the importance of this issue, it is surprising that the DGEIS only superficially addresses this area. The DGEIS indicates that approximately 21,280 tons of solid waste will be generated annually by the year 2005. We find this estimate to be extremely low based on waste generation rates of commercial/industrial/retail uses currently in the Town. The additional waste to be generated must be handled within the context of the Town of Colonie's waste management system. Therefore, accurate projections must be developed which will allow the Town of Colonie to effectively plan for how best to deal with the solid waste generated within its boundaries.

See
App. 14
Response
II.M.1.

One other point that we believe to be critical is need to coordinate the the GEIS with the Solid Waste Management Plan being developed by the Town of Colonie Solid Waste Planning Unit. Although

both plans cover the same planning period, the plans have not been linked together if either document is truly going to be a planning tool.

See App. 14
Response
II.M.1.

3. REFERENCE TO LUMAC AND WATERCOURSE LEGISLATION

We believe that mention of any LUMAC recommendation in the GEIS which has not been adopted by Colonie's Town Board as an environmental safeguard is inappropriate and misleading. Therefore, we respectfully submit that any such reference be removed and not be included in the FGEIS.

See
App. 14
Response
II.B.9.

In addition, we believe that it is equally inappropriate to assume that bodies of water (i.e. streams, etc.) within the study area will not be disturbed due to the recently passed Watercourse Legislation. Although this piece of legislation is a significant step forward, it does not guarantee that bodies of water within the study area will be protected. As a matter of fact, the Town of Colonie has established a committee to hear and issue variances to this legislation. To the best of our knowledge this committee has yet to deny a request for a variance permitting construction within 100' of a body of water. Therefore, the any reference that the mere existence of this legislation will protect bodies of water is inappropriate and misleading.

See
App. 14
Response
II.F.1.

III. SOCIOECONOMIC IMPACTS

The DGEIS points out that the economic impacts of the Targeted Growth scenario are minimal. It recommends that the necessary roadway improvements be financed by impact fees. The DGEIS goes on to clearly identify the fiscal impact of these fees on developers. However, the DGEIS fails to identify the impact on tax rates (whether positive or negative) for the municipalities involved. This type of analysis should be clearly stated. Will municipalities and tax payers be able to pay the bill of future infrastructure repairs and improvements?

See
App. 14
Response
II.0.7

A. COMMENTS ON SOCIOECONOMICS SECTION

The DGEIS should include an analysis of the impact on tax rates. Although development has at times been viewed as a revenue producing mechanism, localities are quickly finding out that it might not always be the panacea that they thought. With development comes additional demands for existing services and new services. The DGEIS did an excellent job of identifying and clearly spelling out the the impact fees that developers might have to pay. It should do an equally good job at pointing out the tax costs to the residents of the involved municipalities.

See
App. 14
Response
II.0.7.

IV. TRAFFIC

The DGEIS reveals a scenario of tremendous increases in traffic.

In some areas of the study, traffic is projected to increase by as much as 400%. Given that some of the roads in the study area are currently operating at an E and F level during peak periods, the accuracy of the analysis, in this area is extremely important. We are troubled by what appears to be an assumption that that traffic will simply go away once it reaches certain points in the study area. What if motorists decide not to take the Northway and decide to use other arterials? What then? Will the current roadways for which the study does not recommend expanding be able to handle the traffic?

See
App. 14
Response
II.H.1.

1. RE-EXAMINE PROJECTIONS FOR THE EASTERN PART OF ALBANY SHAKER ROAD BETWEEN WOLF ROAD AND WERTMAN LANE

The DGEIS indicates that Albany Shaker Road (between Wolf Road and Wertman Lane) will only see a relatively small increase in traffic compared to the other arterials in the study area. However, the second largest project planned is within this area (Anderson PUD). Given the current level of service on this segment of Albany Shaker Road, the DGEIS conclusions appear to be inconsistent with the facts.

See
App. 14
Response
II.H.2.

2. DEVELOP A MORE CONSISTENT ANALYSIS OF TRAFFIC PROJECTIONS

Traffic impacts should include the potential impact of continued travelling patterns of motorists who simply will not travel new routes or expanded roadways. Where will these motorists end up? What are the most logical routes that these motorists will use?

See
App. 14
Response
II.H.1

3. IMPACT ON AIR QUALITY

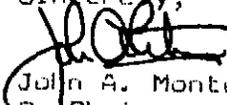
As previously mentioned, the DGEIS indicates that we will see an impact on air quality within the study area. Specifically, carbon monoxide levels are expected to increase regardless of improvements to the study area. The FGEIS should clearly point out potential impacts on the health of such individuals as young children and seniors. These populations tend to be highly affected by high levels of carbon monoxide and tend to be more prone to respiratory ailments and conditions.

See
App. 14
Response
II.I.2.

V. CONCLUSION

In closing, I want to thank you on behalf of CWOW for the opportunity to comment on this very important document. Should you have any questions or require clarification of the points addressed in this letter, please feel free to contact me on 482-6271.

Sincerely,

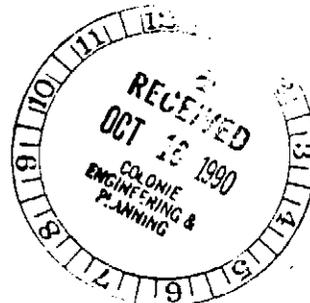

John A. Monteiro
Co-Chair
Colonie Work on Waste

GARY P. MOSTERT
SUPERINTENDENT
EDWARD H. WRIGHT
ASST. SUPERINTENDENT



312 WOLF ROAD
LATHAM, NEW YORK 12110
PHONE (518) 783-2750

M E M O R A N D U M



TO: Mary Burke, Senior Planner
Engineering & Planning Service Dept.

FROM: Gary P. Mostert, Superintendent
Latham Water District *GPM*

DATE: October 15, 1990

SUBJECT: AIRPORT GEIS

The Latham Water District has reviewed the DGEIS for the Airport area and have only a few comments.

1. Section II, page 22 - paragraph 2:
474' above mean sea level should be 500'±. See p.II-26
2. Section II, page 92 - Exhibit No. II-G-4 See Exhibit II-G-4
 - a. Add Mohawk View Well Complex and Well #9 to the exhibit.
 - b. Paragraph 1: 3) Mohawk View Well Complex - 4 MGD should be 5 MGD. See p.II-99
 - c. Paragraph 3: Is incorrect - There are four well pumping stations located in the study area. All four currently produce a total of 2.75 MGD, not 5 MGD. See p.II-99
Well #9 on Buhrmaster Road should be included.
Also should be noted that Well #1 and Well #2 will be abandon. See p.II-100
Any questions, contact Gary P. Mostert at Latham Water.
3. Section II, page 93 - paragraph 2:
The second storage tank located 600' to the south should be north. See p.II-100

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call.

GPM:bh
cc: Larry Callander,
Clough, Harbour & Associates



October 19, 1990

Ms. Mary Burke
Town of Colonie
Engineering & Planning
272 Maxwell Road
Latham, NY 12110

Dear Ms. Burke:

I have several comments regarding the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement.

My main concern is that the Picotte Companies were not contacted regarding the study. We have several parcels within the study area and it does not appear that they have been included as future projects. In addition, as one of the areas largest developers, we would have a sense of trends in the real estate business that would be helpful when considering growth.

I am concerned as to how the projected amount of new commercial space was determined to be 7 million square feet. What amount of square footage exists today compared with the projections? What happens if only several million square feet is developed? How will that impact these projections?

See
App. 14
Response
II.B.1

In general, I feel that the Town, Village and County are to be commended for their efforts. However, I do not feel that this process is anywhere near completion.

See
App. 14
Response
II.B.8.

What is the next step? How are these plans going to be implemented? Who will oversee and determine which mitigating measures will be utilized?

See App. 14
Response
II.B.8. &
II.B.10

The Town of Colonie has been very successful in handling the growth that has occurred over the last decade. In order to continue the success, this document needs careful scrutiny as to how it is used. The fear is that it will result in such complex scenarios that no growth will take place in the area. This would be a disappointing failure to the development industry as well as the municipalities.

See App. 14
Response
II.B.7.

PICOTTE
C O M P A N I E S

120 Washington Ave., P.O. Box 219, Albany, NY 12201-0219 (518) 465-4747



Ms. Mary Burke
October 19, 1990

If the report is to be accepted it should be done only with a strong statement and plan as to how it will be utilized.

I appreciate the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

PICOTTE COMPANIES

Nancy E. Carey
Director of Development

NEC/mjb
JB192



TOWN OF COLONIE

272 MAXWELL ROAD

LATHAM, NEW YORK 12110

ENGINEERING & PLANNING SERVICES DEPARTMENT

TELEPHONE 482-0248



RECEIVED

DEC 06 1990

Clough Harbour & Associates

Robert S. Mitchell
DIRECTOR

December 5, 1990

Mr. Peter Conway
Clough, Harbour & Assoc.
3 Winners Circle
P. O. Box 5269
Albany, NY 12205

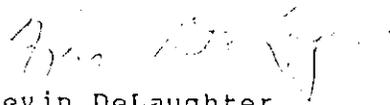
RE: Airport Area G.E.I.S.

Dear Mr. Conway:

In follow-up to our discussion on December 4, 1990, this is to confirm a request for revision of the content of the Draft G.E.I.S. with respect to traffic impact. Specifically, the current draft does not appear to address the Northway Exit 6 interchange with Troy Schenectady Road. As this intersection is one of the primary access points to the study area, analysis of the impacts of projected development and the need for mitigation is critical. We request that this analysis be completed and a summary be provided to us for review as soon as possible.

Should you have any questions, please contact us.

Very truly yours,


Kevin DeLaughter
Senior Planner

KD/asm

cc: Paul Cooney, County of Albany
Herbert Kuhn, Village of Colonie

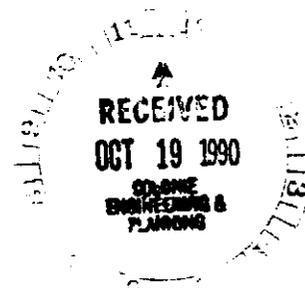
See
App. 14
Response
II.H.18.

An Equal Opportunity Employer

SHAKER RIDGE - VLY ROAD NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

October 19, 1990

Ms. Mary Burke
Senior Planner
Town of Colonie
Engineering & Planning Services Dept.
272 Maxwell Road
Latham NY 12110



Re: Comments on
Airport Area Draft GEIS

Dear Ms. Burke:

In lieu of submitting the several hundred pages of comments and suggestions we have amassed in regard to the Airport Area Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement, we have opted instead to refer you to the comments we made at the Public Hearing of October 2 (enclosed), and to express our support of the comments transmitted to you this week by our umbrella association, the Colonie Coalition of Homeowners Associations.

After much serious study of the GEIS, we have concluded that it is not truly our responsibility to dot every "i" and cross every "t" in the draft document. We are also compelled to mention, with some chagrin, that after the public hearing and painstaking submission of written comments from many sources on the draft scoping document for this GEIS, the final scoping document reflected only one miniscule change from the original.

We feel it is our responsibility, however, as residents of Colonie, to state generally our expectations of the GEIS and of the Town Planning Board, as Lead Agency, in overseeing the completion of the final document and its Findings Statement.

We offer the following general synthesis of our views on this draft document and what it represents to us: *our future*.

We think that the people of this area have made it sufficiently clear to the elected and appointed officials who are sponsoring this GEIS that while they expect their public officials to do all in their power to encourage economic soundness here in Colonie, they also expect those officials to guard and protect what is left of our natural environment, to act to maintain those qualities of our Town which drew us here in the first place and which, thus far, have kept us here, and to always act with an awareness of this goal: a suitable and tranquil balance of

residential, agricultural, commercial, recreational, economic, environmental, and even spiritual harmony.

Overseeing the successful completion of this GEIS may be the gravest responsibility and greatest opportunity the Town Planning Board has ever embraced. We look to the Town Planning Board to craft this document with more wisdom and foresight than it has ever been asked to exercise before. Yes, we expect it.

We all have some apprehension about how the wave of recession washing over our country will inevitably affect this area. We are concerned about our economic future as much as, maybe more than, the respective planning boards are. We live here, we work here, and we attend school here. This is our home.

With these thoughts in mind, we feel that we must now ask the Town Planning Board to re-evaluate precisely its motivation for compiling this GEIS. We, quite naturally, initially thought its purpose was to preserve our quality of life in the face of seemingly rapacious over-development. It has become increasingly apparent, from the document itself and from certain recent public statements, that the purpose of the sponsoring municipalities may not quite match our hopes.

Whatever the initial motivation to collaborate on this document was, an overriding motivation seems to have emerged which is most disturbing to us. "How to deal with development pressures," we submit, is not synonymous with "How to provide a legal tool to squeeze money out of developers so that wider roads may be built to accommodate yet more development."

Asking wrong questions invariably produces wrong answers. Instead of asking, "How will we pay for the road construction the "Target Growth" development scenario in the draft GEIS says will be necessary?" perhaps the right question should be, "Is this development scenario the one we want for Colonie?"

Instead of asking, "Which roads should we widen and where shall we build new ones?" perhaps the right question is, "How can better land use management planning and building and zoning regulations guide development in a healthy and beneficial manner for all those who live in or use the Airport area?"

We do not believe that *All developers are created evil*. We are not the enemy. We seek and support a healthy economy and healthy growth in Colonie. Yet, neither do we believe that every proposed development project deserves approval, simply because it is proposed, as is implied in the draft GEIS ill-named Target Growth scenario. We do not believe that the proposed "green belt", projected on the maps like a wilted, shriveled, green string-bean, represents a sign of healthy growth.

What the GEIS *should* reflect, we believe, is a birds-eye view of how we want the Airport Area to look fifteen years from now, and beyond. The Town Board, as Lead Agency, has the ultimate

responsibility, we think, to look at the area, to look at where we are heading, to plot a "best of all possible worlds" scenario, and to find out how to achieve it. Our expectations of the GEIS were that a brave new plan would emerge, and our expectations of the Board were that they, finally, could proudly stand up and say, "Yes! This is the way it *should* be! And we'll do it!"

Instead, we fear the current prevailing attitude is, "My God, how will we cope?" Cannot we residents expect just a little more from our public planners? Cannot we expect the imagination, foresight and courage it takes to set responsible goals -- and then go after them?

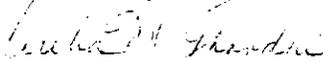
We suggest that the Town Planning Board is expending disproportionate amounts of time and energy on trying to determine who will pay for highway expansion. We caution you against this at the cost of losing sight of a more important task. It was stated well in the fine 1988 *Traffic Assessment for the Albany County Airport Area (Draft Summary Report)* prepared by the Capital District Transportation Committee:

"In view of these findings, local planning efforts should be directed at advancing land use management guidelines for the study area to ensure that the type and extent of expected future development does not result in future peak hour traffic levels which exceed standards established under this study (and CDTC's Wolf Road area study.)" [p.41]

A build-spend-panic cycle has been established in Colonie which we believe must be dealt with and broken, and a new planning philosophy established in its place. By means of this GEIS and its Findings Statement, we may now have a chance to do this. There may never be another chance. Please don't fail us.

See
App. 14
Response
II.B.7.

Sincerely,

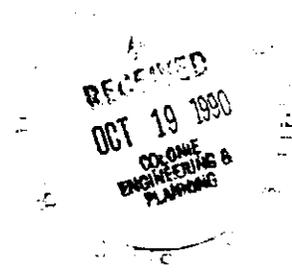


Cecilia M. Gandhi
President

SHAKER RIDGE - VLY ROAD NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

7 Linda Lane
Schenectady, NY 12309
(518)869-0674

C: Peter Platt
Enc



(Public Hearing; Airport Area DGEIS; October 2, 1990)

MY NAME IS CECILIA GHANDHI AND I AM WITH THE SHAKER RIDGE - VLY ROAD NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION. ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION RESIDE WITHIN THE AIRPORT GEIS AREA, AND WE LIVE NOT VERY FAR FROM THE AIRPORT.

I WISH TO THANK THE TOWN, VILLAGE AND COUNTY FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON THE AIRPORT AREA DRAFT GEIS. MY REMARKS TONIGHT WILL BE BRIEF, SINCE WE WILL BE SUBMITTING MORE COMPLETE WRITTEN COMMENTS SHORTLY.

I WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE THAT WE RECOGNIZE THE DANGERS OF ECONOMIC STAGNATION. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THIS AREA WILL BE SUBJECT TO FURTHER DEVELOPMENT, BUT WE ARE ALSO CRITICAL OF THE KIND OF RUNAWAY DEVELOPMENT WE HAVE SEEN IN COLONIE DURING THE LAST 10 YEARS OR SO. WE ARE IN FULL SUPPORT OF THIS GEIS EFFORT TO RATIONALLY DEFINE THE POSSIBLE WAYS IN WHICH THAT GROWTH WILL OR WILL NOT OCCUR. IN FACT, THIS ASSOCIATION OF HOMEOWNERS SUPPORTED THAT EFFORT EVEN BEFORE AGREEMENT WAS REACHED TO DRAFT THIS GEIS.

IN RECENT WEEKS, I HAVE HEARD MANY DENEGRATING REMARKS ABOUT THIS DRAFT PLANNING DOCUMENT. HOWEVER, I BELIEVE THAT MANY OF THOSE COMMENTS ARE UNJUSTIFIED. THE REASON FOR THIS BELIEF IS SIMPLY A MATTER OF PERSPECTIVE. IF WE VIEW THIS DOCUMENT FOR WHAT IT IS, I THINK WE ALL BECOME A BIT MORE CHARITABLE. IT IS A DRAFT GENERIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT. IT IS NOT THE FINAL DOCUMENT. AS A DRAFT, IT HAS MERIT. IT IS INTERESTING AND EDUCATIONAL -- AND WE RECOGNIZE THAT ITS FLAWS AND OMISSIONS HAVE YET TO BE WORKED OUT. THE PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD IS TO HELP ENSURE THAT THEY ARE.

WITH THAT THOUGHT IN MIND, I WOULD LIKE TO SUMMARIZE SOME OF OUR CONCLUSIONS TO DATE.

1. WE WHOLEHEARTEDLY AGREE WITH THE CONCLUSION THAT THE HIGH GROWTH SCENARIO IS UNACCEPTABLE. A DEVELOPMENT PROJECTION WHICH WOULD NECESSITATE A 10-LANE ROUTE 7 AND A 16-LANE ALBANY SHAKER ROAD, FOR EXAMPLE, DESERVES TO BE REJECTED.

See
App. 14
Response
II.B.7

2. FOR VARIOUS REASONS, WE FIND THE TARGET GROWTH SCENARIO EQUALLY UNACCEPTABLE. THE THREAT TO PREHISTORIC AND HISTORIC SITES, THE FRESHWATER WETLANDS, THE WATERSHED, TRAFFIC, AND AIR AND NOISE QUALITY WHICH IT PRESENTS CAN NEVER BE SUFFICIENTLY MITIGATED. WE ARE NOT CONVINCED OF THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC NEED FOR THE HUGE AMOUNT OF RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT PRESENTED IN THE TARGET GROWTH SCENARIO. IT ALSO SEEMS SOMEWHAT IMPRACTICAL TO US THAT SO MUCH BUILDING CAN ACTUALLY BE ACCOMPLISHED IN THE SHORT SPACE OF 15 YEARS: ARE THERE THAT MANY CONSTRUCTION WORKERS IN THIS AREA? ARE THERE ENOUGH BUILDING SEASONS IN THE YEAR TO ACCOMMODATE ACTUALIZATION?

See
App. 14
Response
II.B.1

WE STRONGLY REQUEST THAT A MORE REASONABLE LOW-GROWTH SCENARIO BE DOCUMENTED, CONSIDERED, AND ADVOCATED IN THE GEIS.

OCT 16 1990
COLONIE
ENGINEERING &
PLANNING

3. NEITHER OF THE 2 OPTIONS PRESENTED FOR THE PROPOSED NORTH-SOUTH ARTERIAL ARE PARTICULARLY ATTRACTIVE OR ECONOMICAL. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE SEVERAL MORE OPTIONS INCLUDED.

4. THE SECTIONS REGARDING AIR AND NOISE QUALITY DESERVE MORE ELABORATION. RELYING ON HYPOTHETICAL FUTURE AIR AND NOISE QUALITY STUDIES ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS SEEMS UNREALISTIC. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT MOST OF THE TARGET GROWTH SCENARIO PROPOSED PROJECTS WILL NEVER BE SUBJECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENTS, EVEN ON A "SUPPLEMENTAL" BASIS.

See
App. 14
Response
II.I.1 &
II.J.8.

WE, THEREFORE, REQUEST THAT A LEVEL 2 AND/OR LEVEL 3 ANALYSIS OF AIR QUALITY BE INCLUDED IN THIS GEIS.

See App. 14
Response II.I.1

WE ALSO REQUEST THAT PROJECTIONS BE MADE ON THE NOISE IMPACTS WHICH WILL RESULT FROM INCREASED TRAFFIC AND PROJECTED DEVELOPMENT. LIMITING THE CONSIDERATION OF NOISE TO THAT EMANATING FROM INCREASED AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS FROM THE ALBANY COUNTY AIRPORT IS, WE FEEL, INADEQUATE. WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT OUR PREVIOUS REQUEST TO ACTUALLY MONITOR AIRPORT NOISE LEVELS FOR THIS STUDY WAS DULY IGNORED, WE MAKE THAT REQUEST AGAIN. ALSO GIVEN SHORT SHRIFT IN THE DRAFT GEIS WAS THE PRESENCE OF NIGHTTIME ENGINE MAINTENANCE NOISE. THE GEIS SIMPLY STATES: "ALBANY COUNTY AIRPORT HAS ESTABLISHED A POLICY WHICH PROHIBITS NIGHT TIME ENGINE RUN UPS AT THE AIRPORT." THE FACT IS THAT THE POLICY PROHIBITING RUNUPS BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND 6 A.M. WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1985, AND HAS NEVER BEEN ENFORCED OR ENFORCEABLE. THE NOISE KEEPS GETTING WORSE, AND RESIDENTS OF THE AREA ARE INCREASINGLY RESENTING IT. WE HAD HOPED THIS DRAFT GEIS WOULD HAVE PRODUCED DATA ON THIS FROM SOME SORT OF MONITORING PROGRAM; OBVIOUSLY, IT DIDN'T. WE AGAIN REQUEST THAT THIS TYPE OF NOISE FROM THE AIRPORT BE MONITORED AND THE RESULTING DATA BE INCLUDED IN THIS GEIS.

See pp. II-182
through II-186;

5. THIS DRAFT GEIS RECOMMENDS DEVELOPMENT OF A DETAILED INTERMUNICIPAL AGREEMENT AMONG COUNTY, TOWN AND VILLAGE FOR COORDINATION OF HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS AND TRANSFER OF FUNDS FROM THE COLLECTION OF DEVELOPMENT MITIGATION COSTS RELATED TO TRAFFIC, WATER AND RECREATION IMPROVEMENTS. WE STRONGLY SUPPORT THIS RECOMMENDATION, AND WOULD GO SO FAR AS TO SAY THAT NO FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IN THIS AREA SHOULD TAKE PLACE WITHOUT SUCH FIRM INTERMUNICIPAL COMMITMENT.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.10.

IF ANY TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS ARE TO BE SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTED, STRONG AGREEMENTS MUST ALSO BE CONSIDERED NOT ONLY AMONG THE MUNICIPALITIES INVOLVED IN THIS GEIS PROCESS, BUT ALSO WITH SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES. WHILE THIS IS PROBABLY OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF THE GEIS, LET'S FACE IT: NEITHER ROUTE 7 NOR ROUTE 155, FOR EXAMPLE, DROP OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH WHEN THE AIRPORT GEIS BORDER IS REACHED. ANY WIDENING OF ROADS IN THIS AREA WILL HAVE TO BE CONTINUED ON INTO OTHER MUNICIPALITIES. EQUALLY IMPORTANT, COSTS TO THOSE MUNICIPALITIES WILL HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED.

See
App. 14
Response
II. H .10

OCT 19 1990
COLUMBIA
ENGINEERING &
PLANNING



**CAPITAL DISTRICT
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

5 COMPUTER DRIVE WEST

ALBANY, N.Y. 12205

518-456-2161



October 17, 1990

Ms. Mary Burke, Senior Planner
Town of Colonie
Engineering & Planning Services
272 Maxwell Road
Latham, New York 12110

**Re: Airport Area Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement,
August 1990**

Dear Mary:

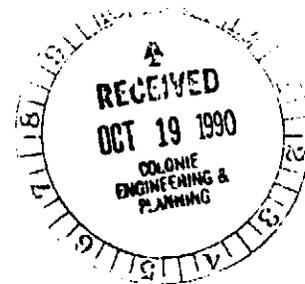
Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this document. The town, village and county are commended on this effort to comprehensively investigate development impacts in this key area. The importance of the effort has been recently reaffirmed by CDTC's current work on a ten-year regional capacity and mobility plan. The Wolf Road/ Albany Shaker Road/ Watervliet Shaker Road/ Wade Road area has been identified once again as one of the Capital District's critical corridors on the basis of current and projected traffic congestion.

The GEIS effort is also commended for examining the transportation issues affecting all units of government (state, county, local and transit systems). In this regard, the final GEIS should serve as a valuable reference document toward addressing existing and emerging transportation problems in the area.

There are several observations that the CDTC staff would like to offer toward improving the usefulness of the final GEIS and the resulting findings.

1. As discussed at our October 16 meeting, the usefulness of the "Target" development scenario could be improved through inclusion of additional explanation and qualifications in the text. The target scenario may be better termed a "Cumulative Development" scenario to more accurately describe its nature as an accumulation of developer's proposals and intentions, rather than to imply that the scenario is a *desired* target or even the *most likely* development level to expect over the next fifteen years.

See
App. 14
Response
II.H.12.



The amount of development shown should be qualified in terms of the fact that it represents a pace of development that significantly exceeds regional forecasts of population and employment growth for the study area.

See
App. 14
Response
II.A.1.

2. The document does not attempt much evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of alternative mitigating actions beyond statements of the actions' general effects. For example, typical transportation studies attempt to identify the relative merits of a range of actions with respect to social, environmental and economic goals. Measures of effectiveness are generally identified for the following: land consumption; community disruption; encroachment on environmentally sensitive lands and historic sites; and transportation system adequacy (in terms of arterial spacing, expected vehicle hours of delay, user accident and operating cost, system levels-of-service and reserve capacity). Also, it is typical to evaluate alternative actions on a benefit-cost basis, choosing the most appropriate set of actions with knowledge of an expected B/C ratio or net present value for each set of actions.

See
App. 14
Response
II.H.13

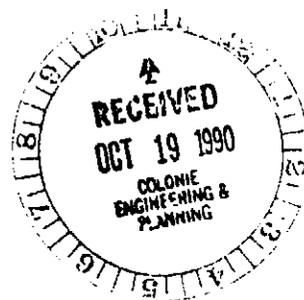
If it is not possible or appropriate to include this type of analysis within the GEIS document for the "do nothing", "full build" (Options 1 and 2) and some "intermediate" level of highway construction, then the town, village and county may wish to qualify any commitment to highway improvements made in the resulting statement of findings as conditional, pending further environmental, engineering and economic analysis. It should be recognized that such further analysis might result in a final set of highway improvements that differs significantly from the sketch plan suggested in the GEIS.

See
App. 14
Response
II.H.13

Further, the document should attempt to suggest a staging plan for the identified highway improvements. Even a rough staging plan would provide users of the document a general understanding of the conditions under which certain improvements are needed and provide a basis for monitoring the need to advance each improvement.

See
App. 14
Response
II.B.8.

3. A major aspect of the transportation mitigation measures identified in the DGEIS is travel demand management. The importance of this mitigation measure should be emphasized in the report so as not to appear to be an "afterthought". Also, the cost and degree of commitment required to accomplish the necessary 25% trip reduction should be clearly stated. The level of demand management implied would have to be sufficient to eliminate 5,000 daily peak hour trips from the study area. This represents an extremely



highly successful program. Nationwide, experience indicates that such a high level of demand reduction is possible only through adequate staffing and support for rideshare matching, encouragement, and administration of vanpool and transit programs and through direct economic incentives to employees. Demand reduction going much beyond 8-10% appears to be likely only when transit and carpool users are given noticeable financial incentives (such as through a monthly transportation allowance coupled with parking fees). The aggregate cost of a demand management program sufficient to eliminate 5,000 peak hour trips could easily exceed a million dollars annually, if both staffing costs, transit support and economic incentives are counted.

See
App. 14
Response
II.H.6

4. Some discussion is required in the GEIS to highlight the need for careful coordination of site development and arterial management. The scale of development shown in the target scenario calls for development of new collector and distributor roads in conjunction with the arterial improvements cited in the report. The arterials should be developed to serve through traffic and provide access to collector/distributor roads -- new driveways and curb cuts should be avoided and existing ones consolidated where possible. While the report may not be able to proscribe the details of an access management plan for NY 7, Albany-Shaker Road, Watervliet-Shaker Road and other facilities, it should clearly document the need to develop such a plan. Without careful access control, mobility in the study area will be jeopardized.

See
App. 14
Response
II.H.28.

5. Certain aspects of highway inadequacy should perhaps be identified as impacts on the residential community. While the magnitude of existing and future traffic is identified, its affect on the safety, accessibility and livability of those living along the affected highways such as Sand Creek Road, Mill Road, and Albany Shaker Road should also be cited.

See
App. 14
Response
II.H.14.

6. The use of a special district (a "transportation development district") should be considered as a possible alternative to impact fees to raise the non-public share of desired highway improvements. The advantages are several: first, annual assessments may be more acceptable to property owners than large one-time impact fees; second, assessments could include owners of existing development as well as new development, further spreading out the burden; third, assessments could be used to raise some portion of the revenue needed to mitigate existing traffic problems; and fourth, assessments would be levied only if and when improvements are to be undertaken.

See
App. 14
Response
II.H.10.

7. Editorial comments are summarized in Attachment 1 to this letter.

Mary Burke
Page 4



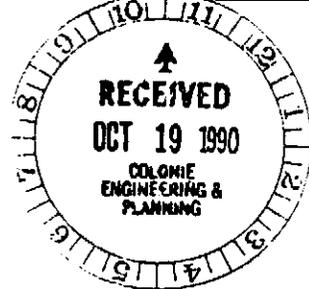
Thanks again for the opportunity to comment on the traffic-related issues of the Airport Area DGEIS. We are looking forward to answering any questions you may have regarding our comments at the scheduled October 31 meeting. In the meantime, if we can be of assistance in any way please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'John P. Poorman'.

John P. Poorman
Staff Director

cc: Mr. Paul Cooney, Albany County Department of Public Works
Mr. Larry Callander, Clough, Harbour & Associates



Attachment 1

Editorial Comments Regarding the Airport Area DGEIS

1. In the list of persons contacted, John Poorman (#23 on the list) is incorrectly identified as Staff Director of the Capital District Regional Planning Commission. John Poorman is Staff Director of the Capital District Transportation Committee. See References
2. Even when considering recent traffic growth in the area, average annual daily traffic volumes cited on Exhibit II-H-1 seem somewhat high when compared to traffic counts compiled by ACDPW in 1987 and 1990. Most notably, while the DGEIS reports that Wolf Road carried more than 40,000 vpd between Sand Creek Road and Albany Shaker Road in 1989, a seven-day count taken in April 1990 by ACDPW points to roughly 31,700 vpd north of Sand Creek Road (after the opening of Windsor Plaza). See Exhibit II.H.1.
3. We understand that NYDSOT's design of the Route 7/Albany Shaker Road intersection has recently been modified. The current design calls for a left turn and right turn lane eastbound; double left turn lanes westbound; and a single right turn lane and double left turn lanes northbound. We suggest confirming this change with NYSDOT and reflecting the change in the GEIS report. See p. II-140
4. Item 6 on Exhibit II-H-2 incorrectly reads New Karner Road/NYS 7. It should read New Karner Road/NYS 5. See Table II.H.2
5. Exhibits II-H-4 and II-H-5 cite "Service Roads Recommended by CDTA". The recommending agency is CDTC. See Exhibits II.H.4 and II.H.5.
6. It may be useful if transportation improvement costs cited in Section H of the document were reported by generalized improvement type (intersection, highway widening, new highway, structures); cost category (construction, right-of-way, design, contingencies); and time-frame (short-term and long-term). See App. 14 Response II.H.29.
7. Section VI of the report, "Unavoidable Adverse Environmental Impacts", could be a little more descriptive. In this regard, the transportation section should identify highway segments and highway intersections that would operate at unacceptable levels-of-service even if all mitigating actions were successfully implemented. The extent that adequate and safe accessibility to residential areas adjacent to major roadways in and extending outside the study area cannot be assured should be discussed. See App. 14 Response VI.C.1
8. We agree with Richard Wengraf that some additional discussion of the implications of the "No Action" alternative would make this section of the report more meaningful. From a transportation perspective, a piecemeal approach to traffic mitigation that could be expected under this alternative may not be sufficient to prevent widespread congestion in the area. The transportation implications of taking little or no action to mitigate traffic impacts should be described in some detail in terms of traffic flow, intersection delay, air quality, public safety, land and airport accessibility, rate of traffic growth, and pace of development. See App. 14 Response III.B.9.

VILLAGE OF COLONIE
ALBANY COUNTY
NEW YORK

AGE HALL
HUNDER ROAD
BANY, N. Y. 12205
18 - 869-7562

GENERAL OFFICES

September 20, 1990

RECEIVED

SEP 21 1990

Lawrence Woods, AICP
Clough, Harbour & Associates
3 Winners Circle
Albany, New York 12205

CLOUGH HARBOUR & ASSOCIATES

Re: Airport Area DGEIS
Village & Town of Colonie

Dear Mr. Woods:

The Village of Colonie has reviewed the referenced report and we would like to submit the following comments at this time. Our review has been limited and concentrated on the points which are of concern to the Village.

We appreciate the effort that has gone into the preparation of this document, especially since I, and other Village officials also were recently involved in the preparation of a Generic Environmental Impact Statement of considerable complexity.

Our comments are:

A. Matters Directly Affecting the Village

1. We believe that the most important issue to be settled is exactly what the Village's obligations would be towards the implementation of the Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement (FGEIS), who will make decisions on implementation and what the Village's role in the decision making process will be. These matters should be agreed upon before the FGEIS is accepted and a Findings Statement issued.
Specifically:
 - o The program of improvements should be flexible so that it can be adjusted as more or less growth occurs than is anticipated in the "2005 Target Growth Scenario".
 - o The program should be designed and monitored to make sure that at the end of each stage of construction of improvements a reasonably complete system is in place which can function for an indefinite time without any additions.
 - o The NY State Dept. of Transportation should be fully involved and committed in the planning and implementation, and approve the program and financing plan.
 - o The financing plan should provide sufficient funds and safeguards that the sponsoring agencies - County, Town, Village and, if possible, NYSDOT - are protected from any unexpected liability to make up deficiencies if mitigation fees do not cover improvements which have been committed or built. It should be understood by all concerned that the Village will not contribute any money from its general fund.

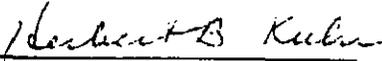
See App. 14
Response
II.B.8. &
pp.II-259
II-260.

- o There must be clear provisions for projects, which are being approved while the EIS is being prepared, as to cut-off dates and credit for mitigation fees already paid. See App.14 Response II.B.7. & II.O.5.
- 2. Considering the above points and apparent slow down in the pace of development, a low-growth alternative should be worked out in more detail, including a program of improvements to serve this lower growth scenario. See App.14 Response II.A.1 & II.B.1
- 3. We prefer the Option II Highway Improvements as having less of an effect on the Village. If Option I is chosen, the road should be moved further away from the Sunset Boulevard neighborhood. See App. 14 Response II.H.10.
- 4. We recommend consideration of sidewalks as mitigating measures, for instance, on Sand Creek Road where the peak hour traffic is expected to double. There is ample precedent and justification for mitigation outside the study area of an EIS. See App.14 Response II.H.32.
- 5. The concept of a relief road south from Sand Creek Road next to the Northway, agrees with the Village's plans; we are currently studying the location and alignment of this road. See App. 14 Response II-H-10.
- 6. Further research on the legal problems of transferring mitigation fees from the Village to the Town Recreation Commission is needed; this does not mean that the Village would consent to such a transfer at this time. See App. 14 Response II.O.II.
- 7. Technical Points that should be corrected/cleared-up:
 - a. What are proposed mitigation fees for hotels and motels? See App. 14 Response II.O.17
 - b. An "Archeological Overlay District" (p. II-195) in the Village does not appear necessary since the only significant undeveloped parcel - Shaker Run Apartments - has been covered by an archeological investigation. See p.II-2
- B. Other Comments of a More General Nature See App.14
- 1. The mitigation fees required under the "2005 Target Grown Scenario" and the low-growth scenario should be evaluated to make sure they are not so high as to make development uneconomical. Response II.O.3 & III.B.1
- 2. To finance transportation improvements, the creation of a Transportation Development District (TDD) appears to be a promising solution and the discussion should reflect this. A TDD might be the appropriate vehicle to insure NYSDOT participation; the formula to determine contributions from benefitted property can be adjusted to fit the requirements of the TDD; it may cause NYSDOT to move state highway projects up on the priority list. See App.14 Response II.H.10.
- 3. The authors of the DGEIS should clarify the following points:
 - a. Concerning the excise tax on development: Is there an precedent for this in New York? Are there any statutory referenced? See App.14 Response II.O.18
 - b. Are there any precedents for requiring mitigating fees for expansion of a municipal golf course? See App.14 Response II.O.13.
- 4. In discussing positive impacts (p. IV-1) the authors may want to consider that successful implementation of the proposed mitigation measures would contribute to the creation of a commercial and employment focus for the Capital District, in effect, a new downtown. See App.14 Response II.O.11.

September 20, 1990
Lawrence Woods, AICP
Page Three

We may submit additional comments after the public hearing. If you want to discuss the comments in this letter further, please feel free to call us.

Sincerely yours,


Herbert B. Kuhn,
Mayor

c: Fred Field, Supervisor, Town of Colonie
Paul F. Cooney, P.E. Albany County Engineer
Peter Platt, Chairman, Town of Colonie Planning Board
Robert Mitchell, P.E., Director
Town of Colonie Engr. & Plng. Services
Christopher Dennis, Acting Chr. Village Planning Comm.
John A. Martin, Village Planning Comm.
David Marinucci, Esq., Village Attorney
Mark Fitzsimmons, Environmental Management Director
Albany County
Laberge Engineering & Consulting Group Ltd.



CHAIRMAN
Henry E. Dennis, Jr.
1ST VICE CHAIRMAN
John B. Simoni
2ND VICE CHAIRMAN
Albert Jurczynski
TREASURER
Arnold S. Harris
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Chungchun Chen

CAPITAL DISTRICT REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

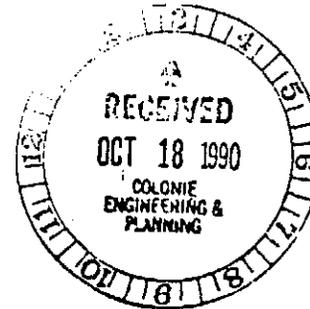
214 CANAL SQUARE, 2ND FLOOR

SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK 12305-2313

518-393-1715

FAX # 518-393-6081

October 12, 1990



Mr. Peter E. Platt, Chairman
Town of Colonie Planning Board
272 Maxwell Road
Latham, New York 12110

Dear Mr. Platt:

We had the opportunity to review the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement for the Albany County Airport area. We want to commend the Town Council and the Planning Board for the leadership in carrying out such an important task of regional significance. The following are our comments on the DGEIS:

1. Executive Summary, Page 3:

"Enplanements at Albany County Airport were projected to more than double by the end of planning period (2005)."

It is necessary to indicate the base year of the projection. If 1990 is used as the base year, then, the more proper statement would be, "Enplanements at Albany County Airport were projected to almost double between 1990 and 2005."

See p.3

A recent study of scheduled service demand at the Albany County Airport by CDRPC staff has indicated that enplanements at the Airport are showing signs of slowing since 1988. Given these results, we suggest using the more conservative low forecast of the Air Service Study (Cress) which shows a growth rate of approximately 72% between 1990 and 2005.

See App. 14
Response
II.B.2.

A copy of the CDRPC report, "Study of Scheduled Service Demand - Upper Hudson Regional Aviation System Plan, June, 1990", is enclosed for your reference.

ALBANY COUNTY

Henry E. Dennis, Jr.
Fred G. Field, Jr.
Paul J. O'Brien
Sanford Tanksley
M. Whalen, III

RENSSELAER COUNTY

Richard M. Amadon
John L. Buono
Sean L. Casey
Arnold S. Harris
Carl Hughes

SARATOGA COUNTY

Thomas H. Clements
Philip W. Klein
John A. Palm
Kermit G. Plummer, Jr.
John B. Simoni

SCHENECTADY COUNTY

Bruce C. Benson
Paul E. Fabian
Michael J. Grasso
Albert Jurczynski
David Vincent

2. Chapter II, Section A: Demographics

Table II-A-2: Existing and Projected Townwide Population

	1980	1989	2005
Town Outside Village	61,712	66,550	83,669
Village of Colonie	8,869	9,700	10,972
Village of Menands	4,012	5,000	5,236
Total	75,593*	81,250	99,667

See pg. II-3

*The correct total is 74,593.

We believe that the estimated 1989 population and projected 2005 population presented in the DGEIS for both the Town and the Study Area are too high and unrealistic. The following shows the 1990 Preliminary Census counts and 2005 projections made by CDRPC.

	Preliminary 1990 Census	2005 CDRPC Projection
Town Outside Village	64,041	65,094
Village of Colonie	8,035	9,594
Village of Menands	4,216	4,189
Total	76,292	78,877

The DGEIS 1989 estimated population for the entire Town is 4,958 or 10.4% more than the Preliminary 1990 Census figures and its 2005 projection is 20,790, or 26.4% more than the level projected by CDRPC. The DGEIS projected net growth in the Town by 2005 would account for nearly 39% of the CDRPC projected total net growth for the entire 4-county Capital District. Please keep in mind that the entire Town grew by only about 1,700 during the last decade and it accounted for less than 8% of the total population gain of the Region. There is no evidence to indicate that a major shift in the growth trend and development pattern of the Region is forthcoming and that the Town of Colonie will become the magnetic center for residential growth.

We certainly cannot support the level of population growth as presented in the DGEIS and seriously question the assumptions based upon which the projections were made for the Town and the Study Area. We suggest that the Planning Board and the Consultant carefully reassess the probability of actual implementation of those proposed new residential projects within the Study Area for the next fifteen years. We doubt that those additional units suggested by the DGEIS could be absorbed by short- and long-term housing demand expected in the Town and the Region.

See App. 14
Response
II.A.1.

3. Chapter II, Section B: Land Use and Zoning

The DGEIS gave reference to CDRPC's population and employment projections and has recommended the "Target Growth Development Scenario". It projected that up to 1,600 new housing units and an additional 7.4 million square feet of commercial space could be built within the Study Area by the year 2005.

The 7.4 million square feet of new commercial and manufacturing space could support up to 23,000 new jobs. We believe that the number is far from

reality. The total number of jobs (by residency) in the entire Town of Colonie is projected to grow from 48,270 in 1990 to 59,146 in 2005, a gain of 10,876.

Again, we suggest that the Planning Board and the Consultant carefully reassess the reality of those proposed development projects. Undoubtedly, many projects are speculative in nature and would not be built because of limited market demand.

See App. 14
Response
II.B.1.

We also suggest that the Consultant provide an analysis of demographic and employment data of the Study Area by TAZ for the planning period. The results should be compared with those relative data available from CDRPC and be included in the final GEIS for reference purposes.

4. Chapter II, Section H: Transportation

We suggest that new trip generation for the target year and traffic impacts should be recalculated based on the adjusted demographic and land use/employment data.

See App. 14
Response
II.H.1.

The application of Transportation System Management (TSM) measures, including ride-sharing programs, variable work hour programs, and transit programs, all are important alternatives to mitigate traffic impacts. However, the effectiveness of these measures is questionable if they are going to be implemented and enforced only within the Study Area.

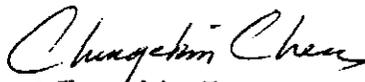
See App. 14
Response
II.H.1.

We suggest that the final GEIS should clarify and elaborate the jurisdictional and implementation issues associated with TSM measures.

See App. 14
Response
II.H. 31

In closing, we thank you for the opportunity to review the DGEIS and hope that our comments will be useful to the Town and the County in carrying out the task.

Sincerely yours,


Chungchin Chen
Executive Director

CC/rmt
Enclosure

CC: Commissioners