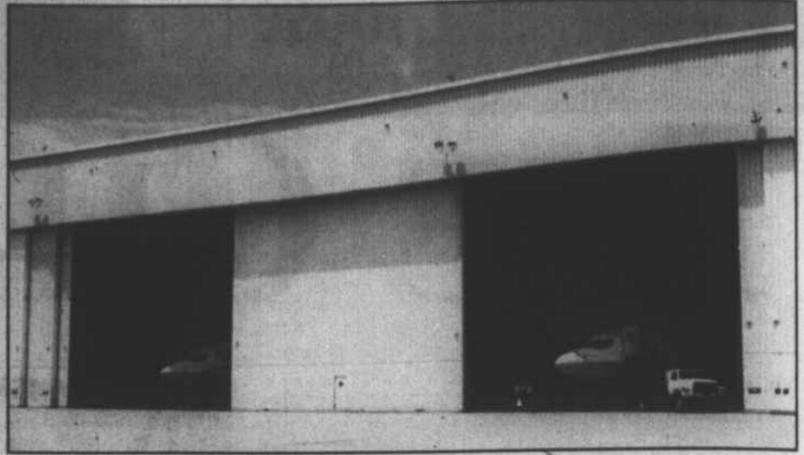


Airport board to ask Forsyth for construction funds



Photos by Todd Luck



Planes are worked on at North State Aviation's location at the airport.

The Smith Reynolds Airport is hoping to use county, state and federal funds for \$15 million in construction.

Some are concerned airport may have to expand into the surrounding community

BY TODD LUCK
THE CHRONICLE

The Smith Reynolds Airport board will be asking Forsyth County for funds to help move a taxiway that will put the airport closer to, or maybe even into, the surrounding community.

Taxiway A runs parallel to the airport's primary long runway, with 281 feet separating them, and currently doesn't meet the Federal Aviation Administration regulation that requires it to be 400 feet from the runway.

Airport Director Mark Davidson said the FAA and regulators have been working with the airport, allowing it to use the taxiway as plans are made to move it. He said the FAA wouldn't waive the regulation, so the taxiway will have to move.

On Tuesday, June 23, the Airport Commission of

Forsyth County approved going to the Forsyth County Commissioners to ask for up to \$15 million to move the runway, which would be 10 percent of the estimated \$15 million in proposed construction, which includes not just moving the taxiway but also removing an obstruction and extending Taxiway F. The rest of the funds – the 90 percent that would be provided by the state and federal governments – are contingent on getting that 10 percent from the County Commissioners.

"We're financially self-sufficient. We don't take any taxpayer dollars, but we don't have that type of money," Davidson said.

Currently only preliminary options have been discussed and there is a study underway accessing the viable options for moving Taxiway A, which runs parallel to the nearby Machine

Street. Moving the taxiway west would require the airport to acquire property that many local residents live on. There's more options for moving the taxiway to the east side of the runway, since there's more vacant land. There's a possibility it could require the acquisition of land with homes on it on Teresa Avenue.

However, Davidson said that there are options that may let it move closer to Teresa Avenue without having to buy homes and disrupt the neighborhood, which is what the Airport Commission prefers.

Though it'll be two or three more months before the study is done, Airport Commission Chair Thomas McKim was confident the taxiway could be moved without disturbing the community.

"We believe we will have several options that

will be totally within the existing perimeter of the airport," said McKim.

County Commissioner Walter Marshall isn't convinced of that and worries that homes on Teresa Avenue will have to be purchased to accommodate the taxiway. He said he was planning on contacting homeowners and letting them know what could happen. Marshall said he would oppose the commissioners giving money to the airport if it disrupted the surrounding community.

"I can't support it at all," said Marshall, about the airport acquiring land from the neighborhood.

The main runway is the only one designed for large aircraft like 737s, which North State Aviation, one of several tenant companies at the airport, works on. North State, which hired 500 employees in the last four years and is con-

tracted to do work on United Airlines planes, accounts for 70 percent of the airport's revenue. Davidson said that makes it essential to meet the FAA regulation so they can continue to accommodate large aircraft.

Smith Reynolds Airport, which is located on Liberty Street, also serves corporate and recreational air travel. Landmark Aviation is the airport's fixed-based operator, serving needs like fuel and maintenance for transient aircraft. The airport is governed by a five-commissioner board appointed by the County Commissioners. The Airport Commission includes County Commissioner Ted Kaplan and former Liberty Street Community Development Corp. Chair Jim Shaw.

Davidson said the Airport Commission first learned that Taxiway A was no longer FAA compliant in 2012 during an Airport Master Plan Update. He said because of

the non-compliance, the airport couldn't get state or federal funds to repave the taxiway. Except for sealing cracks, the taxiway hasn't been repaved since 1983. Even if the County Commissioners approve the funds, once the study is done, it will take years to move the runway, Davidson said.

He said the airport requesting funds from the County was rare. The last time was a loan to help attract Piedmont Propulsion Systems LLC in 2012, a tenant company that works on airplane propellers and hired 45 employees. The loan was unanimously approved by the County Commissioners.

The Airport Commission normally meets at 4 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month at the airport, 3801 North Liberty St., Suite 204, though the next meeting will be July 28.

Street

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"No, the shooting doesn't make me think twice about going to church because you can get shot or killed anywhere; it just so happens that he decided to do it in a church." – **Kenny Patterson**



"No, I believe that church is in you. The building means nothing – it becomes sacred when holy people are in it. It is very unfortunate that this horrific tragedy happened in a place so many feel safe in, but not everyone understands what a building of God means ... As for me, I will continue to attend church and praise my God." – **Racquelle Weaver**



"Church should be the safest place. I will continue to go night and day – it doesn't affect me at all." – **Tony King**, left, Freedom Baptist on 14th Street

"It doesn't scare me at all about going to church. I will continue to go and worship, regardless of what happens in the world." – **Mercina Adams**, right, Christ Rescue Temple Apostle Church



"If you know God, these things are going to happen. God is going to take care of his people, and we are ready." – **Christine Porter**, Heaven View on Clemmonsville Road



"I have no problems because I am a Christian. I have no fear because if his spirit is with me, I am not afraid. God has given me the spirit of power and of protection, and I know where I am going." – **Cleo Kimbrough**, Calvary Baptist Church on Country Club Road



"We must always serve God any kind of a way that we can – because He forgave us first. Everyone." – **John Thomas**

The Chronicle (USPS 067-910) was established by Ernest H. Pitt and Ndubisi Egemonye in 1974 and is published every Thursday by Winston-Salem Chronicle Publishing Co. Inc., 617 N. Liberty Street, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27101. Periodicals postage paid at Winston-Salem, N.C. Annual subscription price is \$30.72.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
The Chronicle, P.O. Box 1636
Winston-Salem, NC 27102-1636

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