Airport Experience Working Group

Expectations, Accomplishments, and Work to Finish

Expectations

The BOCC expects that the members of the Airport Experience Working Group to make recommendations on the future terminal area. They are expected to look at this based on the framework developed by the Airport Vision Committee, our shared values, and on the goals of limited enplanement growth and reduction of C02 emissions.

What would a warm, welcoming and comfortable terminal look like?

- How could it bests fit the community?
- What are the terminal and landside options?
- How could the building size, function, number of gates, etc. best reflect our values, planning directions and goals?

Accomplishments

The Group has met several times since the ASE Vision Process began and have exhibited an open mind for the thoughts and opinions of others. They have debated issues and found common ground on issues. Below is a recap on the accomplishments from the first 3 of 5 meetings in the current "series" of meetings intended to arrive at a recommendation to give the Airport Vision Committee.

Meeting 1, September 24, 2019

This meeting established the baseline situation and discussed goals. The roles of the other working groups and the AVC were discussed. Following are other highlights:

- Reference documents to help guide the discussion and recommendations
    - Values and summary target goals
    - Constrained forecast impacts
    - Gate turn information
    - 2018 Environmental Assessment/Record of Decision
    - FAA Airport Terminal Planning Advisory Circular
    - International terminal planning guidance

- Deliverables to report back to the AVC include recommendations on:
    - Terminal building and priorities (number of gates, sterile boarding area, ticketing/passenger space, etc.)
    - Customer amenities
    - Sustainability measures
    - Architectural/aesthetic treatment

The Group discussed airport terminal planning factors, including "rules-of-thumb" for terminal sizing, and where the County has choices. The Group also had initial discussions on the various functional areas in a terminal, including security, ticketing, hold rooms, concessions, customer amenities,

circulation space, and mandatory items such as service animal relief areas. There was a robust discussion of the importance of airport worker spaces, including adequate "back of house" space to perform their functions, break rooms, training facilities, and other amenities.

The Group discussed the impact on various numbers of gates 4, 5, 6 and 8-gate options, including number of peaks in a peak day. The number of gate "turns" under different gate number scenarios (unloading and loading of passengers) was reviewed against what is normal.

The meeting closed with a discussion of what warm, welcoming and comfortable looks like for Aspen.

Meeting 2, October 2, 2019

The rules for voting were discussed at the beginning of Meeting 2. A significant portion of the meeting was devoted to discussion and voting on a number of items, as described below.

- How many gates?
  - The Group members discussed the gate on many levels. To some, opinions were voiced that when an airplane lands and it has to wait for a gate before unloading (sometimes for 30 minutes or more), it takes away from the passenger's experience.
  - The debate among the group seemed to vacillate across 7 or 8 gates as being ideal.
  - Two motions were made, with the first calling for 7 gates. It received 1 Yes vote and 7 No votes.
  - After more discussion, a new motion was made:
  - **Motion:** Eight gates with planned expansion as-needed in the design
    - Motion: Cindy Maetzold | Second: Rich Burkley | Result: Approved (7-1) | Upon result, one group member decided to submit a minority report.

- Terminal sizing – how many levels?
  - The plans from the 2018 EA were used as a reference and the group discussed the efficiencies of "stacking" levels (energy usage, etc.) and the resulting use of less land for the building's footprint. Also, the notion of building a portion of it into the terrain was appealing.
  - A motion was made stating that the new terminal should be two stories that takes advantage of topography and massing. After discussion, the Group decided that maybe more than two levels could be used so long as the overall massing or height was kept within the Aspen character and acceptable height. The initial motion was withdrawn, and a new motion was made:
  - **Motion:** Support additional stories that keep within the Aspen character to support appropriate massing taking into consideration topography and phasing
    - Motion: Donnie Lee | Second: Cindy Maetzold | Result: Approved (8-0)

- Back of house space should meet demand
  - This discussion topic focused on having adequate room for the airport employees to do their job in a non-confining way, and that it should be sized based on the anticipated demands
  - **Motion:** Design should incorporate best practices worldwide for employee accommodation and operational efficiency

- o Motion: Rich Burkley | Second: Donnie Lee | Result: Approved (8-0)

- ▪ Employee housing
  - o The Group discussed lack of affordable housing and need to incorporate its inclusion into this process that is specific to airport workforce employees.
  - o **Motion:** Rental housing dedicated to Airport Workforce Employees should be incorporated into this process
  - o Motion: Rich Burkley | Second: Cindy Maetzold | Result: Approved (8-0)

Meeting 3, October 21, 2019

Meeting 3 was focused on a deeper dive into certain functional components of the terminal area and framing those discussions within the context of the Success Factors put forth by the Community Character Working Group. The following Success Factors were presented and discussed:

- ▪ Adaptable and flexible for the present and future
- ▪ Environmental responsibility
- ▪ Reflect the local culture and values
- ▪ Economic vitality
- ▪ Design excellence
- ▪ Responsibility to preserve the high quality of life

The following provides a brief summary of the various items that were discussed and voted on:

- ▪ Jet Bridge vs. Tarmac?
  - o Opinions on this topic ranged from those who appreciated the unique experience of stepping off the plane and immediately getting the Aspen experience in terms of the views and open air, to those related to safety of people walking on the tarmac during conditions if bad weather. A robust discussion was also had by the group on the subject of airplane types (expect to see more than a single commercial airplane model in the future). In the end it was felt that a possible compromise is to have the loading bridge that is made of glass and has windows that can open would provide near the experience but in a safer environment.
  - o **Motion:** Go with jet bridge vs. tarmac with caveat of modification to design for open air/fresh air and visual experience with views or mountains, maybe with glass.
  - o Motion: Gary Feldman | Second: Donnie Lee | Result: Approved (5-1)

- ▪ Bag claim devices
  - o Group discussed how guests get bags after getting off the plane and thought two were
  - o **Motion:** Two baggage carousels with possibilities of expansion
  - o Motion: Rich Burkley | Second: Cindy Maetzold | Result: Approved (6-0)

- ▪ Rental car counters
  - o Group discussed how most airports now are building a rental car facility adjacent to airport. Group also discussed that from an experience standpoint, it is nice to get off the

plane and get to your rental car quicker than going to a different building. After discussion, Group decided to keep rental car counters at the terminal with baggage claim.
  - o **Motion:** Rental car counters are adjacent to baggage claim area
  - o Motion: Rich Burkley | Second: Donnie Lee | Result: Approved (6-0)

- ▪ Design aesthetics
  - o Group decided to give designers guidance for the new terminal building. However, designers should have flexibility to design what is needed and not be hamstrung by the guidelines.
  - o **Motion:** Design aesthetics align with the Aspen/Pitkin County Airport Design Guidelines as referenced in Meeting #3 PPT
  - o Motion: Rich Burkley | Second: Cindy Maetzold | Result: Approved (6-0)

Meeting 4, October 30, 2019

Meeting 4 included a discussion of site planning and terminal planning, including some of the fundamentals that impact both. For example, the airfield dictates setbacks to where a terminal building (or any other building) could be located. The site planning used the 80-foot west runway shift as an assumption, understanding that was just one of the potential scenarios. The group also discussed the Highway 82 100-foot setback, which limits development near the highway.

Although the group focused heavily on the site identified in the 2018 EA as the preferred site for the terminal area (the current terminal site), group members did discuss whether there were more optimal sites elsewhere on the airport – such as the GA area – that would work for a commercial terminal area.

The discussion of the site planning revealed that there are a few options in terms of where to site the building (north vs. south along the building line), as well as the entrance roadway and parking. The evolution of the site planning exercise showed that the entrance and exit road to the terminal – as presented in the 2018 EA, has terrain challenges and so a 2nd scenario was developed that responds better to the terrain and does not require large-scale retaining walls.

- ▪ Airport Terminal Area Site Planning (see Passenger Terminal Layout on following page)
- ▪ Passenger Terminal Area Layout
  - o **Motion:** Endorse Typical Passenger Terminal Layout with added comments and additions as indicated on the Layout graphic.
  - o Motion: Donnie Lee | Second: Jeff Bay | Result: Approved (5-0)

Typical Passenger Terminal Layout