

Airpark Community Advisory Committee (ACAC) Meeting Minutes

January 20, 2025
7 – 8:30 PM

Montgomery County Upper County Community Center
8201 Emory Grove Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20877



Attendees:

Members:

Jake Adler representing Ruben Rosario, non-voting
Bobbi Besley
Justin Bollum, non-voting
H Michael Brown
Karen Kodjanian
Aaron Kraut representing Councilmember Luedtke, non-voting
Prayas Neupane
William “Skip” Reindollar
Dale Tuttle

MCDOT Staff Liaison:

Joe Pospisil

Guests:

Mollie Hilty
Lucy Seifert

Action Items

Month Meeting Minutes Approval

The meeting started with disagreement over the December 16th meeting minutes. Mr. Bollum had several notes on the discussion summarized in the minutes. During the debate over the minute’s content, it became clear that this would not easily be reconciled. To ensure that enough time would be dedicated to the January meeting agenda items, it was determined that the MCRA would submit comments clarifying their position on comments made in the minutes, which would then be attached to the December meeting minutes. Aside from a couple of grammatical modifications, no additional changes were made to the December 16th meeting minutes, they were unanimously approved by the voting members of the committee and posted on the [ACAC Webpage](#).

Old Business

Townhall

The committee discussed plans for the townhall style meeting that has been scheduled for March. The committee would like to hear from all stakeholders. While people will be able to speak about whatever they like, the ACAC would like speakers to focus their time on the following 3 topics:

1. Improving Fly Friendly Procedures
2. Merits and Demerits of Tower Control
3. MCRA Accountability

The meeting would be structured so that 45 minutes would be allocated to each of these 3 topics. The committee will develop questions and statements related to these topics to help focus stakeholders on what the committee is looking for. Ultimately the committee is looking for potential solutions and actionable items.

As with the meeting held last January where the ACAC solicited community input, the committee discussed ways to promote the meeting. A flyer will be created; however, the committee will investigate social media outlets and other methods to promote the town hall. The committee discussed modifying the date and time of this meeting. Since the intention is to have three 45-minute comment periods, the normal hour and a half meeting period would not be sufficient.

The following motion was made after discussion:

The March ACAC meeting will be held in a townhall format and rescheduled from March 17th to March 24th. This meeting will be extended by 30 minutes and run from 7 to 9 pm.

This motion was unanimously approved.

Note: The committee initially wanted to schedule the March meeting from 7 to 9 pm. Since the Upper County Community Center closes at 9 pm, the committee liaison is checking if this schedule is OK with the center staff or if the meeting may need to be moved to 6:30 – 8:30 pm.

Tower Research

There had not been a lot of progress made by the committee on researching tower operations. Additional follow-up with Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) representatives and outreach to other airports has not been completed. In an effort to generate momentum on this topic, it was determined a subcommittee would form. The subcommittee will meet before the February meeting and report back to the entire ACAC. The volunteers for this subcommittee included Mr. Brown, Mr. Tuttle, Mr. Bolum, and Ms. Besley.

FAA/MAA Request

Mr. Pospisil informed the committee that a letter with their requests had been sent to the FAA, a copy of which has been attached. Before sending the letter, Mr. Pospisil reached out to Senator Van

Hollen's Office, who suggested a contact person within the FAA. Senator Van Hollen's Office also indicated they would help with follow up on this matter. Mr. Brown, a former FAA employee, was familiar with the contact person provided by the senator's office. He believed there were more appropriate offices and staff to reach out to and provided their information. Mr. Pospisil would follow up on this matter.

Thus far the committee has not reached out to the Maryland Aviation Association (MAA). The committee discussed reaching out to MAA representatives with a focus on economic development. Chair Reindollar asked the new committee representative from the Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation (MCEDC), Prayas Neupane, to draft something to send to the MAA.

MCRA Response to Recommendations

Moving to progress made on the ACAC FY25 Report recommendations, Mr. Bollum indicated that DC Metro had responded to Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) regarding hangar code remediation. They were now waiting for a response from DPS.

Disagreement within the committee on how to update the Fly Friendly procedures continued, with several members believing it was the MCRA's responsibility. During the December meeting Mr. Kraut was asked to get clarification from the County Council as to whether it was the ACAC's role to update the guidelines. He reported back that this was something the committee could take on if it chose. Several members were not convinced this was the ACAC responsibility nor would it have the capacity to gather input from all the stakeholders who should be involved with developing new guidelines. One option briefly discussed was that the ACAC could make recommendations and clarify that it did not represent all stakeholders.

The Airpark has gotten a quote from a vendor that specializes in designing airport websites and was awaiting MCRA Board approval. The plan is to completely overhaul the Airpark website. Project, budget and FAA information commonly found on other airport websites would be included as part of the website update. No determination had been as to whether they would maintain flight data as is or make changes. When asked about making the website available in Spanish, Mr. Bollum was unable to answer at this time. He noted that much of the content may be in a PDF format.

When asked about progress on outreach, Mr. Bollum indicated that there had been discussion with DC Metro about holding an open house in the fall and making this an annual event. However, nothing has been confirmed as of now.

New Business

Capital Improvement Plan

Montgomery County recently released its recommended FY27-FY32 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which includes funding for a new hangar on the north end of the Airpark and updates to the runway lighting. The MCRA already has grant funding for the hangar project. The new hangar would increase overall hangar capacity at the Airpark, which is needed, and create infrastructure to potentially develop the north end. This hangar could also provide space for another fixed-base operator (FBO) besides DC Metro.

Some committee members voiced concern with the hangar projected, specifically that a new FBO could request a similar lease structure to the one DC Metro operates under. Mr. Bollum indicated that he would go back and look at the draft lease, which has been reviewed by attorneys and the FAA. Chair Reindollar put a question to the committee as to whether they should speak at the February 9th County Council capital budget public hearing to express concerns with the hangar project. No decision to speak at the public hearing was made by the committee.

Community Input/Feedback

Two members of the community, Lucy Seifert and Nancy Shenk, provided in-person comments during the community input portion of the meeting. Testimony was provided by Mollie Hilty before the meeting and Katherine Wallenmeyer after (both attached). Referring to a topic discussed earlier in the meeting, Ms. Seifert suggested reaching out to elementary schools to help promote the town hall meeting. She also suggested providing the meeting notice in English and Spanish. She indicated that there seemed to be some improvement with flight school operations and voiced concern with the jet aircraft traffic. She suggested that rather than just have community members speak at the end of meetings, they should be allowed to submit questions to the committee that could be addressed during this period. She closed her remarks by playing audio taken from outside her home as an illustration of the aircraft noise that she regularly experiences.

Ms. Shenk's comments were written out and have been attached.

Following a unanimous committee vote the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.



Outlook

Testimony for January 20, 2026, Meeting of the ACAC

From Mollie <>**Date** Sun 1/18/2026 3:11 PM**To** Pospisil, Joseph <Joseph.Pospisil@montgomerycountymd.gov>**Cc** Kraut, Aaron <Aaron.Kraut@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Luedtke's Office, Councilmember <Councilmember.Luedtke@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Miller, Keith <kmiller@mcra-md.com>; Stewart's Office, Councilmember <Councilmember.Stewart@montgomerycountymd.gov>; acevero@house.state.md.us <acevero@house.state.md.us>; lopez@house.state.md.us <lopez@house.state.md.us>; wims@house.state.md.us <wims@house.state.md.us>**[EXTERNAL EMAIL]**

Email Testimony for the January 20, 2026, meeting of the 18th Airpark Community Advisory Committee (ACAC). Not in Attendance. Please attach to Agenda.

Mollie Hilty, Tygart Court, Gaithersburg, 20879, Hadley Farms Community, 595 homes. My home is 1.9 miles from runway 32.

Please advise the County Council, County Executive, Revenue Authority, the Federal Aviation Administration for the safety, noise, environmental concerns, to those Residents who live within three miles of the Airpark, to establish alternative flight patterns for those low flying aircraft from the many Flight Training Schools located at the Airpark.

Inform those Residential communities via the Airpark website and Advisory Committee website to the FlightAware.com tracking system to monitor overhead Aircraft.

What are noise abatement procedures for Aircraft flying at low altitude over Residential Communities? Please consider this an agenda item for the February meeting.

Thank you,
Mollie Hilty
[@aol.com](mailto:mollie@comcast.net)

Testimony at ACAC meeting
January 20, 2026

Good evening. My name is Nancy Shenk and I have been involved with issues at the airpark for over 35 years, having lived under the flight patterns for almost 50 years.

I am disheartened to learn that the MCRA is requesting CIP funding from the county to develop the north end of the Airpark and intend to expand their presence by requesting a tower to be built. Needless to say, these enhancements to the airpark would substantially increase air traffic and impact the health and safety of the surrounding community. Unfortunately, no one here remembers that many years ago the county assured the citizens that the Montgomery County airpark would NEVER be expanded

I am requesting that this committee speak out against this CIP funding until significant progress is made to address the recommendations made in the 2025 report of the ACAC. It took almost 6 months for the MCRA's response to these recommendations to be made public and only positively committed to one....to update the Airpark complaint website.

As a reminder, these recommendations were very similar to the recommendations made in the Vianair report in 2022 as well as the Part 150 study in 1993... most if not all of which the MCRA chose NOT to implement.

I am asking that the MCRA be held accountable to complete these recommendations and supply a "roadmap" by which to execute the changes.

If MCRA chooses not to comply, the time has come for a plan to replace MCRA as the airpark operator.

I also implore our county council representatives to support their constituents in denying MCRA's multi million dollar requestNot only because it is the right thing to do for their constituents, but especially given the county's budget shortfalls.

I am available to continue this discussion with any members of this committee as well as County Council members.

Nancy Shenk



[Airpark - CIP Budget] - Urgent

From Catherine Wallenmeyer <>

Date Wed 1/21/2026 10:27 AM

To Dawn Luedtke <dawn@dawnluedtke.com>; Stewart's Office, Councilmember <Councilmember.Stewart@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Councilmember Natali Fani-González <councilmember.fani-gonzalez@public.govdelivery.com>; Council President Andrew Friedson <councilmember.friedson@public.govdelivery.com>; Councilmember Will Jawando <councilmember.jawando@public.govdelivery.com>; Councilmember Marilyn Balcombe <councilmember.balcombe@public.govdelivery.com>; Glass's Office, Councilmember <Councilmember.Glass@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Councilmember Laurie-Anne Sayles <councilmember.sayles@public.govdelivery.com>; Marc Elrich <Marc.Elrich@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Balcombe's Office, Councilmember <Councilmember.Balcombe@montgomerycountymd.gov>

Cc Resnick, Andrew <Andrew.Resnick@montgomerycountymd.gov>; Anne Delegate Kaiser <anne.kaiser@house.state.md.us>; Lynne Benzion <>; Pospisil, Joseph <Joseph.Pospisil@montgomerycountymd.gov>; William Reindollar <>; Dale Tuttle <>; H. Michael Brown <>

[EXTERNAL EMAIL]

Please provide a copy to the Economic Development committee and the ACAC Committee meeting minutes and members

Subject: Opposition to Additional CIP Funding or Charters for Montgomery County Airpark Without Further Studies

Dear Montgomery County Council Members,

I am writing as a concerned resident of Montgomery County to strongly oppose any further Capital Improvements Program (CIP) funding for the Montgomery County Airpark or the approval of additional charter operations until comprehensive, independent studies by an experienced aviation consultant to evaluate impacts are conducted to address the ongoing management and operational issues at the facility. The Montgomery County Revenue Authority (MCRA), which oversees the Airpark, has demonstrated significant challenges in managing its current responsibilities, as evidenced by persistent community complaints and recent reports highlighting oversight gaps, safety risks, and environmental concerns. A Master plan has not been updated for over 30 years.

Recent findings from the Airpark Community Advisory Committee (ACAC) Annual Report for FY25 underscore these problems. The report details unsafe flight operations, dominance by flight schools leading to excessive noise and congestion, improper hangar practices, permitting violations, and a lack of enforcement on leases. Homeowners near the Airpark have reported health and safety impacts, including toxic pollution from aviation fuels and disruptive noise levels that affect daily life. For

instance, noise complaints have surged in recent years, with records showing a drastic increase tied to flight training activities, as noted in the 2022 Aircraft Noise: Community Impacts Analysis.

Furthermore, a September 2025 County Council worksession revealed critical oversight lapses by the MCRA, including economic stagnation at the Airpark, public safety risks from non-compliant operations, and instances where residents raising concerns received cease-and-desist letters from operators. These issues indicate that the MCRA is struggling to enforce basic regulations and mitigate community impacts under its current purview. Approving additional funding or charters without first resolving these would exacerbate the problems, potentially leading to greater environmental harm, reduced quality of life for residents, and inefficient use of taxpayer dollars.

I urge the Council to prioritize independent studies evaluating the Airpark's management practices, noise abatement strategies, safety protocols, and overall economic viability before committing any more resources. This approach aligns with the County's commitments to community health, sustainability, and fiscal responsibility, as outlined in broader CIP discussions for FY26 and beyond.

Thank you for considering this important matter. I look forward to your response and am available to discuss further.

Sincerely,
Catherine Wallenmeyer
Citizens For Airpark Safety

CC: county.council@montgomerycountymd.gov
Councilmember.Fani-Gonzalez@montgomerycountymd.gov
Councilmember.Balcombe@montgomerycountymd.gov
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[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)