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August 19, 2014

VIA Email

Mr. Jack Cavalier, Chairman
Stafford County Board of Supervisors
1300 Courthouse Road
Stafford, VA 22554

Dear Chairman Cavalier:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), the world's largest aviation organization, represents the general aviation interests of pilots and aircraft owners, including 9,135 of our members in the Commonwealth of Virginia. On behalf of our membership, AOPA is committed to ensuring the future viability and development of general aviation airports and their facilities as part of a national transportation system.

We are writing to you today respectfully requesting that the Board of Supervisors not grant the reclassification of 231.6 acres from A-1, Agricultural Zoning District to P-TND, and Planned-Traditional Neighborhood Development Zoning District for the Oakenwald Development

AOPA contends that allowing the development of a residential community, of close proximity to the Stafford Regional Airport, is not a compatible land use. It is our experience that communities that allow such nearby residential development around airports usually experience increased complaints from residents. These issues, often relative to the normal operations of the airport, include factors such as noise, frequency of flights, dust, fumes, etc. It is our strong belief that development around an airport should consist of more compatible uses that do not place residents under, or adjacent to, the airport traffic pattern thereby creating a potential noise impact.

It is our understanding that the County along with the Stafford Regional Airport Authority are in the process of developing compatible land use guidelines that will assist the County in planning better land uses around the airport. These guidelines should ensure a more compatible and harmonic relationship between the airport and its neighbors. We urge the Board of Supervisors to wait for the guidelines before taking action on parcels around the airport. Dulles International Airport used to be out in the middle of nowhere and now look at it today, hemmed in by residential development. Stafford Regional Airport was deliberately located to ensure that encroachment would not be an issue, yet there continues to be efforts made to develop incompatible land uses around the airport. Developers finish their projects and move on, leaving local government to deal with any resulting issues. For the aforementioned reasons, we again respectfully request the Board to not grant the rezoning request.

Thank you for your consideration of our views on this issue. If we can be of further assistance, please contact our staff at 301-695-2200.

Sincerely,

John L. Collins
Manager
Airport Policy