

**City of Colville**  
**COLVILLE 2000 AND BEYOND Airport Study Committee**  
 February 3, 2010  
 6:30 – 8:30 P.M. – City Hall

Purpose:

1. Provide the opportunity to discuss and reflect on the comments gathered at the open house
2. Review and provide feedback on the materials being prepared for the City Council
3. Discuss next steps

**Committee members** (x indicates attendance)

x	Bud Budinger		Ed Gray		Bruce Nelson
	Paul Buxton	x	Velmer Hawkins		Curtis Pedersen
	Bob Campbell		Dan Henry	x	Steve Rawlings
x	Steve Cockerham	x	Greg Knight	x	John Smith
x	Forrest Collins	x	Doug Kyle	x	Mark Smith
	Bill Danekas		Don and Frances Loan		Loren Torgerson
x	Raymond Driggs	x	Cecil McNinch	x	Russ Vaagen
					Troy Washburn

MINUTES

A meeting of the Colville 2000 and Beyond Committee was held on Wednesday, February 3, 2010, at 6:30 P.M., at City Hall.

Facilitator Lori Isenberg welcomed the committee members and the public to the meeting. She overviewed the purpose of the meeting and referenced the following handout materials, which had been distributed to committee members and interested persons prior to the meeting: 1) A Summary Statement of Need; 2) Sample Criteria and Issues for Relocated Airport Environmental Assessment; and 3) Draft recommendation on the goal and objectives for selecting a site (copies on file). Additional copies of the handouts were available for the public. Ms. Isenberg explained that the consultant team is preparing a final report for presentation to the City Council on February 9th.

A comment session followed providing an opportunity for the members to reflect on the accomplishments of the committee. Ms. Isenberg summarized the comments as follows:

- Educated the City Council and the public - gained knowledge
- Heard different views
- Better understanding - now know that there is more than one site being considered
- Shared information
- Community involvement
- Begun the process – first step
- Open House – public involvement
- Media coverage
- Questions/more facts/less rumors
- Site hasn't been selected yet
- General aviation – not commercial
- Relocation of existing airport

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Committee members felt that although there has been an effort made towards community involvement, the community still needs more information. It was felt that leadership is important – a clear vision is needed.

As a result of continued discussion, a tentative timetable emerged outlining the next steps in the process.

Doug Kyle and John Smith provided information about a Community Economic Revitalization Board (CERB) grant the City will be applying for. The CERB grant is for a study addressing the economic impact on existing businesses. Notification of the grant award is anticipated by May 2010. A request for funding from the FAA for site selection would need to be submitted no later than September 2010 to get grant funding for the next fiscal year. Part of that process is hiring a consultant. The Council wants to finalize goals and objectives important in the siting of an airport to convey to the consultant. That process is expected to begin in a month or so and may take 60-90 days. FAA site selection/NEPA could potentially start in spring 2011.

John Smith stated that an Airport Business Plan would be need to be done. Instead of looking at what businesses might come in, he believed the focus should be on how existing businesses would be affected. Part of that process could be to develop goals and objectives, identify the economic aspects of construction, look at comparable sites, gather data, and develop reasonable expectations.

Steve Cockerham pointed out that the economic impact study is needed to evaluate the impact on existing businesses, but he felt people would like to see an actual statement of airport operations.

Lou Janke felt a Financial Feasibility Study would cover funding opportunities for every phase – study, design, siting, construction, and long term operation and maintenance.

Doug Kyle added that an Airport Business Plan will describe what is going to happen once it is built. The Financial Feasibility Study will be more encompassing. He felt both of these could be done in phases.

Forrest Collins stressed how important it is to plan ahead; recognizing that economic benefit to local business is going to take time. He expressed support for a 5,000 ft. runway that can accommodate big planes when they need to land here.

John Hodde expressed the feeling that if the objective is to develop a commercial airport in this town more people will leave than the town will ever get back in. He added if we have jet airplanes coming in and out of this place all the time it will be a place that people won't want to live in anymore.

Bud Budinger pointed out that Sandpoint, Idaho has an airport similar in size to what Colville is looking for. It is right in the middle of town and traffic flies over town to get in and out. People have not marched away from Sandpoint because of the air traffic. Instead numerous manufacturing plants have built facilities on the airport and employed local people.

Russ Vaagen commented that comparisons with other similar airports is important to see how many flights increase when you go to a regional size airport and what the real impact is on noise and the community. It was his opinion that no one is proposing that this will be a commercial airport. He stated the reason a longer runway is needed is to safely land planes larger than a King Air or an Air Commander.

Discussion followed regarding the site selection study, which would not start for at least one year. Larry Comer provided clarification in terms of FAA's involvement in the site selection study. He explained that FAA sets the guidelines but the consulting team that the City hires actually does the work. FAA is closely involved with all of the steps. The environmental assessment will evaluate all of the sites selected for the study. The site selection/NEPA process considers all of the site selection criteria. A ranking matrix is used to rank the criteria and a recommendation emerges. Larry noted there will be very active public participation required through the NEPA process. It was his feeling that FAA has got to concur with whatever the recommendation is but ultimately the sponsor (if it is the City of Colville or some other entity) has to actually make the decision to proceed. Lori pointed out that there is always the "no action" option if a site cannot be found that meets the criteria.

Lori explained that generally with the NEPA process, a committee such as this one will be formed to work very closely with the consultant. Workshops will be held at appropriate times where public input will be invited. Lori stated it is very important that it is a transparent process. There are rules, laws, and regulations to comply with.

A member of the audience questioned how the consultant would be picked for the site selection study. Lou Janke explained that the process is guided by federal acquisition regulations. A small team of City people would evaluate consultants based on qualifications and criteria and would recommend someone to the Council for the final decision.

Lou expressed the feeling that it is important early on in the process to develop a timeline to the best of our ability and add on to it as things become clearer so people can see where they fit in and have an opportunity to express their views. Lori suggested that the Council needs to come up with that timeline and publish it to let the public know what to expect.

Velmer Hawkins noted that there is no reference made to "eminent domain" on the tentative timeline. He stated there is nothing that says this committee is for or against eminent domain. It was his opinion that the public is not in favor of eminent domain. Lori suggested, as a committee, the point can be made that eminent domain should only be used as a very last resort, but the Council has to consider it. The law is that you go with a willing seller first, but if not, there is eminent domain.

Lori explained that the City Council is preparing to develop a statement of need, goals, objectives, community desires, etc. Through this process, the committee has been able to accumulate some of that information. As a result, the consultant team drafted a recommendation as outlined in one of the handouts. Following review and discussion, the draft recommendation was amended for clarification, as follows:

#### Objectives for selecting a site

1. Per FAA's policy of avoiding concentrations of people in an approach area to an airport, minimize exposure to people on the ground, including schools.
2. Extended flight paths on both runway ends should be free from obstructions.
3. The airport should have an instrument approach and departure (to allow for safer operations in inclement weather and more efficient use by business-class aircraft).

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4. The design must provide for security and efficiency of maintenance, including drainage and disposal of winter snow.
5. The site should consider opportunities for future growth of the airport and region.
6. Land should be obtained from willing sellers to avoid eminent domain to the extent possible.
7. The site should have reasonable access to or the ability to develop water, sewer, fire protection, and transportation infrastructure.

As a result of the public process, a proposed goal was developed, which states “Relocate the existing airport to improve safety in the air and on the ground, provide opportunity for expanded service and stimulate economic development, while honoring the character and values of the Colville community.”

Lori called for a vote by a show of hands regarding agreement with the recommended goal and objectives, which will be presented to the City Council at the February 9, 2010 meeting. There were no objections noted.

Ms. Isenberg explained that the information will be submitted for the City Council packets and the consulting team will present a final report. Alternatively, she asked if any of the committee members would be willing to make the presentation and share some of the discussion. Following brief discussion, it was a consensus to have Lori make the presentation to the City Council on behalf of the committee. Some of the committee members expressed a willingness to attend the Council meeting to support the consultant team.

Velmer Hawkins commented that it is very difficult for the audience to hear presentations being made at the City Council meetings. He asked if it would be possible to arrange for a speaker to amplify the presentations for the benefit of the audience. John Smith advised that the Chamber of Commerce has a PA system and encouraged City staff to contact them.

Lori asked if there were any comments from the committee members relative to the Summary Statement of Need. Steve Rawlings indicated that item #5 requires some clarification and offered to discuss minor changes with Lori following the meeting.

Lori shared the following observations made by the consultant team that will be shared with the Council:

1. There is a significant level of concern among some members of the community related to the way the City conducted the airport study activities.
2. The project team has been told by community members that it is getting better; consequently it is important for the city to build on positive momentum to continue to improve inter-community relationships.

Ms. Isenberg advised that the consultant team will further recommend that:

1. The community should be involved in selecting the people to sit on the new committee. This needs to be an open transparent process.

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2. The City needs to get started right away on analyzing the current operations at the airport – look at cost benefits and compare it with other areas.
3. There needs to be some sort of on-going process for the citizens to be able to access information, i.e., web site, Council meetings, etc.

Ms. Isenberg stated that the final report will include all the committee meeting minutes, all Open House materials, public comments received, and the recommendations from the committee and consultant team. Lori advised that it will be suggested that the report be posted on the City's website.

In conclusion, final comments from members indicated that:

- Public involvement is a key factor in this process.
- The City should foster essential services for the community but not try to take over the role that entrepreneurs and local business people play in this community.

As there was no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 8:37 P.M.