DCN: 8995

EDWARD H P LYNK
3190 ADAM KEELING RD
VIRGINIA BEACH, VA 23454-1025

BRAC Commission

30 Aug 05

SEP 06 2005

Received

Dear "Brac" Commissioners:

I'd like to offer a few thoughts on what I observed during your hearings relative to Oceana.

First I am an 81 year old retired Naval Aviator with carrier experience in WW II (F4U ~~Corsair~~) thru Vietnam (F8 ~~Crusader~~) approximately 400 carrier landings (400 Combat missions)

The Landing Signal Officer who testified spoke the truth. No matter what your altitude is on approach the visual "meat ball" or mirror is your guide to catch a good wire. No super skill or training is needed to get to the initial visual pick up of the mirror. The training is needed to recognize where you are relative to the "meat ball" on your approach and follow

(1)

it to a safe 'trap' on the deck of the carrier.

Oceana did not start with a noise + crash zone as you all assumed. The houses etc that are there were part of a time frame that had much less restrictions than the present zones due to the nature of jet aviation + its rapid development. The houses now being viewed as encroachment were placed in their location using those zoning maps for the time they were constructed. Some over 30+ years ago with residents who don't want to move, love their homes, love the "sound of Freedom" and don't want the rules of the game changed in the 9th inning.

Remember, as I did in so many other cases the lives of people who sacrificed to get a home, build a life in a nice area and many are retirees or active duty folks are the ones who will get hurt hard on Your directives even if they could be carried out.

As an aside on present Mayor, Meyer Ohrendorf, who has served on city for over 30+ years always voted to protect Oceana + voted against any questionable projects.

My "objective" opinion is that the Commission saw problems of training where none exist. (please remember I have been there)

∴ the Commission failed to

of abuse cast at us during the hearings. Yes even when Oceana was not the subject it was depicted as a villain by commission members.

Thank G for trying to read this old guys writing from a rebel environment.

Edward U. P. Lyle

P.S. We love Oceana + the great servicemembers who go to battle for us from that great base. Their families have fine schools, cultural + educational growth, superb hospitals, work opportunities for spouses and a community that truly appreciates them.

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2 Sept 05

Dear Mr Chairman:

I hope you will read and consider the enclosed copy. We have worked + lived with the Navy a very special bond. Many of us have done the 3 wars, hundreds of carrier landings and the wives of families + kids from schools, churches + friends. We have been there

We feel Oceana has been our friend in so many ways, in addition to defending our country with the finest young folks ever to wear a uniform. They are not in danger here, we have numerous colleges, cultural facilities, great recreation and an environment where Oceana is part of my family. Va Beach is truly family friendly to all.

Question: Why do you think it fair to demand that we take people out of their homes, who have been there for years, many before Oceana had a noise or crash overlay when the base and its pilots have been the safest in the aviation arena.

If possible would you share my thoughts with other members of your commission. I can't believe that you all want to hurt us (the citizens of Va. Beach) under the false premise of effective training and encroachment. I have lived in Va Beach, since retiring as a N.A. over 30 years + know of only one fatality. Thank you

God Bless

Ed Lynk

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Anxiety level rises among Oceana-area homeowners

Many say they won't give up their houses

BY JON W. GLASS
THE VIRGINIAN-PILOT

VIRGINIA BEACH — A week after learning that their homes might be condemned to save Oceana Naval Air Station, residents are feeling anxious, angry and in the dark over what happens next.

Many vow that they will not give up their homes without a fight.

"It's going to breed anarchy here if they try to do this," said David Gracie, a retired Navy pilot who has had a home in Nottingham Estates since 1973. "It's just not American, and it's not right."

SAFETY
While BRAC commissioners cited safety concerns, many residents say they have accepted these risks for years.

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To keep the Navy's East Coast master jet base at Oceana, the BRAC panel said Virginia Beach and the state must condemn and buy homes in the riskiest accident-potential zones around Oceana.

These zones, known as Accident Potential Zone 1 – or APZ-1 – extend about 8,000 feet beyond the base's runways. Besides homes, the city also would have to buy shops, restaurants and other businesses that the Navy views as incompatible.

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Homes: Many residents around Oceana say they accept risks

Continued from Page B1

least two – Oceana Gardens and Gatewood Park – were built before Oceana's airfield was officially designated a naval air station in 1952. It was an auxiliary air station in 1943.

"I have lived here for so long and gotten so used to them flying over, I guess it doesn't worry me," said Cheryl McClenney, who now lives in the same Gatewood Park home that her parents bought in 1949, when Oceana was, as she said, just "a little rinky-dink base."

"I would sign a waiver saying they're not responsible if a jet crashes here, if that's what it takes to stay," McClenney said.

McClenney expressed bewilderment and anger that residents who have lived there for decades now might be forced out. "It's like we're not even citizens anymore, we're encroachment," she said.

Some neighbors, she said, are retired and on fixed incomes and could not afford to buy another house in Virginia Beach.

Sloane Johnson, who grew up in Virginia Beach and bought a 1950s-era home in Oceana Gardens five years ago, said, "I absolutely, completely do not want to move. I've never even thought twice about a jet crash. I'd be more likely to die on the interstate."

The Rev. Todd Holt, senior pastor of Great Neck Baptist Church, said he knew his house in Brookgreene Commons was in an accident-potential zone when he bought it in 2000. He said he bought the house in the "nice, little neighborhood" so his children could attend city schools in that district.

Holt said he doesn't mind living where jets could crash "any more than I mind living in an area where a hurricane could take my house. I don't lie awake at night worrying that a jet is going to crash into my house. I think the likelihood is nil."

Many residents said they are incensed that the City Council has not flatly rejected the BRAC panel's condition.

Council members assured them earlier this year that their homes would not be condemned. After a public outcry, the council voted unanimously in January to shelve plans to seek state legislation giving the city condemnation powers around Oceana.

"I won't give up my house until Meyera Oberndorf gives up hers," Marian Linett, a 29-year Cheltenham Square resident, said of the city's mayor.

Janice Roller, another Cheltenham Square resident, said her family will pay off their home's mortgage in April.

"I am not willing to give up my house of 30 years to see the base stay here, especially when the Navy says this is not a long-term solution," Roller said. Since January, Roller said she and her husband have put in new windows, installed a custom front door and started an addition to the living room.

"I'm not willing to start over," she said. "If we could never see another jet fly over Virginia Beach and we could keep our homes, that would be fine with me. My feeling is, I'll go over and help Oceana pack to leave."

Last week, the City Council spent two hours discussing Oceana and BRAC, but came to no resolution.

Since then, council members and other city officials have been cautious about discussing their options. City staff has been compiling information on the number of properties that would have to be condemned and the cost. Some city officials have estimated it could run $400 million to buy homes alone.

The City Council is scheduled to discuss Oceana on Tuesday at a one-hour, informal workshop at 3:30 p.m.

"Right now, we're basically in limbo," McClenney said.

Gracie, who flew F-4 Phantoms and A-4 Skyhawks, said he believes the BRAC panel overstepped its authority with the demand to condemn houses. He and other residents said the city and Virginia should mount a legal challenge.

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