

## **NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT**

**RE: ORDER OF THE BOARD OF ALDERS APPROVING AN AMENDED AND RESTATED LEASE AND OPERATING AGREEMENT BY AND BETWEEN THE CITY OF NEW HAVEN AND TWEED NEW HAVEN AIRPORT AUTHORITY and ORDINANCE AMENDMENT REPEALING SECTION 4-70 OF THE CODE OF GENERAL ORDINANCES**

**REPORT:** 1589-08

**ADVICE:** Approval

### **BACKGROUND**

The land upon which Tweed-New Haven Airport (the “Airport”) is situated is owned by the City of New Haven (the “City”), leased to Tweed New Haven Airport Authority (“the Authority”) and operated under a management contract with Avports, an airport management services provider. Earlier this year, the Authority and AvPorts announced a series of initiatives, namely;

- AvPorts and the Authority agreed to the terms for an agreement for AvPorts to operate and manage the Airport through a long-term sub-lease agreement. The agreement will include provisions for financial contributions to capital improvements and air service development to support the economy of south central Connecticut.
- An approach to capital improvements as recommended in the updated Airport Master Plan. In summary, AvPorts will carry out projects including extension of the main runway 2-20 and construction of the new passenger terminal and parking garage on the east side of the Airport property through a combination of federal grants and private investment.
- The launch of a new commercial air service, Avelo Airlines, which will make the Airport its first East Coast base. Avelo will station three 737 aircraft at the Airport by year end and generate local employment for over 100 crewmembers. [To accommodate Avelo, Tweed and Avports will seek other land use approvals next month related to short-term improvements to the West Terminal.]

To implement these initiatives, it is necessary to amend and restate the above-mentioned lease with an Amended and Restated Lease Agreement (“the Amended and Restated Lease”) between the City and the Authority as well as to address an outdated provision of the City’s Code of Ordinances related to the weight of aircraft.

### **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

Future plans for the Airport have been a topic of significant discussion in recent years notably during court proceedings concerning the length of the runway 2-20. The Airport Master Plan recently was updated following a study of the infrastructure, marketplace and alternatives for the runway itself. These efforts are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan of Development, prepared in 2015, noting,

“...the vision for the next decade is to attract commercial service to Florida and two to three hub cities. Efforts should be made to implement the capital improvement program in a manner that protects nearby residents from undue hardship.”

Through the long-term sublease agreement with AvPorts, the Authority will be able to move forward with the updated Master Plan for Tweed in a manner that provides for growth in passenger air travel in a responsible manner relative to the surrounding community and the environment. The Amended and Restated Lease includes provisions to extend the main runway to a length sufficient for flights to Florida (based on type of aircraft), to relocate the main terminal from the west to east side of the Airport (which is a more convenient route from Interstate 95 to the Airport) and to make various stormwater and environmental improvements (eg-noise mitigation, coastal habitat restoration). A number of other environmental initiatives will be undertaken, including a new stormwater management plan, wetland and coastal habitat restoration, upgrades to the Morris Creek tide gates. On an ongoing basis, AvPorts will develop a sustainable airport development plan and there will be a new Environmental Stewardship Advisory Council to work with Airport officials to maintain a high standard of environmental protection. It is outside the Commission’s purview to look at the financial aspects of the proposal. However, the Commission encourages the investments in mitigation of noise and traffic concerns, which should be undertaken in earnest to support the residents of the East Shore who reside in close proximity to the Airport.

**ADVICE**

The Commission finds the Order may be in the best interest of the City and aligned with the City’s Comprehensive Plan, provided that the Board of Alders considers, any/all:

- Financial/fiscal implications this proposal may have;
- Quality of life issues that may arise on the site itself or within the surrounding; and/or
- Environmental impacts, issues and/or challenges that may be derived from this proposal.

**ADOPTED:** July 21, 2021  
Leslie Radcliffe  
Chair

**ATTEST:**   
Aicha Woods  
Executive Director, City Plan Department