

Buxton area residents opposing increased activity at local airport

Most of the 100-plus people attending a public meeting regarding expansion of aviation activities at Apple Valley Airport were in agreement: They do not want helicopters operating from the private airport, nor do they want flight training for either helicopters or fixed wing aircraft.

John Rankin, a land use attorney from Sherwood led the July 28 meeting, at Banks Christian Academy in Buxton. Rankin is representing airport owner Mike Applebee in his land use process with Washington County and the neighborhood meeting was required as part of the process. Many of those who attended the meeting are members of Neighbors Against Apple Valley Expansion (NAAVE), a grass roots organization formed to oppose the increased activity.

Prior to taking questions or statements, Rankin reviewed parts of Washington County Ordinance 609, as it pertains to private airports. The ordinance applied an "Overlay District" for several private airports within the county to coordinate with state law for "their continued operation and vitality."

In an effort to provide structure to the meeting, Rankin requested that "fact-based" questions be asked before individuals or groups made statements. The effort was mostly successful, though Rankin occasionally had to adopt the persona of a referee.

Many of the questioners were frustrated by a lack of answers, with responses of "Don't know yet," to questions such as the number of anticipated take offs and landings and whether the airport will be lighted. According to Rankin, the questions couldn't be answered until the land use application is complete, and that the information gathered at the neighborhood meeting in progress would be used in developing the application.

Noise generated by increased activity at the airport was the concern most frequently mentioned by opponents, especially in the valley area

where it reverberates, although the loss of privacy caused by hovering helicopters was a close second.

Other concerns expressed were about negative impacts on wildlife and the environment, safety for equestrians on the Banks-Vernonia Linear Trail, and traffic. Some of the environmental concerns were related to the potential for pollution by aviation fuel in ground water and runoff into Dairy Creek. The airport, which parallels the Sunset Highway, is in a flood plain.

One speaker said that the previous owner, Rod Anders, was friendly and talked with neighbors about his plans; others commented that Applebee not only doesn't live on the property, but doesn't even live in the community.

While audience members cheered comments made in opposition to the expansion of activities at the airport, some were rude to speakers who supported Applebee's point of view, interrupting and sometimes trying to shout down his supporters. When a speaker from outside the area spoke favorable about Applebee, there were shouted comments of "You don't even live here," while outsiders who supported the opposition were warmly applauded.

Before the meeting closed, Rankin said he would be willing to talk "one-on-one" with the leaders of NAAVE about changes and/or concessions in Applebee's proposal, if they were willing to talk. The group's leaders seemed reluctant to do



Some of the 100+ Buxton and Manning residents at a public meeting on increased aviation-related activity at Apple Valley Airport.

so, saying they want another public meeting, instead.

Applebee has already run afoul of the County Community Development Code and was issued three citations for failing to obtain the necessary permits before erecting a sign, engaging in commercial flight training without land use approval, and failing to seek a required review of land use. A July hearing date was suspended for 30 days pending the filing of the re-

quired applications.

Minutes from the neighborhood review meeting will be made available for response. The public will also have addi-

tional opportunity to comment on the proposal, according to Mark Brown, Land Development Manager for Washington County.

Jim Dandy Farm Market
Fresh Peaches, Gravenstein Apples & assorted Vegetables




Open 7 Days • 9 AM - 6 PM
45770 NW Sunset Hwy, Banks
503-324-3954

If you're ready for a Stihl check out the latest equipment from Stihl during the Vernonia Jamboree & Logging Show

Visit the Stihl Trailer in Hawkins Park, Saturday & Sunday **August 6 & 7**, during the Vernonia Friendship Jamboree & Logging Show. **Great deals** on the newest in tools, equipment, & supplies

MS270

This mid-sized saw includes the STIHL Quick Chain Adjuster as well as a heavy-duty anti-vibration system to help reduce operator fatigue.



MS361

This high-tech engine includes a new carburetor preheating system, a redesigned anti-vibration system, a decompression valve and toolless fuel and oil caps.



PRECISION OUTDOOR POWER EQUIPMENT

Banks Hardware

503-324-5221 • 150 N. Main Street, Banks

- Mon - Fri 8am to 6pm
- Saturday 8am to 5pm
- Sunday 10am to 4pm



Oak Village Laundromat

4 Jumbo Washers

Air-conditioned Easy Access with Ample Parking

located next to Jim's Market at the junction of Hwy 47 & Hwy 6 Main Street, Banks