

AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION RIVERSIDE COUNTY

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Community & Economic
Development Department

Ms. Candice Assadzadeh, Senior Planner
City of Riverside Community Development Department/Planning Division
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RE: Resolution Overruling the Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission Determination of Inconsistency for City of Riverside Case Nos. P18-0970 (General Plan Amendment), P18-0971 (Rezone), P18-0972 (Tract Map), P18-0973 (Planned Residential Development), P18-0974 (Design Review), P18-0975 (Variance)

Dear Ms. Assadzadeh:

Riverside County Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) staff has reviewed the findings included in the draft City Council Resolution to overrule ALUC's determination of Inconsistency on March 14, 2019 for ZAP1096RI19. Please see the below comments:

1. Finding (b) does not include the fact that aircraft in flight are regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration, which supersedes any local jurisdiction regulations. While the Master Plan recommends the referenced northwesterly turn for departing traffic, the memorandum dated September 12, 2019 from Airport Manager Kim Ellis to General Services Department Director Carl Carey notes that local air traffic control representatives have observed straight-out departures. Furthermore, aircraft on an instrument approach from the west must fly over the area. Mr. Ellis' memorandum also notes that the Compatibility Zones were designed, in light of State guidelines, based on statistical analysis of aircraft crash data that warrant a low residential density for sites located in the extended approach/departure zone, such as this one. Aircraft in an emergency will not follow the designated flight pattern procedure and will attempt to land the aircraft safely. Restricting the number of homes that could be impacted in an emergency landing or crash is prudent. That is the basis of the Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP).
2. Finding (c) does not address the fact that this proposal exacerbates a risky situation. Existing homes that predate or were approved prior to the adoption of the airport land use compatibility plan are not subject to ALUC review. However, new projects, like the proposed project, are subject to the ALUC compatibility criteria. Additionally, the proposed finding is incorrect in regard to the project's proposed density being "consistent" with the density of the nearest residential neighborhood. The project's proposed density is 7.9 dwelling units per acre, while the nearby residential neighborhood densities are approximately 4.7 dwelling units per acre. The project's density is almost double the density of the nearby neighborhoods. Additionally, as noted in the letter from Friends of Riverside's Hills, the large area to the west is undeveloped.

3. Finding (d) correctly presumes that the proposed project would potentially result in a lower occupancy than a non-residential project; however, homes would be occupied 24 hours a day, while non-residential uses only operate during business hours, thus leaving the site with no occupants for the remainder of the time. This significantly reduces the risk of a high casualty number in the event of an aircraft crash. Furthermore, residents would be asleep during a significant portion of the time. They would be less able to quickly evacuate in such an event.
4. The applicant may claim that this site is a convenient location for a housing development and that the project continues an existing land use pattern. However, the existing land uses cited in the applicant's document predate, or were granted final discretionary approval prior to, adoption of the ALUCP. (Most of the residences were built in the 1950s or 1960s, prior to the establishment of airport land use commissions.) Extension of this old pattern based on "convenience" should not be elevated above the safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the proposed project.

When the City adopted its General Plan in 2007, the City assumed responsibility for implementation of the ALUCP. Approval of this project would be inconsistent with the policies of the City's Land Use Element regarding protection of its citizenry.

On March 16, 2019, two days after the ALUC meeting, an aircraft crashed into the backyard of a single family home on the 10500 block of Robinson Avenue, approximately 9,000 feet south of the project, with one fatality (pilot). Pilots in an emergency situation will try to avoid crashing into a building. The ALUCP restricts density along the extended runway centerline at this distance from the airport, so a pilot can direct a crashing aircraft away from residences.

We urge you to give serious consideration to the concerns expressed by the Riverside Municipal Airport in response to the applicant's proposal.

In the event that the City Council deems it appropriate to overrule the determination of inconsistency and approve the project, the City is encouraged to apply the conditions included in ALUC's staff report on the project. **Implementation of those conditions would not render the project consistent with the 2005 Riverside Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. They are recommended in order to minimize impacts on the continued use of the airport and to notify the public of the risk and the aircraft overflights, but cannot eliminate vulnerability in the event of an aircraft accident.**

Should you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Paul Rull, ALUC Principal Planner, at (951) 955-6893.

Sincerely,
RIVERSIDE COUNTY AIRPORT LAND USE COMMISSION



Simon A. Housman, ALUC Director

cc: Ron Bolyard, California Division of Aeronautics
Robert Fiore, California Division of Aeronautics
Michael Smith, California Division of Aeronautics
Kim Ellis, Manager, Riverside Municipal Airport
Passco Pacifica, LLC, Applicant

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