

# Editorial

## Airspace Alternative Is Wrong Choice

A few months ago the Federal Aviation Administration came up with a tentative solution to air traffic congestion at the area's airports. The Integrated Airspace Alternative (the Alternative), the FAA claims, is a new operational concept in airspace redesign.

The Alternative, the FAA says, "integrates the airspace of the New York Terminal Radar Approach Control (New York TRACON) with portions of the airspace of surrounding Air Route Traffic Control Centers in order to operate more seamlessly in a consolidated manner."

The Alternative's initial phase "enhances safety by reducing complexity and voice communications [and] improves efficiency by reducing delay, balances controller workload and improves meeting system demands, among other things." Employing a fuller application of this Alternative would involve full airspace consolidation and modifications to multiple departure gates, the addition of arrival posts and additional close-in departure procedures and would represent a new approach to the redesign of airspace from New York to Philadelphia. In simpler terms, the Alternative would, so the FAA claims, reduce the complexity of the current air traffic system operation in the New York area and Philadelphia by more efficiently directing aircraft to and from major airports in the two metropolitan areas and would save an estimated 12 million minutes of delay annually for John F. Kennedy, La Guardia, Newark and Philadelphia Airports.

Local reaction to the proposal was swift and almost universally unfavorable.

Loudest in opposition was Rose Marie Poveromo, president of the United Community Civic Association (UCCA). The Alternative, the

plan selected by the FAA, "will reduce delays for the airlines, but will most definitely add to the suffering of community residents surrounding La Guardia by seriously increasing noise, air and traffic pollution," she testified at a public hearing on April 23. (Her remarks were later published as a Letter to the Editor in the *Gazette* of May 23.)

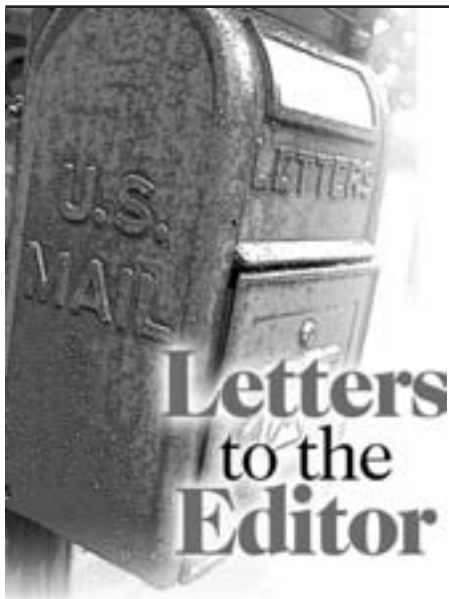
"The FAA has abused its power," she charged additionally. "Trying to mitigate the projected additional noise impact after the damage has been done from this ill-conceived alternative is 'smoke and mirrors', as the FAA well knows. Any and all additional flights will cause irreparable harm and sharply contribute to a decline in our communities' already fragile quality of life by increasing toxic emissions and noise."

Fuel being directly dumped from aircraft that are taking off or landing is another major concern for Poveromo and others who do not see the Alternative as a viable solution to the problem posed by the airports. "Queens is the only borough that has not one but two major airports dumping fuel over the homes and the residents," another area resident at the April 23 meeting commented. "[Pilots] are dumping thousands and thousands of gallons of fuel over the land", having a negative impact on areas adjacent to the landing and departure headings at each airport in particular and the communities near the airports in general.

While any community near an airport is going to be impacted by the facility's presence, La Guardia, especially, causes major problems in Astoria, Jackson Heights, Flushing and the other communities that border it. The smallest and oldest municipal airport near a major U.S.

city, La Guardia handled 400,000 flights in 2006 and JFK 378,000, according to the *New York Times* of February 18. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that on its 560 acres of land, La Guardia has only two runways, and those two intersect and thus cannot be used simultaneously. On any given day, 75 flights per hour are scheduled at La Guardia. In 2000, Congress passed a law that lifted limits on traffic at La Guardia and other busy airports, but after delays reached an average of 38 minutes for arriving flights, the federal government re-instituted limits on the number of flights.

JFK and La Guardia together make their owner, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the largest employer in Queens. Obviously, losing the airports is not a viable option for a number of reasons. After considering the possibilities put forth by the FAA, however, we find ourselves in agreement with the opponents of the Integrated Airspace Alternative. "Any and all additional flights will cause irreparable harm and sharply contribute to a decline in our communities' already fragile quality of life by increasing toxic emissions and noise," Poveromo declared at the April 23 hearings. In light of the irrefutable evidence presented by UCCA and other civic groups, much of which is based on investigative methods using sound scientific principles, it is apparent that the problem of airport congestion and the noise and pollution it generates, not to mention the threat to human life and safety brought about by the presence of aircraft and fuel, will not be solved by the Integrated Airspace Alternative. We call on the FAA to find another, viable solution, and quickly.



### St. Mary's Fight Goes On

To The Editor:

As many of you have heard, St. Mary's Senior Center announced that they would be closing the end of June. This announcement came with 60 days' notice and would have left many seniors in our community without a place to go for much needed senior programs or meals.

Today Mayor [Michael] Bloomberg announced that the program will be funded for an additional six months to allow more time to find an alternative location for this important and much needed community facility in Hunters Point.

Thanks to the efforts of Assemblywoman [Catherine] Nolan who, according to sources in the Mayor's office, "gave the Mayor's Albany staff a lot [of] grief" over the closing. Today the center has a reprieve while we work on an alternative site in the community.

Cathy Nolan called for a meeting last Thursday and has been relentless in her efforts to keep [the] senior center.

Thank you, Mayor Bloomberg and Assemblywoman Cathy Nolan.

Joe Conley  
Chairman  
Community Board 2

### Thanks Quinn For Trip

To The Editor:

I'm taking this opportunity to thank the officers and managers of Quinn's Funeral Home, for the wonderful trip organized by them to Calverton National Cemetery on Memorial Day,

I'm sure I speak for all of us who took advantage of the coach ride, sandwiches, soft drinks and beautiful flower arrangements, all courtesy of Quinn's, to visit with our loved ones interred in Calverton,

I'm forever grateful, and once again, Thank You.

Sincerely,  
Mrs. E. Forbes  
Astoria

### NAFTA=New World Order

To The Editor:

Since NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement) was passed in 1994, it has eroded the independence of the American people and undermined our Constitution. Henry Kissinger saw it as a "creative step toward a new world order" and "the architecture of a new international system", which, indeed, it is!

NAFTA courts or tribunals can override our own court decisions, trashing our sovereignty and constitutional law system. Dozens of lawsuits have already been filed in NAFTA courts against the United States and hundreds more are expected.

Do we need foreign bureaucrats forcing an alien law system, so-called "international law" on our nation for the benefit of others and not for justice as we understand it? Not surprisingly, NAFTA tribunals operate under the aegis of the United Nations, an organization that has long been hostile to the United States.

According to Prof. Robert Pastor of American University, NAFTA "can be considered a kind of draft constitution for an emerging region", referring to the political merger of Canada, the U.S., and Mexico. This formation of a North American Union has long been a stealth agenda of the New World Order cabal!

We must urge our congressmen to derail this agenda by supporting House Concurrent Resolution 22 and House Concurrent Resolution

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