

**TO:** City Plan Board

**Item Number: 5**

**FROM:** Planning Department Staff

**DATE:** December 6, 2010

**SUBJECT:** Petition PB-10-107 TCH. Eng, Denman & Associates, agent for Gainesville Regional Airport. Amend Land Development Code Section 30-76, Airport facility district (AF), to include solar generation facilities, additional light industrial and other manufacturing uses, gasoline service stations, United States Postal Service, solar generation stations, pet boarding, and corporate offices as permitted uses; and to increase the amount of Revenue Support uses for: Office Development; Retail, Service and Wholesale Development; Limited Industrial; and Hotel.

---

### Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of Petition PB-10-107 TCH, with the proposed changes to Section 30-76 as shown in Exhibit B-1.

### Background

The proposed text amendments pertain to the Airport facility district (AF), Section 30-76 of the City's land development code. A map showing the location of the AF district is attached (Exhibit A) for reference. The purpose of the AF zoning district is stated in Sec. 30-76 (a) as follows, in *italicized text*: *The AF district is established for the purpose of assuring the proper and safe operation of the Gainesville Regional Airport, to protect the public investment in the airport, and to protect and promote the public utility of the airport. Recognizing the unique conditions pertaining to the airport, this district provides a means of balancing conformance to applicable state and federal regulations with local concerns.* Development of properties within the AF district is an important component of this zoning district, of the Gainesville Regional Airport Master Plan that was updated in 2006, and of the airport's ability to operate as an independently funded facility.

The Gainesville-Alachua County Regional Airport Authority in early 2010 commissioned Eng, Denman & Associates to review existing development conditions and future development potential of properties associated with the Airport. As stated in the petition application document dated September 20, 2010 (Exhibit C-3: Land Development Code Text Amendment – Airport Facilities (AF) Zoning District), the Airport Authority's intention was to use the resultant information to help the airport "place itself in a more strategic position to attract compatible private business/development activity on these properties in order to generate additional revenue, thus ensuring that the airport will continue to operate as an independently funded facility."

On June 30, 2010, the Airport Authority directed Gainesville Regional Airport's Chief Executive Officer to prepare the following planning proposals: amendment of the AF zoning district to include solar generation facilities, light industrial, and other accessory activities considered accessory to the airport as permitted uses; and, amendment of the AF district to increase the amount of "revenue support" uses, including office, retail, service, industrial, etc. The applicant subsequently discussed these text amendments (and proposals pertaining to prospective land use and zoning changes for several parcels adjacent to the AF zoning district) for enhancing economic development opportunities at the airport with City Planning staff, and staff recommended that the applicant present them to the City Commission. The applicant made such a presentation to the City Commission on August 19, 2010 (Legislative No. 100233, Proposed Enhancement to Facilitate Gainesville Regional Airport Economic Development Opportunities), and the Commission voted unanimously to authorize preparation of a petition to the Plan Board. The current petition is limited to text changes for the AF zoning district. (Petitions for several land use and zoning changes for several parcels adjacent to the AF district are anticipated in 2011.)

### **Explanation**

Staff has worked closely with the applicant on the proposed text revisions to the Airport facility district (AF). The text changes consist of additional uses to be permitted by right within the airport development area, establishment of development limits for each of the additional uses, increases in allowable ("proposed") development for the four Revenue Support categories (Office Development; Retail Service and Wholesale Development; Limited Industrial; and Hotel), updated development data for uses that are currently allowed, and addition of solar generation station as a permitted use in the airfield infrastructure area and in the non-development area. The airport development area, airfield infrastructure area, and the non-development area are shown on the Airport Facility (AF) Zoning Map that is attached (Exhibit A). These three sub-areas of the AF district are comprised of approximately 540 acres, 600 acres, and 200 acres, respectively.

The proposed additional uses (the first three of which - MG 36, 38 and 39, are manufacturing uses) to be permitted by right in the airport development area of the AF district are as follows:

- MG 36 - Electronic and other electrical equipment and components, except computer equipment
- MG 38 - Measuring, analyzing, and controlling instruments; photographic, medical and optical goods; watches and clocks. (Note: GN 381 is the only MG 38 use currently allowed in the AF district.)
- MG 39 - Miscellaneous manufacturing industries
- MG 43 - United States Postal Service
- GN 554 - Gasoline service stations, in accordance with Article VI
- Solar generation station, as defined in Sec. 30-23, and in accordance with Article VI
- Pet boarding, only within enclosed buildings
- Corporate offices as defined in Sec. 30-23

Of these uses, all but solar generation station, which was recently added to the land development code, and pet boarding (which is not currently specified in the land development code) are allowed by right in the I-1 (Limited industrial) zoning district. The AF district already includes the following I-1 uses: MG-47 (Transportation services), MG-48 (Communications), MG-73 (Business services), and various uses within MG-87 (Engineering, Accounting, Research, Management, and Related Services).

An example of the need for additional permitted uses is the former Eclipse Aviation facility. The current disallowance of light industrial and other manufacturing uses in the AF district has precluded the use of a vacant, 61,500 square-foot hangar for light manufacturing (e.g., manufacture of photovoltaic panels), for which the Airport has received several inquiries.

The proposed increases in the amount of development that can be allowed in the four Revenue Support categories (Office Development; Retail Service and Wholesale Development; Limited Industrial; and Hotel) will increase opportunities for economic development and job creation, and can provide additional revenues to the airport.

Adding solar generation station as a use is a timely and appropriate addition to the AF district, which has substantial vacant acreage that could be developed for this sustainable energy use. The United States Postal Service is a sensible addition as a permitted use for a regional airport, and would avoid future amendment of the AF district should the USPS wish to establish a major facility at the airport. Pet boarding is a proposed permitted use that could be reasonably accommodated within the approximately 540-acre development area, which at its closest is approximately 1,900 feet away from the closest residential area - the mobile home park on the north side of NE 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and which has Residential Low-Density (up to 12 units per acre) land use and MH zoning. Preliminary development plans in the AF district must not only meet all applicable requirements of Article VII (Development Review Process) and Appendix F (Airport Hazard Zoning Regulations), but also require approval of the Airport Authority (except for wireless communication facilities, which are subject to review and approval by the DRB or City Plan Board).

The proposed text revisions to the Airport facility district (AF) are attached (Exhibit B-1, Proposed Changes to Sec. 30-76, as Recommended by Staff). Related Exhibit B-2 (Proposed Additional Permitted Uses for AF Zoning District) provides a more detailed description of the additional uses that are proposed. The application and related information are attached as Exhibit C.

The proposed text amendments to the AF zoning district are consistent with Plan East Gainesville, which identifies the airport as the 'anchor for the northern part of the Plan East Gainesville study area', and states that 'despite the obvious economic value to the community...the airport is considered by many in the community to be an underutilized asset.' Plan East Gainesville also states that "the key to community improvement is economic development".

The proposed text amendments have been found by the Airport Authority to be consistent with the adopted Airport Master Plan. The proposed amendments to the AF zoning district are also

consistent with the City of Gainesville 2000-2010 Comprehensive Plan, particularly with respect to Future Land Use Element Goals 1 and 2.

**Goal 1** – Improve the quality of life and achieve a superior, sustainable, development pattern in the city by creating and maintaining choices in housing, offices, retail, and work places, and ensuring that a percentage of land uses are mixed, and within walking distance of important destinations.

**Goal 2** – Redevelop areas within the city, as needed, in a manner that promotes quality of life, transportation choice, a healthy economy, and discourages urban sprawl.

Respectfully submitted,



Onelia Lazzari, AICP  
Principal Planner

Prepared by:



Dean Mimms, AICP  
Lead Planner

#### List of Exhibits

**Exhibit A: Airport Facility (AF) Zoning Map**

**Exhibit B: Proposed Text Changes**

Exhibit B-1: Proposed Changes to Sec. 30-76, as Recommended by Staff

Exhibit B-2: Proposed Additional Permitted Uses for AF Zoning District

**Exhibit C: Application and Related Information**

Exhibit C-1: Application – City Plan Board – Text Amendment

Exhibit C-2: Application Letter, September 20, 2010

Exhibit C-3: Land Development Code Text Amendment – Airport Facilities (AF) Zoning District, September 20, 2010 (updated & received September 30, 2010)