



**AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION**

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January 12, 2006

Nicole DeVaughn  
Principal Planner, City of Ft. Myers  
1825 Hendry Street  
Suite 101  
Fort Myers, Fl 33901

Re: Orchid Island Residential Development

Dear Ms. DeVaughn:

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) represents the general aviation interests of 406,000 members, more than two-thirds of the nation's pilots including more than 31,000 members in Florida. 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 express the Association's concerns regarding the proposed development known as Orchid Island at the southeast corner of Metro Parkway and Colonial Avenue. We believe that, if approved, this development could potentially have a significant impact on Fort Myers Page Field Airport (FMY). As a national organization with more than 66 years of aviation experience, AOPA has been involved in numerous proposals to build residential developments near public use airports. Our vast experience has shown that residential development in close proximity to an airport (Orchid Island is a mere 2,300 feet from the end of the runway) creates poor public policy and we strongly encourage the City to disapprove the project in its current configuration.

AOPA has long advocated for compatible development in and around airports. A housing development that will be within a half-mile of the end of the main runway and nearly directly under the flight path at a busy general aviation airport such as Page Field could have local residents filing noise complaints on aircraft overflights; creating a problem where one did not previously exist.

We believe the City should explore a more "airport friendly" and compatible use of land this close to Page Field. If such a use cannot be found and the City chooses to move forward with this project, we truly hope the City will use every possible alternative in order to mitigate potential complaints and airport noise problems. Some of the possible alternatives could include requiring sound attenuation construction, written real estate disclosure notices concerning airport activity and the proximity of the homes to the airport, as well as aviation easements that convey with the deed or title to residences in the proposed development.

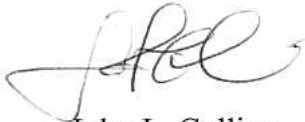
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The Lee County Port Authority relies on the City of Fort Myers to help protect the approaches to the airport by preventing the creation of airport hazards and by restricting the use of land adjacent to or in the immediate vicinity of an airport to activities and purposes compatible with normal airport operations. The City must do this because the Authority does not have the ability to enact zoning or other land use restrictions outside the property boundaries of the airport.

We encourage the City to work in coordination with the Florida Department of Transportation Aviation Office to comply with the applicable state statutes, specifically Chapter 333, Florida Statutes.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'J. Collins', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John L. Collins  
Government Technical Specialist  
AOPA Airport Support Network

cc:

Ms. Coleen Baker, Manager, Page Field Airport  
Mr. Aaron N. Smith, Airspace and Land Use Manager, FDOT Aviation Office  
Mr. Dean Stringer, Manager, FAA Orlando Airports District Office  
Mr. Nelson Rhodes, AOPA Florida Regional Representative  
Mr. Mark Twombly, AOPA Airport Support Network Volunteer FMY