

The posts below, were originally published in 2010 on the stopcta.info "Factoids" blog. Note that many of the verification links to the original sources no longer exist due to technological 'advances' and the demise of local news publications, many through corporate media acquisition. RIP community news.

## SEPTEMBER 2010

Saturday, September 25, 2010  
**Commissioner Dildy says it all**

### "If I lived out here, I wouldn't want it either."

-Lee Dildy, Commissioner, Precinct 4, Bastrop County, at the April 20, 2010 meeting of the Lazy River Neighborhood Watch

Posted by noairport at 12:39:31 in News  
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Sunday, September 26, 2010  
**What were they thinking!?**

The county has played a pivotal role in setting the proposed Central Texas Airport project into motion. Just why they chose to do so eludes the thinking (wo)man on the street. Most likely they were presented with some great PR about how this would bring phenomenal economic growth to Bastrop County. And they fell for it.

In Suzannah Gonzales' March 29, 2009 Statesman article 'Plans for airport in Bastrop worry neighbors' Judge Ronnie McDonald is quoted as saying "... county officials are weighing the pros and cons of the project, making sure it's not going to adversely affect the community, schools or residents".

Just how is imposing an Airport Compatibility Zone on 20 established subdivisions NOT going to adversely affect residents of those communities who will be trading sounds of nature for jets thundering overhead? And how is an approaching 737 possibly flying as low as 900 ft. over Bastrop's shiny new high school NOT going to affect students?

The good citizens of Bastrop county were not invited to the negotiation table or asked for any input into this project. Yet Carpenter & Associates were granted an evening public forum in April 2009 to present their proposal. The public was invited but only as 'spectators' not participants. One and a half years later, we are still waiting for the opportunity for public participation that the Commissioners Court promised at the Carpenter & Associates' presentation.

The 381 Agreement was signed in June of this year without any public input. It seems that in Bastrop county money talks and 'we the people' don't count for much.

All of which points to a double standard. When citizens approach the Commissioners Court for relief from one harm or another, they are frequently advised that "the court has very limited authority". Obviously, that isn't really true. When it comes to enabling corporate schemes that could negatively impact taxpaying citizens as they did through this 381 Agreement, the Court seems to have plenty of authority.

Posted by noairport at 23:42:29 in Players, County, Voices, stopcta  
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Sunday, September 26, 2010  
**Plans for airport worry neighbors**

"Plans for airport in Bastrop worry neighbors", a March 29, 2009 Statesman article by Suzannah Gonzales, is worth a read if you haven't already. It has some good background information on Jim Carpenter, a summary of official positions and an overview of what else is going on in the area etc.

See: <https://www.stopcta.info/docs/press/0329bastrop.html>

Posted by noairport at 21:51:30 in News, Media, Looking back, Costs, Players  
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Sunday, September 26, 2010  
**Bastrop airport moves ahead**

PR surrounding the signing of the 381 Agreement in the Austin Business Journal.

Planned \$150M Bastrop airport moves ahead  
Austin Business Journal  
June 15, 2010

A \$150 million private airport slated for western Bastrop County moved forward this week, garnering commissioners' unanimous approval Monday for tax rebates and incentives to the company building the center.

Under the '381 Agreement', developer Jim Carpenter & Associates Inc. would be rebated 75 percent of local property taxes for 30 years. The county would reportedly still receive more from the remaining 25 percent paid then it currently receives annually from the property, which is estimated between \$99,000 and \$120,000.

Under terms of the agreement, the 600-acre Central Texas Airport near the intersection of FM 1704 and 969 could not be used for commercial purposes.

The airspace will be part of the 1,200-acre Green Corporate Centers, which Carpenter previously said will serve as a showcase for renewable and sustainable energy technology companies supporting the airport. It could include 4 to 5 million square feet of industrial space.

Construction is set to begin June 30, 2012 or earlier, and finish some time before the same date in 2014, pending county design approval.

See: <http://austin.bizjournals.com/austin/stories/2010/06/14/daily13.html>

Posted by noairport at 22:11:21 in News, Media, Looking back, Players, Developer, County  
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Sunday, September 26, 2010  
**CTA waits for County OK**

'Central Texas Airport waits for County's OK' from March 19, 2010 is basically a love fest between Jim Carpenter, Commissioner Lee Dildy and the Elgin Courier. It could be argued that some of the information presented is misleading to say the least.

See: [https://www.stopcta.info/docs/CTA\\_waits.pdf](https://www.stopcta.info/docs/CTA_waits.pdf)

Posted by noairport at 22:02:51 in News, Media, Looking back, Players, Developer, County  
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Sunday, September 26, 2010  
**Airport incentives approved**

After the signing of the 381 Agreement, Suzannah Gonzales wrote a follow up on the proposed airport - 'Bastrop commissioners approve incentives for airport'.  
See: <https://www.statesman.com/news/local/bastrop-commissioners-approve-incentives-for-airport-747636.html>.

Sometimes folks will say "there's nothing we can do. It's a done deal". Well, that's just not true. Not only are there legal remedies but as stated in this article, "The airport is far from a done deal — parts of the project still must be approved by the county and federal regulators . . ." It won't be easy, but there are plenty of ways we can stop this project in its tracks.

Posted by noairport at 23:42:05 in News, Media, Looking back, Players, Developer, County  
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Monday, September 27, 2010  
**Playing catch up**

If you're unfamiliar with this issue, please take a look at the series of media articles that have been posted the last few days. They will introduce you to the players and history of the proposed CTA project. Additional articles will be posted as they break or if we find one we missed.

Posted by noairport at 23:02:35 in News, Announcements  
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## OCTOBER 2010

Friday, October 01, 2010  
**Economically Disadvantaged?**

The '381 Agreement' crafted by Carpenter & Associates' corporate attorneys describes the area surrounding the proposed Central Texas Airport in these words:

"... the project will stimulate economic development within an area of Bastrop County that is or has been considered to be economically disadvantaged."

See: <https://www.stopcta.info/docs/381.pdf>

'Economically disadvantaged'? Give me a break! Anybody with half a working brain cell should see right through that corporate-speak. With those two words, Carpenter & Associates has marginalized the 'victims' of this corporate scheme in order to justify the imposition of their vision of 'economic development' - asphalt, pollution and most importantly corporate profits.

They don't care a whit that residents in the neighboring area might not consider themselves at all 'economically disadvantaged'. That in fact many have come to the area to escape the consequences of urbanization and economic development elsewhere.

Not every square inch of the earth needs to be utilized for industrial 'economic development'. There are other models for land use that benefit communities of living, breathing citizens not just corporate profits.

You'd think the Bastrop County Commissioners would know better by now. Hopefully, they'll get a clue.

Posted by noairport at 14:57:30 in Costs, Players, Voices, stopcta  
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Saturday, October 2, 2010  
**Property Rights**

What does that phrase mean to the citizens of western Bastrop County near the proposed Central Texas Airport?

It means that the 'property rights' of Carpenter & Associates within the 1100 acre proposed Central Texas Airport and 'Green' Corporate Center site are superior to the 'property rights' of taxpaying property owners in the approximately 22,000 acres of the surrounding Airport Compatibility Zone.

It means that Bastrop County may 'take' some of YOUR control over YOUR property to ensure that Carpenter & Associates may have the full measure of THEIR 'property rights'.

It means that YOUR property valuation will decrease while Carpenter & Associates reaps the benefits of developing a hayfield into an aviation/industrial boondoggle.

It means that the CTA may pollute YOUR property with noisy low-flying aircraft that will destroy YOUR quality of life.

"Good fences make good neighbors." However, you can't fence out noise, air and water pollution, and economic ruin brought to YOU by the CTA.

Demand that the Bastrop County Commissioners Court carry out their responsibility by recognizing and defending YOUR rights before kowtowing to an outsider's corporate agenda.

Posted by noairport at 03:27:49 in Costs, Quality of life, Property, Players, Voices, oracle  
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Sundays, October 03, 2010  
**Runups & Runoffs**

So ya'll think that the roar of large low-flying aircraft going in and out of the CTA will be the only big noise issue that's going to impact your quality of life?

Nope, not even close. There'll be a LOT of noise generated on the ground between flights too!

The culprit is 'static testing' which is just one of the servicing options that Carpenter & Associates is planning to offer at the proposed 'Green' Corporate Center complex. You see, when jet aircraft engines have completed their servicing, they need to be 'runup'.

During a 'runup' the aircraft is immobilized and the engines tested at various throttle settings. This is VERY noisy and sound will undoubtedly reverberate up and down the Colorado river corridor and beyond. Don't you just love how neighborly and 'Green' that is?

Now, let's get to sewage.

Carpenter & Associates estimates that at full capacity up to 43,000 people will be working at the 'Green' Corporate Center. Consider this . . . 43,000 people flushing a low flow toilet twice a day will produce 129,000 gallons of water and other 'material'.

It's gotta go somewhere. Just how will the 'Green' Corporate Center get rid of it?

As far as we know, the 'Green' Corporate Center has not filed for or been granted a permit for a wastewater treatment plant sited along the Colorado River.

So, there's ONLY one option . . . evapotranspiration. Yikes! That's a big word!!

Here's how it's usually accomplished. An on site facility would separate the solids from the liquid. Solids would likely be trucked out (making the pollution someone else's problem). Then the remaining liquid would be treated with toxic and dangerous chlorine gas (which will have to be trucked in on FM 969 and stored on-site). The partially treated liquid would then be sprayed on open areas within the complex filling the air with a unique perfume.

See: <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/chlorine/basics/facts.asp>

This would path on regardless of the weather, 24/7/365, rain or shine. Problem is that sunlight is needed to kill the remaining organisms in the partially treated liquid.

If the sun doesn't shine and it rains, guess where the runoff of the contaminated liquid will go?

Yup. You guessed it. The Colorado River.

Isn't being 'Green' the coolest thing?

Posted by noairport at 14:51:41 in Costs, Quality of life, Environment, Voices, oracle  
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Monday, October 04, 2010  
**It's not political!**

PLEASE HEAR THIS:

The proposed Central Texas Airport is NOT a political issue. It is a quality of life, environmental and land use blunder of gigantic proportions that cuts across all party lines.

There's no denying that our elected officials who are supposed to be protecting us are aiding and abetting this ill-advised plan. But newsflash . . . that's the way the system works. 'Politics' seems to be in the throes of an institutionalized stupidity from which no 'party' is immune.

In this case, Carpenter & Associates corporate attorneys penned the infamous 381 Agreement.  
See: <https://www.stopcta.info/docs/381.pdf>

In all fairness to the County Commissioners, they did send it back and forth a few times to address points undisclosed to the public. But all too readily and without ANY public input, they unanimously agreed to sign it.

Considering that the Court had legal counsel, we are baffled that they seem to have missed using any restriction on the length of runway, the size of aircraft allowed or possible use of the facility as a cargo hub. If those issues are addressed in the 381 Agreement, we haven't been able to find it.

A request to the County to clarify those points was answered with a non-responsive letter from the County's attorneys Bickerstaff Heath Delgado Acosta LLP.  
See: [https://www.stopcta.info/docs/court\\_response.pdf](https://www.stopcta.info/docs/court_response.pdf)

We are still waiting for clarification.

The lesson of this sad tale is an old one that collectively we just can't seem to learn . . .

When corporations and big money call the shots, 99 chances out of 100, we'll get screwed in the process.

Posted by noairport at 04:15:17 in Players, Developer, County, Voices, stopcta  
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Wednesday, October 06, 2010  
**Not a done deal!**

When talking about the proposed Central Texas Airport, a common attitude is that 'it's a done deal'. Well, we don't think so!

For starts, Carpenter & Associates doesn't even own the land yet! The real estate is under contract but don't assume it's going to close. Currently, the developer is seeking investors which is a formidable challenge in this economy. No investors. No airport. It's as simple as that.

In addition, there is a bit of backstory that might make investors wary. Remember the proposed Manor airport that fell apart when Robert Mueller moved to ABIA? Well, that was another one of Jim Carpenter's grandiose plans and look what happened to that!

But don't assume that because the Manor airport failed that this one is bound to fail too. That would be naive and very foolish because it seems this man is hell bent on building an airport.

Even if the money appears and the contracts close it's still not a done deal. Final plans have not yet been submitted to Bastrop County for approval and those plans are going to be scrutinized very closely.

Although an 'Environmental Impact Statement' (EIS) is not required because there is no federal funding involved, there is a very real possibility that at some point one will be ordered. Since the Colorado River and surrounding habitat will be severely impacted by this project it is only prudent to do so.

Two other studies should also be done. One to assess the impact of increased traffic on FM969 and FM1704 and another to determine a base noise level for the areas surrounding the airport.

Perhaps the Bastrop County Commissioners will step up, take responsibility for the deficiencies in the 381 Agreement that make this airport nightmare a very real possibility and put this project to rest. After all, their job should be to protect the citizens and resources of Bastrop county not to put them in harm's way.

Posted by noairport at 16:35:45 in Costs, Quality of life, Traffic, Environment, Players, Developer, Voices, stopcta  
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Saturday, October 09, 2010  
**Wheelin' & Dealin'**

What's going on in Bastrop County?

We have a Commissioners Court that made a deal with a speculator, had him write an agreement that NONE of us working stiffs could EVER get, hired a 'crack' legal team to 'make sure that Bastrop County is protected' and now, those of us that can READ are finding out that the county has legally thrown out the baby with the bath water.

The 381 Agreement 'protects us' against those nasty passenger jets carrying thirty-one or more plutocrats flying in to watch the F1 races in Elroy, but DOESN'T PROTECT US against a cargo jet of the same size carrying their damned Perrier water, pate and poodle-grooming supplies.

You know, they're probably 'Jet-Setter' plutocrats because they carry that stuff everywhere.

We're also 'protected' against those meddlesome folks at the FAA with all their rules and regulations that crimp those speculators' styles when they build an airport that they want to run by ONLY THEIR RULES.

This 'crack' legal team exempted the CTA from having to obtain an Airport Operating Certificate, under 14 C.F.R., part 139, which promotes safe operations of air-carriers, requires certain environmental regulations, and protects passengers and people on the ground from hazards.

Now, let's talk security . . . private security. This is another 381 legal flub. The CTA will have NO TSA presence, so as to 'streamline the airport experience' for these idle-rich-tourists so their sensitive Bordeaux wines won't get manhandled by the 'help'.

Do ya'll remember Joe Stack? He loaded his Cessna with a full drum of aviation gas, set it on his passenger seat, took off from Georgetown Municipal Airport, and crashed it into the Echelon Building in Austin.

That airport has 'private security'.

How big of an embarrassment to Bastrop County would it be if a 737 departed from the CTA and flew into the State Capitol . . . or some really USEFUL building?

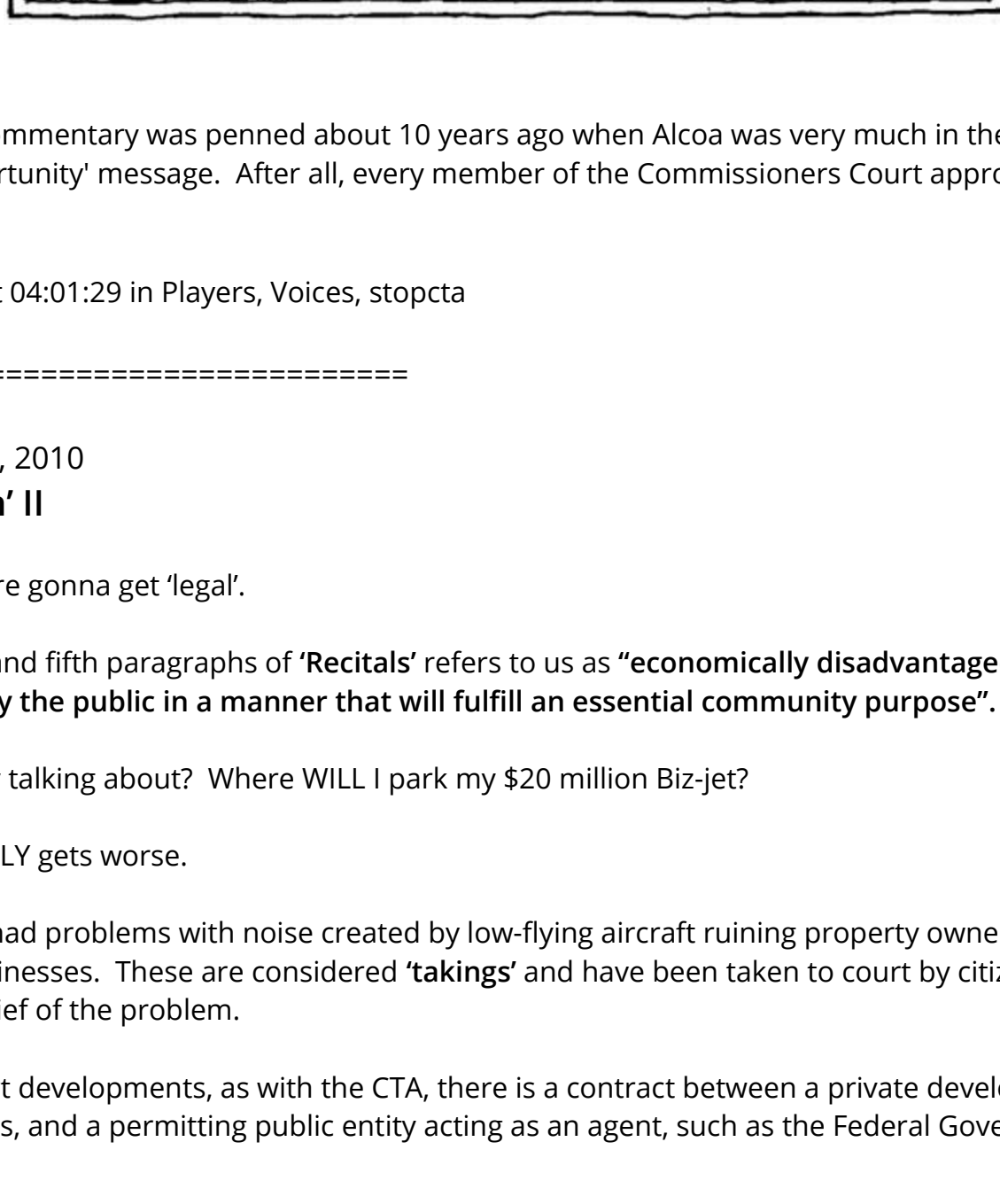
I read kind of slow, but there's lots more coming, like how Bastrop County might not be protected against litigation arising from condemnations due to noise from all these AIR BLUEBLOOD Perrier'n'pate over-flights.

So, bear with me . . .

posted by noairport at 22:04:22 in Costs, Future, Players, Developer, County, Voices, oracle  
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Monday, October 11, 2010  
**Then and Now**

Ten years ago it was Alcoa. Now it's the Central Texas Airport. Isn't it comforting to know that your elected representatives are in YOUR corner? Yeah, right . . .



NOTE: This graphic commentary was penned about 10 years ago when Alcoa was very much in the news. Please read this as an 'equal opportunity' message. After all, every member of the Commissioners Court approved the 381 Agreement.

Posted by noairport at 04:01:29 in Players, Voices, stopcta  
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Monday, October 11, 2010  
**Wheelin' & Dealin' II**

As promised, now we're gonna get 'legal'.

In the 381 the fourth and fifth paragraphs of 'Recitals' refers to us as "economically disadvantaged" and states that the airport will be used "by the public in a manner that will fulfill an essential community purpose".

Which 'Public' are they talking about? Where WILL I park my \$20 million Biz-jet?

The 381 give-away ONLY gets worse.

Airports have always had problems with noise created by low-flying aircraft ruining property owners living conditions and sometimes family businesses. These are considered 'takings' and have been taken to court by citizens for 'just compensation' for relief of the problem.

In many private airport developments, as with the CTA, there is a contract between a private developer, which is Carpenter & Associates, and a permitting public entity acting as an agent, such as the Federal Government, State, County, or Municipality.

A legal definition of 'agent' is "one who, by mutual consent, acts for the benefit or another; one authorized by a party to act in that party's behalf".

The 381 Agreement constitutes 'acting in behalf' of Carpenter & Associates, making Bastrop County the 'agent'.

If you will examine 'Section 14, Indemnification', it appears that Bastrop County is immune from litigation arising from the construction, operation, maintenance, or any other problems with the CTA, as they are ONLY the permitting authority, and not the owners or operators. But does that really get them off the hook as an 'agent' of Carpenter & Associates. Existing case law suggests that ALL parties may be liable for damages resulting from 'takings', regardless of 'agreements'.

The City of Austin spent over \$33 million dollars on property considered 'uninhabitable' when they opened ABIA.

Do ya'll want to take that chance? Not me.

By NOT taking Federal dollars and REFUSING comprehensive FAA control, the CTA and the surrounding 22,000 acres of the Airport Compatibility Zone misses out on the opportunity for federally subsidized compensation for 'takings' and sound-proofing measures for homes, schools, and churches.

So who may foot the bill for protecting the citizens of Bastrop County, and their property?

It might just be YOU!!

Don't take my word for it.

Google is your "friend".

The CTA isn't.

Posted by noairport at 12:38:05 in Costs, Taxes, Future, Players, County, Voices, oracle  
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Tuesday, October 12, 2010  
**Press release 12/10/10**

These comments were presented by Tom Thompson to the Bastrop County Commissioners Court on October 12, 2010 during the Citizens' Comments period. In addition, a Facts about the Central Texas Airport flyer was distributed to everyone present. See: [http://www.stopcta.info/docs/CTA\\_facts\\_2011.pdf](http://www.stopcta.info/docs/CTA_facts_2011.pdf)

I'd like to speak to the Court today about legal loopholes within the 381 Agreement for the Central Texas Airport, and the many other problems facing Bastrop County residents associated with this proposed facility.

1) \*One loophole would allow up to 250 daily flights of 737-class cargo aircraft of 100 tons or less to use the runway which is only 69' shorter than the longest runway at old Robert Mueller airport.

2) \*Another loophole would circumvent FAA rules and regulations that protect the health, safety, and welfare of property owners near the facility, and, in fact, all of Bastrop County.

3) \*Apart from the 381, there is the continuing LACK of public notification of the REAL environmental and property abuses of the CTA/GCC, including airport zoning and condemnation procedures and traffic gridlock on FM 969 & 1704.

4) AND, the continuing absence of an Environmental Impact Study,

5) AND, the complete LACK of a required ON-SITE Part 150 noise study that would reveal the impact of large aircraft flying at 100' or less over populated areas. A 737 with Stage III engines flying at 500' altitude will produce 115 dB of noise.

Many of these concerns were raised in a letter sent to the Court in August, followed by a response from the Court's attorneys on September 1, 2010, which was evasive, and COMPLETELY non-responsive.  
See: [https://www.stopcta.info/docs/court\\_response.pdf](https://www.stopcta.info/docs/court_response.pdf)

These questions REMAIN unanswered.

We are respectfully requesting an answer to the legal questions; AND whether the same legal team that 'vetted' the 381 Agreement has, or has not, closed these loopholes.

We are also requesting that the Commissioners Court create an 'AIRPORT ZONING COMMISSION' to address the public's concerns in a series of public meetings. We WERE promised a meeting by the Court in 2009, but it has NOT been scheduled.

I might remind you that the primary goal of governance is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the governed, NOT to facilitate the profits of corporate speculators.

Would the Judge or any member of the court like to address these questions today?

\*1) & 2) See Letter of 8/25/2010, Airport Operating Certificate, 14 C.F.R., Part 139.

\*3) Texas Airport Zoning Act, Chapter 241 of the Texas Local Government Code, enables a city, a county, or a combination of cities and/or counties to adopt, administer, and enforce zoning regulations.

Posted by noairport at 14:29:16 in News, Announcements, Players, County

Thursday, October 14, 2010  
**381 plan raises concerns**

**Airport 381 plan raises concerns**  
By Mike Blackwell  
The Smithville Times  
October 14, 2010

A pair of citizens briefly shared concerns about the 381 Agreement for the proposed Central Texas Airport Tuesday at the regular meeting of the Bastrop County Commissioners Court.

The airport proposed by Austin developer Jim Carpenter remains in the planning stages. Tom Thompson told commissioners that several legal loopholes exist in the agreement, including the possibility of a large number of daily cargo flights, the circumvention of various FAA safety rules, a lack of public notification, the absence of an environmental impact study and the lack of an on-site noise study.

"Many of these concerns were raised in a letter sent to the court in August, followed by a response from the court's attorneys on Sept. 1, 2010, which was evasive, and completely non-responsive," Thompson read from a prepared statement. "These questions remain unanswered. We are respectfully requesting an answer to the legal questions and whether the same legal team that 'vetted' the 381 Agreement has, or has not, closed these loopholes."

Phil Cook, representing the Bastrop County Sierra Club, also spoke to the commissioners about the airport, adding that commissioners have cost citizens gathering information about the project "thousands of hours of time."

County Judge Ronnie McDonald said the county could not address the concerns at the meeting, and referred Thompson to Ronnie Moore, the county's planning and project management director. Moore said after the meeting that he would continue an ongoing dialogue with Thompson.

"We are requesting that the commissioners court create an airport zoning commission to address the public's concerns in a series of public meetings," Thompson said. "We were promised a meeting by the court in 2009, but it has not been scheduled. I might remind you that the primary goal of governance is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the governed, not to facilitate the profits of corporate speculators."

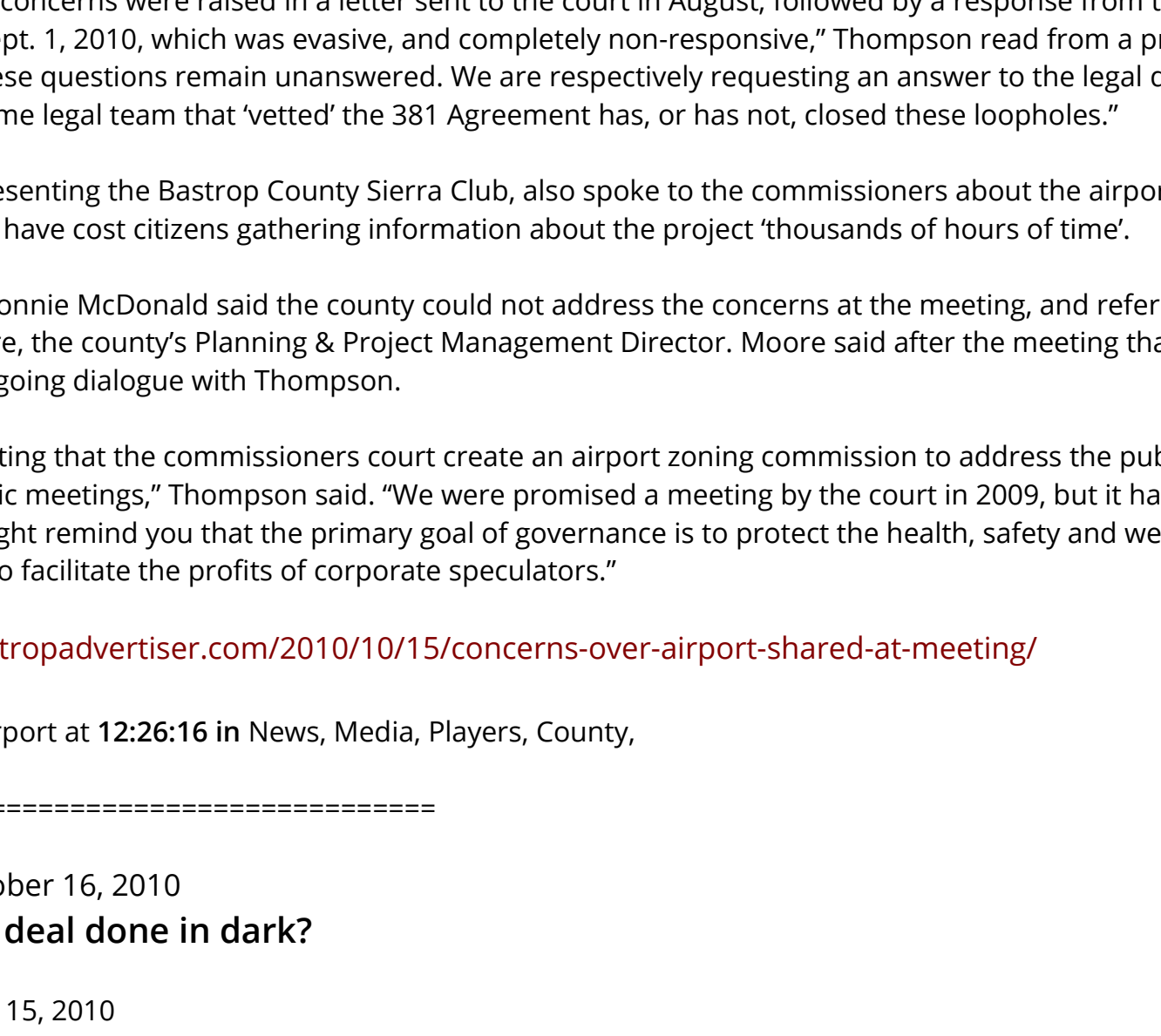
In other court action . . .

<http://smithvilletimes.com/2010/10/14/airport-381-plan-raises-concerns/>

Posted by noairport at 13:54:28 in News, Media, Players, County

Friday, October 15, 2010  
**Citizens challenge airport**

From the front page of the Bastrop Advertiser:



Posted by noairport at 12:57:07 in News Media Players County

Saturday, October 16, 2010  
**Concerns over airport shared at meeting**

**Bastrop Advertiser online**  
Friday, October 15, 2010  
Mike Blackwell

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See: <http://bastropadvertiser.com/2010/10/15/concerns-over-airport-shared-at-meeting/>

Posted by noairport at 12:26:16 in News, Media, Players, County

Saturday, October 16, 2010  
**Was airport deal done in dark?**

Friday, October 15, 2010  
**Special to the Advertiser - Opinion:**

Editor:

In June of this year, the Bastrop County Commissioners unanimously approved a '381 Agreement' with Carpenter & Associates to facilitate the construction of a 'Central Texas Airport'.  
See: <https://www.stopcta.info/docs/381.pdf>

There was no public input during these negotiations.

The loopholes contained in this 'deal in the dark' jumped out at us 'common folk' that have bothered to read it. So just how did the court and its well-paid legal team miss something so obvious?

A letter was sent to the court requesting specific information relating to the 381 Agreement deficiencies. The response was an evasive letter from the court's legal team.  
See: [https://www.stopcta.info/docs/court\\_response.pdf](https://www.stopcta.info/docs/court_response.pdf)

Just what is going on here? Either they don't want to share (so much for open government) or they signed this agreement completely unaware that they were being snookered into a deal that could be a disaster for Bastrop County (and they don't want to fess up).

For details about the 381 Agreement giveaway and the county's response to the request for clarification, please visit: <https://www.stopcta.info>

Candace Boheme  
Cedar Creek

<http://bastropadvertiser.com/2010/10/15/was-airport-deal-done-in-dark/>

Posted by noairport at 15:57:27 in News Media Players County

Wednesday, October 20, 2010  
**I.E.D. In Bastrop County**

Ya'll know what an 'I.E.D.' is, don't you?

It's an 'Improvised Explosive Device,' a bomb that kills many American service-people every week in Iraq and Afghanistan.

We have an 'I.E.D.' in Bastrop County that's a little different.

It's an 'Intentional Environmental Disaster' known as the Central Texas Airport.

Funny thing about the I.E.D. bombs in the Middle East is that soldiers try to disarm them to prevent injury to others.

This isn't happening with the Bastrop 'I.E.D.' . . . no, in fact our 'leaders' keep trying to prevent US from disarming the damn thing.

Now why is that?

Maybe because they figure that sacrificing a few Bastrop County citizens for phantom tax and business revenues will be excused as 'doing the right thing for Bastrop County'?

Maybe.

It also may be because our elected public officials starting with the United States Senate, and working down through the House of Representatives are afraid of making waves that may upset 'States Rights' and 'local control'.

That worked out really well prior to the Civil War, and the following debacle of Reconstruction.

No, any elected official that won't stand up and provide protection for US citizens when local governance is ruled by corporate interests, isn't worth the powder it takes to blow up a pissant.

Part of protecting the governed should be sticking their necks out and issuing an order for an Environmental Impact Study on the site of our very own aviation 'I.E.D.'

But, no they're too busy getting re-elected to notice the plight of people that don't own a corporate jet.

Posted by noairport at 17:59:08 in Costs, Environment, Voices, oracle

Friday, October 22, 2010  
**What 'Green' Is Not**

The term 'Green' has been thrown around for the past three decades to describe objects, actions, and views that are supposed to be 'friendly' to nature.

However, certain industrial, manufacturing, and development sectors of the world economy have twisted the true meaning of these words to make their often 'ungreen' products acceptable to a more environmentally educated, but easily fooled group of elected officials and citizens. We call it 'greenwashing'.

We're here to tell you what 'Green' is NOT.

'Green' is not placing an airport in a suburban area that will then be subjected to unbearable noise pollution from large aircraft flying over homes and businesses at altitudes as low as 100'.

'Green' is not approving aircraft maintenance facilities that will static-test loud jet engines at all hours of the night and day near 20 subdivisions.

'Green' is not placing an airport in the basin of the Colorado River.

'Green' is not building an airport across the Colorado River from the McKinney Roughs Nature Preserve.

'Green' is not creating hundreds of acres of impermeable groundcover for aircraft and car parking.

'Green' is not polluting the Colorado River with runoff from these impermeable surfaces.

'Green' is not storing tens-of-thousands of gallons of jet and aviation fuel in or near flood plains of the Colorado River or its tributaries.

'Green' is not planning an industrial facility that will spray sewage and industrial effluent over hundreds of acres located less than 1/2 mile from the Colorado River.

'Green' is not putting the citizens of Bastrop County at risk from falling aircraft that are crippled from bird strikes because the airport is located in a 'Wildlife Hazard Zone.'

'Green' is not choking local roads that are already dangerous, with thousands of commuting workers.

'Green' is not misleading gullible public officials with slick advertising that promises 'get-rich-quick' schemes and tax windfalls from 'renewable' energy while 'business' aircraft waste thousands of gallons of fuel to fly a handful of elites to golf and F1 dates.

Nope, this project has an entirely different color . . . the color of an old dried-out cow-patty.

Posted by noairport at 14:23:57 in Costs, Environment, Voices, oracle

Sunday, October 24, 2010  
**Numbers Don't Lie**

The latest 'nugget' of information from the 'Eco-Merge' Central Texas Airport site is this bit of numerical numbskullery:

**"As many as 250 aircraft are projected to be housed at CTA, but only a small percentage of those will be involved in daily takeoffs and landings. Eighty percent of daily air traffic will arrive from the more rural north, descending against the southern wind with the practical effect of minimizing noise. Takeoffs will quickly rise 1,000 feet or more before leaving GCC grounds and climb steadily from there."**

Let's see how good, the north end of the runway is less than one-half mile from FM 969, with existing homes and new home building going on about 100' north of the Right-Of-Way of FM 969.

The south end of the runway is less than one-half mile from the Colorado River on whose banks are located the McKinney Roughs Nature Preserve and the Hyatt Regency recreational complex.

So, Mr. Carpenter is trying to tell us that a loaded 737 is going to take off and climb to 1000' in 2500'?

That's about a 22 degree rate of climb, and with the diverse performance envelopes of many types of aircraft, a COMPLETELY unsupported claim.

Ever see any of those climb like that after a departure from ABIA going over Hwy 71?

I haven't.

Remember, a 737 with Stage III engines will develop 115 dB of noise at 500'.

Now if you'll notice ANOTHER antic with semantics which says that:

**"As many as 250 aircraft are projected to be housed at CTA, but only a small percentage of those will be involved in daily takeoffs and landings."**

Did he say anything about large cargo-aircraft NOT housed at the CTA making up to 250 flights daily?

Nope.

Now that we've settled those bits of verbal sleights-of-hand, it's time to address the FAA-mandated 3 degree approach slope for aircraft arrivals.

The MAXIMUM ALTITUDE for aircraft entering the five-mile approach-zone of either end of the runway is 1350' above-ground-level (AGL).

Notice that I said MAXIMUM ALTITUDE.

They can be lower.

Much lower.

FAA rules mandate that aircraft only have to clear ground obstacles by 35'.

At the MAXIMUM approach altitudes, they'll only be approximately 100' AGL over many homes.

See a pattern here?

Numbers don't lie.

I'll leave it to the people of Bastrop County to figure out who is . . .

Posted by noairport at 12:14:41 in Costs, Quality of life, Players, Developer, Voices, oracle

Monday, October 25, 2010  
**StopCTA comments 25/10/10**

*StopCTA comments these comments to the Bastrop County Commissioners Court on October 25, 2010 during the Citizens' Comments period.*

I'd like to begin by wishing good morning to Carpenter & Associates indispensable 'financial partners'.

Today's lesson is 'Reading 101'.

You're probably all familiar with the famous line:

"What we've got here is a failure to communicate . . ."

Well, I think what we've got here in Bastrop County is a failure to read and understand the 381 Agreement. Want to raise your hand if you actually did read it? [Surprisingly, all Commissioners raised their hands.]

- 1. Members of the Court insist that there will be no cargo flights at the airport yet CARGO is not mentioned ONCE in the 381.**
- 2. Members of the Court insist that there won't be any 737s landing there. Yet the plans show a 7200' runway which is long enough to land a plane of that size. And the only limitation on aircraft size in the 381 is for PASSENGER planes.**

In the law, what is not specifically prohibited is permitted. The 381 is leakier than a dike in Amsterdam and you just can't see it.

But, whether you did or didn't read the 381 is really beside the point because the Court's legal team was paid to vet this 'IED'. In Bastrop County that means 'INTENTIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER'.

- 3. Carpenter & Associates claimed that their dog and pony show last week that they will follow all FAA rules and regulations. If that's true, why did their attorneys make sure the 381 exempts the proposed Central Texas Airport from the 14CFR, Part 139 rules which relate to safe operation of aircraft?**

And if you please explain how if legal team vetted the 381, they do not have any records relating to these rules on file? Your legal team needs to be held accountable for failing the Court and the people of Bastrop County.

One of the 14 detailed sections of these rules covers Wildlife Hazard management. An 'Advisory Circular' in this section recommends that jet engine aircraft should not operate within 10,000' of a natural or created bird-rich habitat. Well guess what? The entire proposed Central Texas Airport site falls within a 'Wildlife Hazard Zone' endangering those in the air and on the ground. Think Hudson river Bastrop style.

The 381 traded the peace and safety of Bastrop County citizens for the financial interests of a corporate speculator. What were you thinking? At a minimum, it needs extensive triage. An even better idea would be to shred it and forget it.

As our elected representatives you should be on OUR side. But with this closed door deal, you have betrayed the promise of Democracy and you have betrayed the good people of this county as well. SHAME ON YOU!!!!

Posted by noairport at 13:25:56 in News, Announcements, Players, Developer, County, Voices, stopcta

Wednesday, October 27, 2010  
**Airport fallout**

**Airport fallout: critics blast county leaders**  
By Davis McAuley  
bastrop-news.com  
October 25th, 2010

Bastrop, Tx--A dozen-odd angry Bastrop County residents spent most of an hour Monday berating county commissioners and the judge for encouraging the development of a private general aviation airport and associated industrial projects on more than 1,000 acres west of Bastrop.

One after another they took the podium at a regular meeting of commissioners during a "citizens comment" section of the agenda. Some said they felt betrayed by the county signing a development pact for the project with veteran developer James Carpenter of Carpenter & Associates who has publicly pushed his plans for more than 18 months.

Others accused commissioners of "selling out" to developer interests. Many called for a public hearing on the airport and associated development projects. Some called for the development agreement to be scrapped outright.

Monday's outpouring of anger was prompted in part by an announcement by Carpenter in Austin on Oct. 19 that four business ventures, including the conglomerate Toshiba, have made agreements to locate new facilities near the proposed airport.

In April 2009 Carpenter first laid out the project at a public meeting before commissioners and a hostile crowd which packed the meeting room. At the time County Judge Ronnie McDonald said residents would be able to pose questions about the plans at a future public session.

But no such session took place before commissioners approved a development agreement with Carpenter earlier this year, the construction of some critics. A key provision of the pact calls for Carpenter to invest a minimum of \$150 million before the project is eligible for a rebate of 75 percent of county property taxes on the site and improvements for 30 years. Property taxes assessed by school districts and other taxing jurisdictions are not affected.

Commissioners did not respond to the critics during Monday's meeting, nor did they offer any defense of the project or the deal with Carpenter.

Outside the meeting, however, some of them questioned whether Carpenter will be able to meet the \$150 million investment threshold. At the Oct. 19 announcement in Austin, Carpenter said he hopes to begin construction later this year.

Posted by noairport at 16:05:15 in News, Media, Environment, Players, Developer, County, The 'expendable

Thursday, October 28, 2010  
**Got Answers?**

The Court continues to circle the wagons and recite the mantra that there won't be any cargo traffic or planes as large as a 737 at the proposed Central Texas Airport. Well, PROVE IT!

The following questions are being asked of every member of the Court including the Judge. Since they all voted on the 381 Agreement you'd think they would have the answer at their fingertips. Guess we'll find out.

Commissioners, please show us EXACTLY where in the 381 Agreement:

1. cargo traffic has been prohibited.
2. aircraft of up to 100 tons - like a 737 for example - have been prohibited from landing at this airport.

We would be happy to move on from this very technical point if the Court can provide a reference to the specific passages in the 381 that unequivocally answer those questions. We want definitive black and white evidence, not a conclusion drawn from inference or extrapolation or wishful thinking.

Sorry, we're not gonna take it on faith. The stakes are too high.

Posted by noairport at 08:50:48 in Players, County, Voices, stopcta

Thursday, October 28, 2010  
**Ozone Antics**

The Commissioners Court 'follies' continue to get better and better.

On Monday, 10/25, the Courts agenda included a 'Discussion and possible action' dealing with Bastrop County's potential nonattainment designation for Ozone standards.

A letter from Judge McDonald addressed to Ms. Margie McAllister of the TCEQ, was touting Bastrop County's participation in several voluntary pollution reduction programs, such as 1-Hour and 8-Hour Ozone Flex Plans, and the early Action Compact.

The letter continued on to say:

**"there are few additional things, if any, that Bastrop County could implement to control emissions sources. Reductions in Bastrop County's Ozone levels will ultimately need to come from a cleaner fleet of cars in the United States and a reduction in transport emissions."**

Now wait a damn minute!

How does putting a huge airport and industrial complex in the Colorado River basin help with Bastrop County's plans to 'control emissions'?

It doesn't.

It'll make them worse, much, much worse.

Jet aircraft produce vast amounts of particulate and gas pollutants.

The 'Green' industries planned for 'Eco-Merge' may produce energy saving devices, but may produce much more pollution and emissions than products of older technology.

Once again, did the Court research what they were supporting before they gave their OK?

Doesn't look like they did.

It's obvious that one thing is missing in our Commissioners Court.

An ability to see the big picture and connect the dots of cause and effect . . .

Posted by noairport at 13:07:56 in Costs, Environment, Players, County, Voices, oracle  
1 comment

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## Saturday, October 30, 2010 Airport foes rally at court

**Commissioners Court: Airport foes rally at court**  
By Mike Blackwell  
Smithville Times  
October 29, 2010

Fourteen men and women – all opposed to the proposed 381 Agreement between Bastrop County and the Central Texas Airport – spoke during the citizens comments portion of the Bastrop County Commissioners Court meeting Monday.

The citizens expressed concerns ranging from a lack of communication about the project from the airport's developers, Carpenter & Associates, to the safety of those whose homes or schools fall within the flight zone of the airport. Several in the group also suggested the site violates certain Federal Aviation Administration regulations.

"We have information that places the proposed site entirely within a FAA Wildlife Hazard Zone that requires a minimum separation of 10,000 feet to five miles for the safe operation of jet aircraft near the Colorado River which is frequented by large birds, namely geese, ducks, eagles, and others," Tom Thompson read from a prepared statement. "We are also informed that on-site drainage construction required by FEMA will produce even more habitat for large avian species and that constructing these facilities within the Airport Operating Area is in direct violation of FAA 'Advisory Circular, #150/5200-33D, Hazardous Wildlife Attractants In or Near Airports."

Tom Thompson added that his organization was "for the second time" requesting a public meeting pertaining to the proposal.

Candace Boheme said safety was a concern for her and specifically mentioned last week's meeting pertaining to the airport proposal hosted in Austin by Carpenter & Associates.

"Carpenter & Associates claimed at their dog and pony show last week that they will follow all FAA rules and regulations," Boheme said. "If that's true, why did their attorneys make sure the 381 exempts the proposed Central Texas Airport from the 14CFR, Part 139 rules which relate to safe operation of aircraft?"

Ruth Thompson also mentioned the Carter [sic] & Associates meeting in her remarks.

"I was not invited to last week's meeting for the elite," Ruth Thompson said in her prepared remarks. "I am just an ordinary citizen, but I did witness you, Judge (Ronnie) McDonald, and you, Commissioner (Lee) Diddy, 'selling out' the ordinary citizens of Bastrop County – the very people whose interests you were elected to protect. There you were, all lined up with the Toshiba investors to offer your enthusiastic support for the project. Disappointment does not even begin to express how I feel."

Ruth Thompson said she went to the meeting in order to pass out information from her side of the argument.

"I was there to hand out to the attendees of the meeting information citing some real truths about this project, not the slick sales pitch of an unscrupulous and, to date, rather unsuccessful developer in this area," Ruth Thompson said. "And then, what do you know, I was pursued by a security guard for my efforts. All I can say is 'shame on you, Judge McDonald, Commissioner Diddy, and the entire court.' By signing the 381 Agreement with Carpenter & Associates, without public input, you displayed a total lack of respect, sensitivity and support for the health, safety and welfare of your citizens."

Other court action at:  
<http://smithvilletimes.com/2010/10/29/commissioners-court-airport-foes-rally-at-court/>

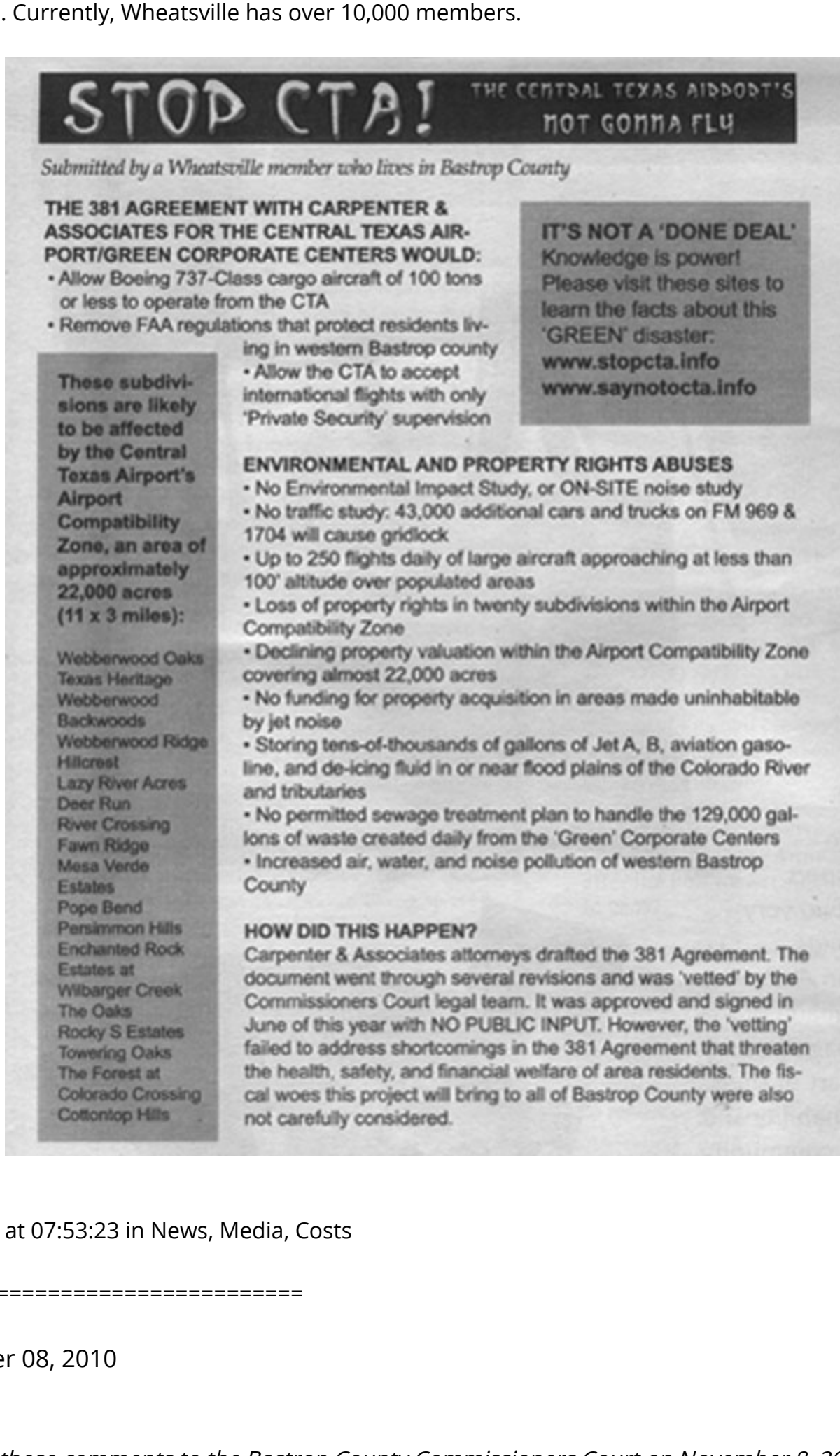
Also posted as "Airport opposition voiced" in the Bastrop Advertiser:  
<http://bastropadvertiser.com/2010/10/29/airport-opposition-voiced/>

Posted by noairport at 12:23:34 in News, Media, Players, Developer, County, The 'expendable'  
1 comment

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## NOVEMBER 2010 Friday, November 5, 2010 Wheatville Breeze

This month's Wheatville Breeze just arrived. Wheatville is Austin's and Texas' only food co-op with deep roots in community activism. Currently, Wheatville has over 10,000 members.



Posted by noairport at 07:53:23 in News, Media, Costs

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## Monday, November 08, 2010 Bait 'n Switch

*StopCTA presented these comments to the Bastrop County Commissioners Court on November 8, 2010 during the Citizens' Comments period.*

Today we're going to get technical. Really, really technical. Let's see just how Carpenter & Associates managed to outwit, outplay and outlast everyone else at the 381 Agreement negotiating table.

For many months we've been trying to get answers to what should be very easy questions relating to aircraft size and cargo service in the 381 Agreement. Members of the Court have insisted that neither large planes nor cargo would be allowed. Yet, not one member of the Court or its agents would (or could) point to anything in the 381 to support that claim.

Thanks to Carpenter & Associates spokesperson T.R. Reid, we now know that aircraft as large as 737s will indeed "not be barred from landing at the proposed airport". You can bet that's what they've been planning all along. Here's exactly how we think they accomplished their goal of creating a cargo hub without arousing any suspicions.

For this to work, Carpenter & Associates had to overcome several formidable obstacles:

1. Top of the list was to find a way around having to obtain an Airport Operating Certificate under 14CFR Part 139 rules. Why is that important? Because the current siting of the airport fails to meet the safety requirements spelled out in those very rules. If the rules were in play, the FAA simply would not approve airspace access to the CTA in its current unsuitable and very dangerous location.

2. Multiple tactics were used to avoid the 14CFR part 139 rules. ANY federal funding would have made adherence to the rules mandatory. So Carpenter & Associates made a big deal about the CTA being a PRIVATELY funded airport. Privatization had the bonus of eliminating the requirement for an Environmental Impact Study and other federal regulations so it was a two fer. The second tactic was to prohibit flights of 31 or more passengers. The rules are optional for flights of 30 passengers or less but mandatory for 31 or more.

Even then, the Court could have required that these rules be mandatory. But instead, an exemption was written into the 381. Just how did that get-out-of-jail-free card slip by the Court and its legal advisors?

3. The next challenge was how to open the door for CARGO service to the proposed industrial complex. The 381 carefully states that "the Airport is limited to charter and general aviation flights and cannot be used as a full-service commercial airport". That sounds restrictive and reassuring but it's actually an invitation. The operative word is 'charter'. Who needs 'commercial' service when there is a thriving global, 'cargo charter' business?

4. The final hurdle was how to avoid restrictions on really big jets like 737s from using the airport. This was accomplished by simple misdirection. Although there is a clear limitation on number of passengers in the 381, there is not one reference to the actual SIZE of aircraft anywhere in the document.

None of us looking at the 381 after the fact can really know what went on behind the scenes. But we suspect that the Court was given assurances that somehow never made it into the 381 – quite simply, it was a very clever legal bait and switch. It's like you ordered a Happy Meal at the drive thru and were served a Turkey Surprise at the other end. It's time to wake up and smell the con.

We all want what's best for Bastrop county. If there are indeed fatal flaws in the 381 that put the county and its citizens in jeopardy, they need to be addressed forcefully and immediately. Carpenter & Associates may be your financial partner but we the people are your partners in democracy. Working together, we can make this right.

Posted by noairport at 13:02:40 in News, Announcements, Players, Developer, County, Voices, stopcta

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## Friday, November 12, 2010 Foes urge transparency

**Airport foes urge more transparency**  
By Mike Blackwell  
Bastrop Advertiser  
November 11, 2010 |

Opponents of the Bastrop County 381 Agreement with the Central Texas Airport once again implored Bastrop County Commissioners Court to ensure transparency into the particulars of the agreement at the court's regular meeting Monday.

Eleven people spoke at the meeting, with some requesting that the court divulge information about the agreement between the commissioners and Carpenter & Associates, the airport's developers. According to the 381 Agreement, the airport will receive 75 percent of its property tax back (after the airport is built and the land's value improves) for a period of 30 years, after which the county will receive 100 percent of the property tax.

Citizens were given three minutes to speak and County Judge Ronnie McDonald asked those in attendance to adhere to the three-minute rule and to also refrain from name-calling and to be respectful.

"You asked us to respect you," said Bastrop County resident Wilfred Williams, alluding to McDonald's comments. "What about you respecting us? I want to commend ya'll. You've done an excellent job of not letting the public know what you are doing."

Williams also requested copies of e-mail communications between the court and Carpenter & Associates.

"What is alarming is that I only received the e-mails from Carpenter & Associates and none of the emails that were sent from the judge's office and the commissioner's court," Williams said.

Another Bastrop resident, Tom Placek, said the proposed airport would directly affect his family and gave a passionate testimonial that was followed by applause from some in the crowd.

"You're looking at the first face that's at the end of that runway," Placek said. "My children keep asking me, 'What are they doing, daddy? You people have to understand the impact of what you're doing on the community. You need to get it. I'm upset and I'm angry. My valley, the valley that I love to see – rural Bastrop – is now being puked upon.'"

Another citizen who lives in the flight zone of the planned airport, Shelley Cartier, said she didn't believe the commissioners cared about the proposal's potential hazards because, "None of you live in the areas that will be affected. I know that's not your neighborhood, so you don't care."

Cartier also said she did not believe commissioners included citizen input when dealing with Carpenter & Associates.

"I'm right in the flight pattern of the airport," Cartier said. "I don't feel like we've been included in all of this."

Tom Thompson said real estate in the area of the proposed airport has already suffered and will continue to suffer. He also requested the court hold public meetings pertaining to the Airport Compatibility Zone, the area surrounding the airport, which includes several subdivisions.

Ruth Thompson told the court that she was concerned about the tax ramifications of the project on Bastrop County residents and also lamented the court's "lack of concern" for Bastrop County residents.

"I don't know how many people must line up before you, voicing their concerns, before you begin to really listen," Ruth Thompson said. "I suspect that more than one of you realizes now that signing the 381 Agreement with Carpenter & Associates was a mistake. Perhaps you were misinformed and misled by those upon whose counsel you relied. I don't need an admission of the mistake. I only need to hear that you intend to use the power I know you have to fix it. But yet you haven't even called a public meeting, which has been requested endless times. I ask you to stop the madness. Let's work together to find a way out of this mess."

McDonald reminded those in attendance – prior to the citizens' comments – that the commission was not allowed to respond to any comments.

Candace Boheme, who spoke at the previous commissioner's court meeting in October, ended her comments by saying, "We're your partners, we're not the enemy."

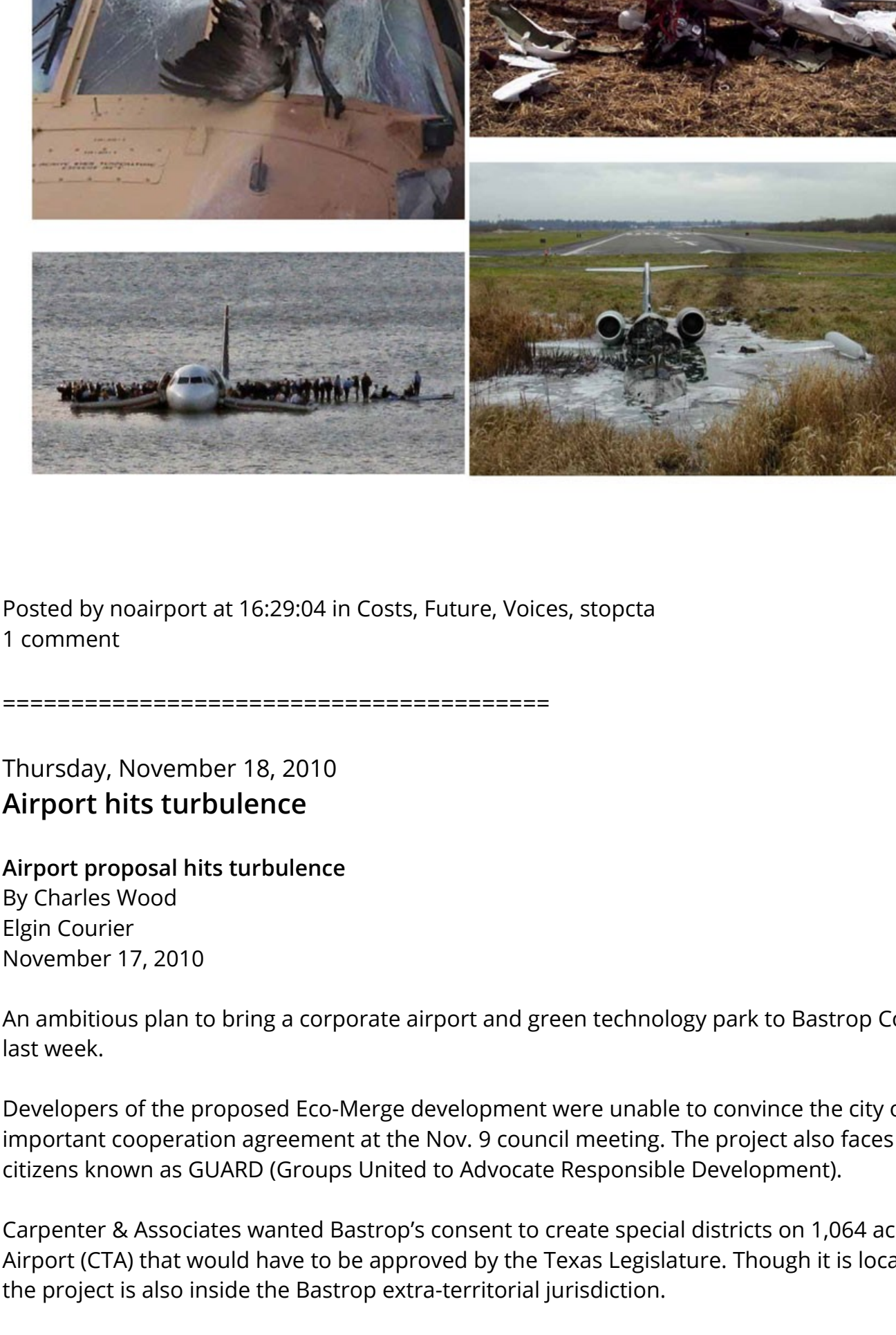
<http://bastropadvertiser.com/2010/11/11/airport-foes-urge-more-transparency/>

Posted by noairport at 05:35:53 in News, Media, Players, County, The 'expendable'  
1 comment

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## Monday, November 15, 2010 Plane meets wildlife

There is a reason the FAA recommends a separation between wildlife habitat and aircraft. It's DANGEROUS!!



Posted by noairport at 16:29:04 in Costs, Future, Voices, stopcta  
1 comment

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## Thursday, November 18, 2010 Airport hits turbulence

**Airport proposal hits turbulence**  
By Charles Wood  
Elgin Courier  
November 17, 2010

An ambitious plan to bring a corporate airport and green technology park to Bastrop County ran into a serious obstacle last week.

Developers of the proposed Eco-Merge development were unable to convince the city of Bastrop to approve an important cooperation agreement at the Nov. 9 council meeting. The project also faces stiff opposition from a group of citizens known as GUARD (Groups United to Advocate Responsible Development).

Carpenter & Associates wanted Bastrop's consent to create special districts on 1,064 acres needed for the Central Texas Airport (CTA) that would have to be approved by the Texas Legislature. Though it is located within the Elgin school district, the project is also inside the Bastrop extra-territorial jurisdiction.

The Bastrop council unanimously rejected the request, citing a need for more information. T.R. Reid spoke on behalf of developer James Carpenter, asking for consent to create special districts to finance the project; support for legislation that would allow creation of the districts; approving annexation of land developed under county rules and regulations; and accepting payments for professional services rendered by the city, periodically and for the duration of the agreement (i.e. 50 years).

The council rejected the proposal after executive session. Council member Julie Hart said the council wanted more input and would need a 30-day time if it was to support the project. She also said reaching an agreement would take much longer than the negotiating time period the developers wanted.

The developers entered a "381" agreement with Bastrop County in June, stating that the county would refund 75 percent of county property taxes over the next 30 years. However, Pct. 4 Bastrop County Commissioner Lee Diddy said the agreement was not sufficient to make the project a reality; the developers were eventually going to have to deal with the city of Bastrop. "The 381 Agreement in and of itself was just a portion of a bigger picture," he said. "The project is currently in the Bastrop ETJ. Getting a consent agreement is a major part of completing this project."

GUARD, which is made up of residents who mostly hail from the countryside around Elgin and Cedar Creek, was active in the past and was recently resurrected. The group's first incarnation was aimed at stopping a trailer home subdivision that was planned in the area.

GUARD members met Thursday, Nov. 11 at the Lil' Mexican Restaurant on FM 969 to discuss their concerns about the proposed Eco-Merge project, which include worries about the flight path location and the potential for pollution to the Colorado River.

GUARD Chairperson Murray Altman-Kaough said her main concern is that "the project is kind of flying under the radar. Because it's private, there's no state or federal regulatory agency monitoring it except for the FAA [Federal Aviation Administration]. The FAA only determines if the airspace is free. I think it's disingenuous for them to say it's privately funded when they are seeking taxpayer funds on the back end for infrastructure improvements."

She believes the green industries could potentially be highly-polluting and wants to see an independent environmental study performed before the project moves forward. "You can spray paint a pig green, but it's still a pig."

"The airport is dangerously sited because of the bird habitat surrounding it subjects it to big strikes and crashes," said GUARD member Tom Thompson. "The 381 agreement prohibits Carpenter and Associates from building an airport that is safe." He believes the developers' prediction that the development could attract 10,000 jobs "is part of a disinformation campaign to get people on board."

Kathleen Woffington said she lives close to the end of the proposed CTA runway. She worried about the "potential for pollution and runoff, not just from the airport, but from any corporate manufacturing processes, into the Colorado River."

<http://elgincourier.com/articles/2010/11/17/news/news56.txt>

Posted by noairport at 10:04:38 in News, Media, Players  
1 comment

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## Monday, November 22, 2010 To the woodshed

*StopCTA presented these comments to the Bastrop County Commissioners Court on November 22, 2010 during the Citizens' Comments period.*

For months, your constituents have been trying to bring the flaws in the 381 Agreement which are not in Bastrop County's best interests to your attention. Unfortunately, our efforts seem to be falling on deaf ears. It has become quite apparent that this governing body rules by proclamation not participation.

We know you're in a pickle with the 381 but ignoring those of us who want to help you fix the problem is so wrong on so many counts. Members of the Court have been circling the wagons and dialog has shut down. Just what is going on? My phone messages to Commissioner Klaus and Beckett have gone unanswered. Commissioner Diddy and I had a lengthy conversation several weeks ago but the Commissioner's earnest promise to get back to me in a few days never materialized. Commissioner, is your word always so reliable?

So just who is responsible for the 381? Well, technically the attorneys representing the County's and the Company's interests.

But the FOIA documents make it perfectly clear that the 381 Agreement fiasco rests squarely on the shoulders of you Judge McDonald and you Commissioner Diddy. You were the only members of the Court who were part of the 'working group' which also included Lisa Smith (County Auditor) and Ronnie Moore (County Engineer). The other members of the Court weren't even a footnote to the negotiations.

The exchange on the non-negotiable items was quite instructive. I can now understand why you 'thought' you had protected the County. Unfortunately, we all now know that the 'protections' are insufficient to prevent the CTA from becoming an active international cargo hub.

I honestly can't see why you bought into what Carpenter was selling. His glowing descriptions of this project and financial shell games should have been enough to send any thinking person running as fast as possible in the opposite direction! It is schemes like this that are bankrupting the county!

I'm hoping that the FOIA to the State of Texas, specifically, Governor Perry, Lt. Governor Dewhurst, Senator Hegar, and Rep. Kleinschmidt, will shed some light on what other influences might be in play. Stay tuned.

Posted by noairport at 16:47:27 in Players, Developer, County

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## Tuesday, November 23, 2010 Monday hearing

*Davis McAuley's report on Jim Carpenter's initial presentation to the Commissioners Court on Monday, April 13, 2009 is very informative and well worth a read.*

**Monday airport hearing yields high drama**  
By Davis McAuley  
bastrop-news.com  
April 14th, 2009

Bastrop, Tx - Monday's 7 p.m. hearing before Bastrop County commissioners was a sterling example of how exciting local political theater can be in these parts. The issue was whether the county should endorse a private general aviation airport proposal put forward by James Carpenter of Austin-based Carpenter & Associates. The proposed site is north of the Colorado River across from the new Cedar Creek High School and the Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort and Spa.

For building dramatic tension and emotion-revealing resolution, I don't recall such a riveting show in years, though we've seen some pretty good dust-ups in that time. Even the famous Austin City Council airport marathon hearings have seldom matched the intensity and clarity of Monday's impromptu theater in Bastrop. And it took less than two hours from start to finish.

The protagonist, of course, was Carpenter himself with his ample silvery hair. It's not clear yet, however, whether he was hero caught in an unexpected ambush or merely acting bravely in the face of looming disaster. Think, perhaps, of George Armstrong Custer with his flowing locks at the Little Big Horn River. I must stop short, I think, of comparing Bluebonnet General Manager Mark Rose to Crazy Horse or some other Sioux war leader, but by the end of the evening Monday he certainly counted coup on Carpenter.

Here's the deal. Carpenter & Associates wants the Texas Legislature to create a special municipal utility district (MUD), perhaps with 2,000-acre sites, to aid the creation of the private airport and associated business/industrial park proposed for a 1,064-acre site between the Colorado River and the intersection of FM 969 and FM 1704 southwest of Elgin.

But State Sen. Glen Hegar and Rep. Tim Klienschmidt won't carry this water in the Legislature without the express backing of county commissioners and the Bastrop City Council. Bastrop City Manager Mike Talbot is worried by some of what he's hearing about the deal, and Bastrop County Judge Ronnie McDonald won't call for a vote by commissioners without public input and airing some relevant issues.

Residents of a nearby upscale subdivision have already complained to the city council about potential deleterious effects on their rural tranquility, personal safety and property values. Hyatt officials aren't entirely pleased either, evidently, and a Bastrop school trustee has written a critical letter to the editor of the local newspaper.

Hence Monday's hearing. Carpenter was forced to face a skeptical public or pack up his tent and ride off over the hill, at least until the next session of the Texas Legislature. A similar hearing is set for 6:45 p.m. April 14 before the Bastrop City Council.

McDonald was expecting a testy crowd and engaged the services of a public meeting manager to keep the proceedings civilized. The room was packed when the meeting convened, the atmosphere was tense and largely hostile to the airport cause.

Carpenter, backed by a team of consultants, associates and aides, was fluent in arguing that the airport is a money-maker, does not involve public funding, and will boost the local property tax base as well as attract additional jobs and businesses. It will be safe and won't bother anyone at the Hyatt or the new high school, he said. And future high-dollar development will be attracted to the area because the airport will cater to affluent customers, he added.

Questions from the crowd were typically tinged with hostility. Some were answered by repeating earlier points in Carpenter's presentation, some were dodged, and some were answered frankly. Yes, Carpenter went through bankruptcy in the late 1980s. "FAA approval" of the proposed airport means only that its flight patterns won't interfere with activities at other nearby airports.)

Judge McDonald assured the audience they will have a chance to voice their opinions (not just ask questions) at a later session, but before he closed the session he allowed brief remarks by Bastrop school trustee (and former county commissioner) Johnny Sanders who called for commissioners to consult with the school board before acting on the Carpenter request.

Of course, Sanders also works for Rose, and McDonald allowed the general manager to offer his own comments. And Rose blew the roof off.

In accusatory terms he declared that Hyatt officials are alarmed by the airport prospect and that Carpenter tried to sneak his proposed MUD bill through the Legislature without first consulting local officials. Rose also thundered that the



Tuesday, December 21, 2010

## The county's responsibility

### Part 1, Central Texas Airport: The county's responsibility

By Cyndi Wright  
Bastrop Advertiser  
December 10, 2010

*Part 2 of this series will examine the City of Bastrop's steps in regards to the Central Texas Airport, which will exist inside the city's extraterritorial jurisdiction. Part 3 will present citizens voices, both pro and con, for the CTA project.*

Is Bastrop County doing all it can to protect its citizens and maintain the great quality of life many people moved here for, while at the same time promoting economic development?

For some residents, especially those who currently find themselves living near the proposed Central Texas Airport in Cedar Creek, it may seem as though there are not enough steps being taken by the county to ensure not only their safety and well-being, but also the safety and well-being of the environment.

But the cold facts are that counties in Texas have almost no power to stop, or even regulate, development within their boundaries. Unlike home-rule cities, which have zoning and other regulatory powers and can almost make their own rules, counties must operate under laws established by state legislation that are not specific to an individual county's needs. And, that legislation does not allow counties to do much more than regulate subdivision growth.

"People move out to the country for the freedom from city regulations but then they still want the coverage," said Ronnie Moore, the county's engineer. "Counties cannot govern like a home-rule city. We can only enforce the statutes and laws of the Texas constitution."

Counties have no zoning authority and have limited ability to regulate land use – primarily through approval of plats (the dividing of land). So what happens when a developer such as Carpenter and Associates, the main force behind the proposed Central Texas Airport comes to the county?

Besides having no real power to say no to a privately-funded development, such as the CTA, the county could find itself in legal trouble if it tried to – and would have to spend taxpayer money to defend itself in a battle it would most likely lose.

However, counties have learned through experience that while they cannot stop such development, they can be at the negotiating table and try to find ways to make these developments more palatable to the people who will be affected most – the county's residents.

In this particular case, since part of the land that Carpenter and Associates are planning to build on is in a flood plain, the county can impose some regulations related to flooding impacts. If the developer decides to subdivide and it requires platting, the county has some authority over that with regards to roads and utilities. But the best negotiating tool the county has in its box by far is the 381 agreement – an economic development agreement that allows for financial incentives as a way to control how something is developed. Additionally, for the developer to pursue other opportunities through the Texas Legislature, having the county's approval is a necessity and the county can withhold that approval until the developer agrees to meet certain requirements set forth in the 381.

"The most effective way a county can regulate is through incentives," Moore said.

The county has entered into one other 381 agreement – with Burleson Crossing developers – and used that agreement as a skeleton for the one they currently have with Carpenter and Associates.

"We want to make sure we are not putting the county at risk," said County Judge Ronnie McDonald. "We want to make sure the county is protected and if the developer does follow through (with the requirements set forth in the 381 agreement), then the county benefits."

### Tax rebates

Under the 381 agreement with the county, the developer will receive back 75 percent of the ad valorem taxes, a tax based on the value of real estate or personal property, paid each year for a period of 30 years, the valorem the 381 agreement is in force. The developer is also entitled to 75 percent back of any sales and use taxes remitted to the county by the state comptroller.

So, under this agreement, is the county giving away what amounts to taxpayers' money to a developer? At first blush it may look that way, but in reality, the land the developer is looking at is currently an agricultural property – and the taxes collected are in line with that.

If someone comes in and puts millions of dollars of improvements on the land, such as what Carpenter and Associates are proposing, the value of the land increases in proportion. So, even though the county may rebate 75 percent of that tax back to the developer for 30 years, the 25 percent the county (and Elgin ISD) will collect, will still amount to much more than is currently being collected.

"It's strictly performance based," McDonald said. "Money they receive back is money they brought in – in investment and increased value to the property."

### Part 139

Much of the anger expressed lately by foes of the CTA has focused on a clause the county inserted into the 381 agreement.

In 2004, the FAA issued a rule that established certification requirements for airports serving aircraft designed for more than nine passenger seats. If larger aircraft, such as the ones flown by Delta and Southwest, ever want to land at Central Texas Airport, that airport must have a 14 CFR Part 139 certificate on file.

There are several basic tenets to a Part 139, including inspections by FAA airport certification safety inspectors for such things as pavement conditions, markings, lighting, presence of wildlife and traffic and wind direction indicators.

The county does not have the authority to impose – or not impose – whether an airport in its borders follows federal regulations. Whether an airport is liable to certain federal regulations depends entirely on the airport, its funding (whether federal or private) and its size and scope.

By inserting a clause into the 381 agreement that says in effect that the CTA will never be required to have a Part 139 certificate, the county has ensured that a possible future owner of the CTA will never be able to change this airport into one that services scheduled airlines that carry more than nine passenger seats or unscheduled airlines that carry more than 31 passenger seats.

"We wanted to have a safeguard to ensure that it would never become that type of airport," Moore said. Since this airport as it is proposed is to be privately financed, there is no requirement by the federal government for an environmental assessment. Since the federal government does not require such an assessment, the county cannot force the developers into getting one.

### The promises

As part of going into a 381 agreement with CTA, the county has asked that certain requirements be met. As discussed, these typically focus on financial incentives for the company that help a Texas county negotiate for economic development that fits in with the safety and well-being of its residents.

Some of the requirements set forth in the 381 with the CTA include that the CTA agrees to use reasonable efforts to begin phase one of the airport improvements to begin by June 30, 2012 and be completed no later than June 30, 2014 (the same restrictions apply to commercial improvements in the project).

"As a county, if there is an opportunity for economic development in our area, as good government we should have a process for analyzing that in a fair way to see if it is good for our county and citizens," McDonald said. "We need to use a fair system of evaluation that protects the citizens while providing for positive economic growth."

See: <http://bastropadvertiser.com/2010/12/10/part-1-central-texas-airport-the-county-s-responsibility/>

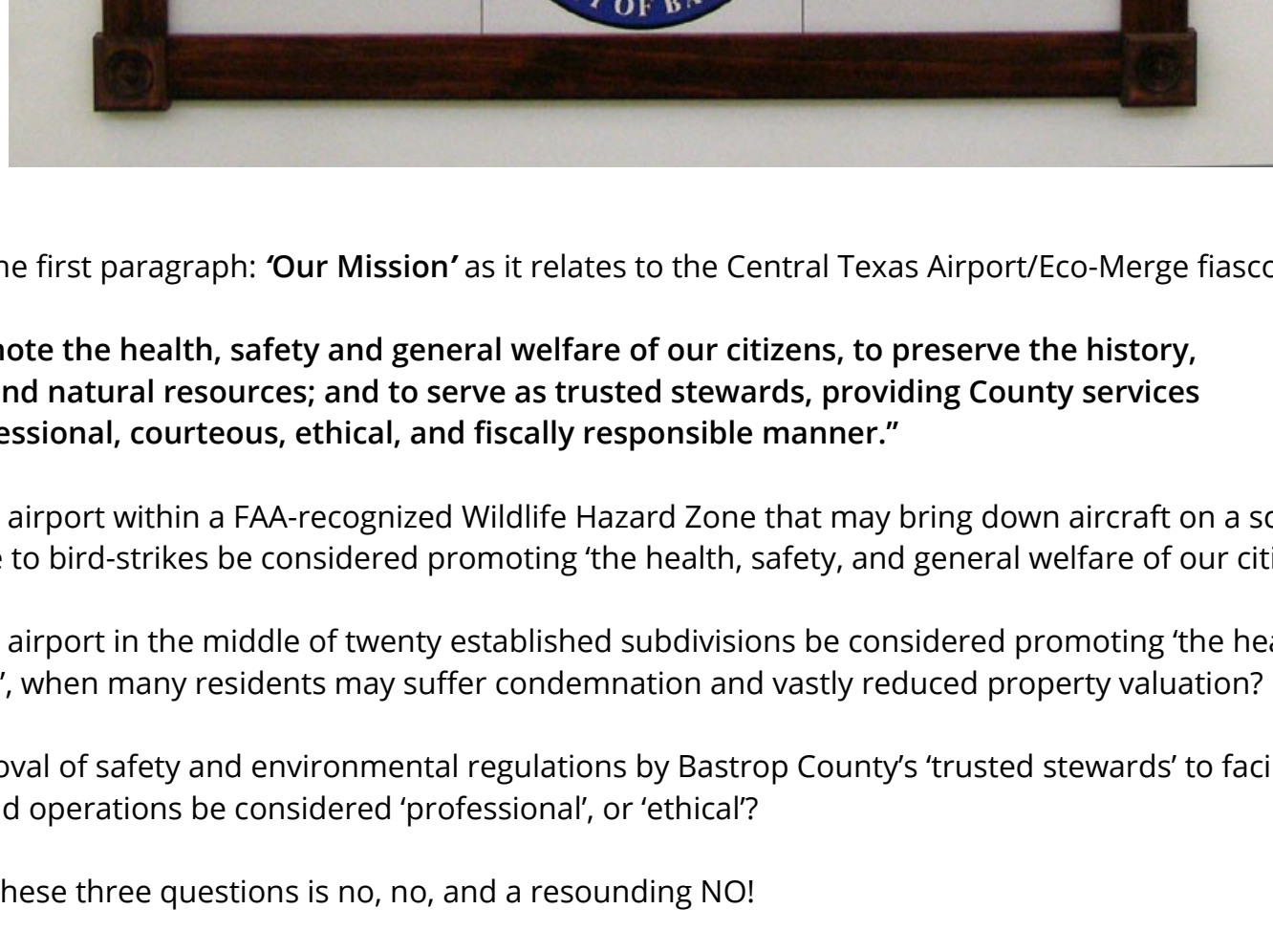
Posted by noairport at 10:59:00 in News, Media, Players, Developer, County

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Tuesday, December 21, 2010

## Mission spin: part 1

Bastrop County recently approved an official 'Bastrop County Mission, Values, and Objectives' statement. It is now posted near the entrance to the Bastrop County Commissioners Court



Let's examine the first paragraph: 'Our Mission' as it relates to the Central Texas Airport/Eco-Merge fiasco.

**"To promote the health, safety and general welfare of our citizens, to preserve the history, culture and natural resources; and to serve as trusted stewards, providing County services in a professional, courteous, ethical, and fiscally responsible manner."**

Would siting an airport within a FAA-recognized Wildlife Hazard Zone that may bring down aircraft on a school or subdivision due to bird-strikes be considered promoting 'the health, safety, and general welfare of our citizens'?

Would siting an airport in the middle of twenty established subdivisions be considered promoting 'the health, safety and general welfare', when many residents may suffer condemnation and vastly reduced property valuation?

Would the removal of safety and environmental regulations by Bastrop County's 'trusted stewards' to facilitate airport construction and operations be considered 'professional', or 'ethical'?

The answer to these three questions is no, no, and a resounding NO!

The performance of the Commissioners Court on these, and many other aspects of the Central Texas Airport/Eco-Merge fiasco, does not live up to the standards of the 'Mission' statement, and should be viewed for what it really is.

'Spin'.

And we all know what 'spin' used to be called.

Posted by noairport at 11:16:26 in Players, County, The 'expendable', Voices, oracle

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Wednesday, December 22, 2010

## The city's responsibility

### Part 2: The city's responsibility

By Cyndi Wright  
Bastrop Advertiser  
December 20, 2010

*Part 2 of this series examines what the City of Bastrop can do regarding regulating development, such as the proposed Central Texas Airport, inside its extra-territorial jurisdiction.*

The City of Bastrop's ETJ stretches west from the city almost to the Travis County line. That's a lot of area for hungry developers to contemplate turning into profitable growth.

For Mayor Terry Orr, there are many things to consider when a developer comes knocking – much of it revolving around compatibility.

"Is it compatible with the area around it – as far as other businesses and residential?" he asked. "Is it compatible with federal, state, county and city regulations? And last, but not least, is it compatible with the environment?"

And another important part of the equation is getting as much input as possible from the citizens who might be impacted by the development.

"The city does not do its business in a back room," he said. "We would have full public hearings about something of any magnitude."

According to city manager Mike Talbot, the city has some means for controlling and regulating the development in those areas.

The developers of the Central Texas Airport have asked the city to approve the implementation of various special districts for the project, which will allow them to recoup private funds used to develop infrastructure within the project, such as roads and utilities, by imposing a tax on residents inside the boundaries of the district.

"By law, we can be intimately involved in the creation of any special district that is located in the city's ETJ," Talbot said. "But, if the city and the developer are not able to reach an agreement about the district's formation and future operation, then the developer can go to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and the attorney general."

Alternatively, if the developer does not want to go through the process either with the TCEQ or the court, directly, it may attempt to have special legislation adopted by the State Legislature to create the district. That process generally happens after a developer has already obtained some form of agreement from within the county, city or city ETJ.

### Tools

There are at least two tools the city has in its box to help regulate such development, according to Talbot, including giving its blessing, or consent, to the creation of a special district, which is a process required by state law, and negotiating a mutually-acceptable developer's agreement, such as the one the city entered into with XS Ranch – the 7,000-unit housing development to be located on Texas 95.

"A developer's agreement was the approach we took with XS Ranch," Talbot said. "The XS Ranch developer felt it was more expeditious to work through the city, rather than going the TCEQ route. We sat down and reached a consensus. There was give and take on both sides."

XS Ranch is a large Municipal Utility District that may be divided into smaller MUDs in the future, all of which are inside its boundaries.

Two weeks ago, Carpenter and Associates, the lead developer on the airport project, approached the city council and asked for their blessing on developing a special district related to the airport project

"They were asking for approval to move forward on their project as a special district," Talbot said. "They were also seeking the city's consent for the plan to extend the boundaries of a water control district that is now located solely in another county into Bastrop County."

A water control district is another taxing entity.

According to Talbot, the city council declined to take immediate action on the matter, instead asking for more time to consider the details of the proposed project and for an agreement to work jointly with the developer on the process.

"We need more information and time to evaluate this," he said.

If it's anything like the process XS Ranch went through with this city council, which took two years, that evaluation and negotiation could be fairly exhaustive – and expensive. According to Talbot, the city sent back a reply to the airport developer's request, asking that the developer bear any cost the city incurs consulting with professionals to determine the feasibility of the project and the city's role in approving it, so that the citizens of the city aren't asked to bear the cost that is generated solely by the developers project. It's the same agreement the city had with the developers of XS Ranch.

"We do take our ETJ very seriously," Mayor Orr said. "We do cooperate with developers. They provide funding for our independent reviews."

So far, however, there has been no reply from Carpenter and Associates.

<http://bastropadvertiser.com/2010/12/20/part-2-the-city-s-responsibility/>

Posted by noairport at 16:45:27 in News, Media, Players, Developer, County

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Thursday, December 23, 2010

## Mission spin: part 2

Let's continue an examination of the 'Bastrop County Mission, Values, and Objectives' by considering the 'Our Values' section.

'Integrity', 'Accountability' and 'Respect' deserve special attention because without these three, the remaining five 'Values' are just window dressing.

**INTEGRITY:** Practicing honesty and ethical behavior in our dealings with one another and with those who entrust us with the governance of the County.

Webster's definition of 'integrity' is:

**'Being of sound moral principle; uprightness, honesty, and sincerity.'**

Now, would anybody who has followed the CTA/Eco-Merge fiasco, and read the Freedom of Information documents which have been made partially available to us, really believe that any 'moral principle' was followed when the Commissioners negotiated and approved the 381 Agreement behind closed doors? How is a decision made without any public input and which may ruin hundreds of people's lives upheld the integrity that is professed?

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** Accepting responsibility for one's actions.'

Just how does that phrase square with the video evidence of Judge McDonald promising a public hearing for citizens on the CTA, and then, after repeated requests from citizens for him to honor the promise, he tries to convince the people that he was speaking about a MUD, and not the citizens project?

**RESPECT:** 'Treating others the way we would like to be treated.'

How respectful is it to leave those who would be most affected by the CTA project completely out of the negotiating equation? Why weren't the people of this County treated with the same consideration as Carpenter & Associates? The Court has given citizens of this County zero respect and endangered the future of many in the process. If only the Court practiced what it preached.

Bastrop County, as the rest of the United States, should operate on a system of representative Democracy which mandates that our elected officials carry out the wishes of the electorate and seek their input on issues that may materially affect their existence. Attempts to undermine this system are usually prefaced by 'spin' designed to make you think you're getting exactly that, when you're only getting a corporate sow's ear dressed up like a silk pursed.

Are the 'Bastrop County Mission, Values, and Objectives' spinning too fast for you to read?

Posted by noairport at 09:08:26 in Players, County, Voices, oracle

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Friday, December 24, 2010

## Airport proponents silent

### Private airport proponents fall silent

By Davis McAuley  
bastrop-news.com  
December 16, 2010

Bastrop, TX - When the Bastrop City Council met Nov. 9 it heard a presentation from developers of the proposed Central Texas Airport, planned for some 1,500 acres west of the city between the Colorado River and the intersection of FM 969 and FM 1704 south of Elgin. City officials have heard nothing from the developers since, however.

Developers, led by Austin-based Carpenter and Associates, asked for Bastrop's consent to annex the tract to an existing water control district and for support to change state law to give the water district additional powers when Texas lawmakers meet in Austin next year. Proponents said the airport will create thousands of jobs and boost tax revenues of the Bastrop and Elgin school districts.

After hearing from the Carpenter group and a number of opponents who live in the proposed airport area, the council decided it would consider the project only on certain conditions, including a requirement that proponents pay the city's cost to engage expert consultants to evaluate the proposals.

In an interview today Bastrop City Manager Michael Talbot said the city has heard nothing from the Carpenter airport group since the November meeting. He declined to speculate on what that silence might mean.

Under current state law, the city's consent is required for the creation of new taxing districts in Bastrop's extra-territorial jurisdiction (ETJ), which includes the proposed airport site. The Legislature, of course, could decide to revise or revoke the city's ETJ powers in some future session.

Talbot said the city would "respond appropriately" to any such effort in the upcoming legislative session beginning in January.

Posted by noairport at 20:19:42 in News, Media, Players, Developer

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Monday, December 27, 2010

## Down the Rabbit Hole

*These comments were presented at the December 27th session of the Bastrop County Commissioners Court. FOX 7 News said they were going to be there but stood us up!! Maybe next time . . .*

There's a lot going on in Bastrop County these days and it's becoming more and more surreal. It's as though the County has fallen down the rabbit hole to another dimension where up is down, left is right and nothing is quite what it seems. Obviously we're not in Mayberry anymore.

First we had the whole eco-merge, greeny goodness spin coming from Carpenter & Associates.

Now the County is trying it's hand at the art of spin. Let's take a look at the the newly penned 'Mission, Values and Objectives' statement that now graces the wall outside this courtroom. It's right up there at the top of the the spin-o-meter chart. Just how do all those noble ideals line up with the reality of what's gone on with regard to the Central Texas Airport? Let's take a look.

The 'MISSION' statement opens with these words: **"To promote the health, safety and welfare of our citizens . . ."**

In light of the 381 Agreement with Carpenter & Associates for the Central Texas Airport, perhaps a better rendering would be **"to promote the health, safety and welfare of our corporate financial partners"**.

Then comes the treasure trove of spin titled 'VALUES':

'ACCOUNTABILITY' promises . . . 'accepting responsibility for our actions . . .' OK, Judge McDonald . . . if you practice what the Mission statement preaches, just when are we gonna have that public hearing?

'STEWARDSHIP' suggests 'striving to make the most efficient and effective use of our natural resources'. The focus on using rather than preserving is very telling and disturbing.

Onward to 'COLLABORATION', which extols 'Actively seeking citizen participation . . .' You have got to be kidding! Not one ordinary taxpaying citizen was consulted or asked to participate in any part of the CTA approval process. Instead, this airport has been imposed on us unilaterally by this very Court via the 381 Agreement.

The 'MISSION' statement closes with a list of 'PRIMARY OBJECTIVES' which offers more unkept promises:

Just how does an airport located within a Wildlife Hazard Zone **'Provide for the safety and security of our citizens'**?

Just how do toxic chemicals, acres of tarmac, screaming jets, increased traffic, plummeting property values etc. **'Protect the environment and our quality of life'**?

The entire 'Mission' statement reeks of strategy from a corporate attorney or clever marketing consultant. Just who are you trying to convince? Well, we see right through all of it and we're not buying what you're selling. Actions do speak louder than words.

Posted by noairport at 11:39:01 in Costs, Quality of life, Environment, Players, County, Voices, stopecta

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Monday, December 27, 2010

## Moore Is Less

The unfortunate debacle today (12/27/10) of Planning and Development Director Moore and Judge McDonald continuing the 'spin' that the citizens and tax-payers of Bastrop do not deserve a public hearing on the CTA/Eco-Merge fiasco should be considered the low-point on the 'Democratic' process in our county.

They would have us believe that Texas Civil Statutes exist which differentiates on what subject matter may be discussed in a public hearing.

Show us, or shut up about it . . . period.

The argument is moot anyway, because when Director Moore placed a restrictive covenant within the 381 Agreement with Carpenter & Associates that will allow the facility to be built and operated in a unsafe manner, this disagreement is no longer about financial or utility concerns, it's a public safety issue . . . period.

Just ask yourself this: is a low-flying tax-abatement, water, or wastewater line going to impact your home at 200 MPH?

Of course not.

But a 737 that just sucked ducks or geese into its engines, and is now falling out of the sky will.

Now, when your Bastrop County Commissioners Court tells you that you may not question their decisions in a public hearing upon this issue, they are not acting in the public interest in any form, shape, or fashion, regardless of what their new 'Mission (of Desperation)' statement says

It'll be interesting to see what the Bastrop County legal team of Dewy, Cheatham, and Howe will come up with to justify the 'Spin' of that 'August' body to the public safety issue.

The truth would be nice . . . for a change.

Posted by noairport at 15:08:34 in Players, County, Voices, oracle  
2 comments