



## **Time to Mobilize for Airport Master Plan Hearings** ***-First Hearing May 24-***

Westchester County is beginning extensive outreach to receive public input as it works to update its Airport Master Plan. When completed, this plan will guide airport land use and operations for the next decade or longer.

The Westchester County Airport is the third-busiest airport in New York State. 85% of flights are for private/corporate aircraft. A County Terminal Use law limits airline flights, and the Coalition does not oppose new airline services within those limits except during the overnight voluntary curfew hours. The airport's location 0.1 miles from the Kensico Reservoir and residential communities creates environmental, public safety and health hazards that need to be consistently monitored and evaluated. We have a right to expect the airport to operate as a good neighbor, minimizing negative impacts while making every effort to maximize public safety and environmental sustainability.

**The Coalition to Prevent Westchester Airport Expansion urges all citizens to participate fully in the County's Airport Master Plan public input process, and to recruit as many friends and neighbors as possible to help.**

The County will be holding live events and online surveys where we must make our positions known. Concerned residents can only have an impact on the Master Plan if we all take part, and the County sees enough of us showing up and speaking out. Complacency will have dire consequences. We anticipate aviation interests to mobilize as well, many of whom care only about making money at the airport and don't care about its environmental impact. Communities that view the airport merely as a convenience will also have input.



### **The Current Expansionary Airport Master Plan Needs to be Thrown Out**

The current Master Plan (see [Link 1](#) below) projects extremely high levels of air traffic. Citing this plan, Million Air, a Texas private aircraft services company, built its terminal and hangar in 2019, ignoring basic environmental requirements. Now the airport is considering adding additional fuel tanks

to expand capacity for peak periods. The current Master Plan supports such expansion. When the public doesn't speak out, facilities get built or expanded and leases get signed which enable more air traffic.

**Let's demand that the County prioritize the following in the updated Master Plan:**

1. Include clear language preserving and strengthening the County's longstanding policy **against airport expansion**, articulated in Board of Legislators Resolution 245-2003. **All members of the Board of Legislators but one voted for this policy in 2003.** See [Link 2](#) below.
2. Strengthen the voluntary **overnight 'curfew'** that is violated every night.
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 majority of county and NYC residents obtain drinking water.
4. Extend airlines' agreements to not challenge the Terminal Use Procedures as a precondition to any updating of the main passenger terminal's technology and conveniences. Since 1985, these agreements have limited commercial air traffic.

Other issues we encourage you to highlight in your remarks include:

1. **Adding safeguards** against expansion or modifications to airport facilities that could enable more private and corporate (i.e. non-commercial) flights, which are limited only by airport infrastructure and now comprise 85% of all air traffic.
2. **Increasing sustainability** through solar installations on buildings and open land, the rapid adoption of unleaded and sustainable fuels, and safe electric aviation.
3. **Limiting hangar facilities** and reserving them for the personal use of Westchester-based businesses and pilots, instead of charter operators or airlines.
4. **Funding the airport** through fees on its users instead of through taxpayer subsidies, whether from local, state, or federal funds.

**The Airport and Our Water**

For decades, concern about our drinking water has been a powerful brake on airport expansion. The airport is sited just 0.1 miles from the Kensico Reservoir, which supplies most county residents and much of NYC. Carcinogenic PFAS chemicals were found on airport property in 2019. The County government, along with the NY Department of Environmental Conservation, is carrying out a careful, expensive and comprehensive remediation, in order to make sure that these toxic chemicals do not pollute the Kensico. Make no mistake: this is a cautionary tale for Westchester - a strong indication that we should not expand facilities at the airport, in order to limit risks known, and unknown.

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More information is available on the Coalition's website: [ctpwae.org](http://ctpwae.org). Additional information about the Master Plan public input process will be shared on the website Events page as it becomes available.

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Please donate to the Coalition's efforts. We're raising money for legal and technical support as well as organizational and communication costs. To donate, visit [ctpwae.org](http://ctpwae.org) > Donate.

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Link 1 The current Master Plan: <https://airport.westchestergov.com/general-information/news-and-public-notice>

Link 2 County policy against airport expansion: <https://cdn.website-editor.net/718697c8968f49be9cd117a9f639f6f6/files/uploaded/Westchester%2520Board%2520of%2520Legislators%2520Resolution%2520245-2003.pdf>