

**Bulletin to Rye Brook Residents on the Westchester County
Airport Master Plan “Relaunch” Meetings & Process**



Westchester Airport Master Plan "Relaunch":

Westchester County is about to begin an extensive outreach program to receive public input as it works to update the Westchester County Airport’s Master Plan. When completed, this Airport Master Plan will guide airport land use and operations for the next decade or longer.

Westchester County’s “On the Horizon Town Halls” for the Westchester County Airport Master Plan relaunch has been released and includes the following public meeting dates and locations:

Tuesday, May 24 at 6 p.m.

Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University
78 N. Broadway, White Plains, NY 10603

Thursday, June 2 at 6 p.m.

Manhattanville College
2900 Purchase St, Purchase, NY 10577

Thursday, June 9 at 6 p.m.

Mercy College
555 Broadway, Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522

Prior to these meetings, Rye Brook Airport Master Plan Task Force will be hosting a Rye Brook “Airport Action Alert” meeting on the following date and time:

Rye Brook Mtg.: Airport Action Alert Meeting

Monday, May 23 at 7:30p.m.

Rye Brook Village Hall

938 King Street, Rye Brook, NY 10573

This initial Rye Brook meeting is a great opportunity to learn more about the County Airport, the County's Master Plan "relaunch" process, and some of the Village of Rye Brook's issues of concern.

Westchester County Airport is the third-busiest airport in New York State and serves as a transportation hub for the region. It provides convenience to the public and businesses, and it generates economic benefits. It also creates environmental, public safety and health concerns that need to be consistently monitored and evaluated so that adverse impacts and risks can be minimized.

The Village of Rye Brook urges all Village residents to participate fully in the County's Airport Master Plan public input process. It is anticipated that there will be live events and online surveys where we can make our feelings known. Rye Brook can have an outsized impact on the Master Plan if the County sees enough Village residents showing up and speaking out.

Rye Brook (and other agencies) provides critical emergency services to the airport. We expect the airport to operate as a good neighbor, minimizing negative impacts on our residents while making every effort to maximize public safety and environmental sustainability.

The Village Board has also formed an *Airport Master Plan Task Force*, whose members are tasked to inform the community about the master plan update process and proposals, assist the public to participate, and provide unified comments from officials representing the village.

The Task Force encourages you to consider urging the County to prioritize the following issues of importance to Rye Brook residents into the updated Master Plan:

1. Include clear language preserving the County's longstanding policy against **airport expansion**;
2. Strengthen the voluntary **overnight 'curfew'** that is too often not followed by aircraft;
3. **Strengthen environmental strategies to address noise, air emissions, and discharges** of de-icing fluids and pollutants into the Blind Brook and Kensico Reservoir (from which the Rye Brook and other county and NYC residents obtain drinking water);
4. Update the **main passenger terminal's** technology, conveniences, and security, but only in conjunction with long-term extensions of airlines' Terminal Use Agreements described below.

Basic Information About the Airport

Westchester County owns the airport and directs its operation through a management firm, AvPorts, subject to the regulatory oversight of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), which controls all airspace and flight traffic. The airport, known by its airport Code HPN, operates 24/7, although there are *voluntary* flight restrictions in place from 12:00 midnight to 6:30 a.m.

Only 15% of flights are commercial airlines. These fly out of the main passenger terminal, which has served as many as 1-1.5 million passengers in recent years. County Law limits the terminal to 240 scheduled passengers per half-hour except for specific holiday periods, and no more than four aircraft can use the terminal at one time. The FAA normally prohibits rules that restrict flights, but Westchester's Terminal Use Agreements were approved due to special circumstances, including the fact that our limitations pre-date the federal legislation that took away local control.

The remaining 85% of flight activity at the airport consists of private planes, corporate planes, charter planes, air taxis, and other non-commercial aviation operating out of private

hangars. The County has few means of controlling the volume and growth of this activity except for limiting the physical capacity of airport facilities and infrastructure. The County has a longstanding policy¹ of not supporting airport expansion by restricting further development of those elements it controls.

More information is available on the Village of Rye Brook website by searching for “airport” or visiting www.ryebrook.org/airport . This will take you to the Village's Airport Advisory Council page with information on airport operations, the Master Plan, and other important airport-related issues. Additional information about the airport and Master Plan public input process will be shared and added to this page as it becomes available.

Other Issues of Concern:

1. **Safeguards** against modifying airport facilities in ways that could enable more private and corporate (i.e. non-commercial) flights;
2. Adoption of **sustainable** and unleaded fuels, solar installations on buildings and open land, and safe electric aviation;
3. Prioritizing Westchester-based businesses and pilots for the airport’s limited **hangar facilities**;

¹ *Westchester County Board of Legislators Resolution 245-2003 re. Airport Expansion: Commitment to the community to preserve current limitations on County Airport facilities.*