

UNC, Town Revamp Air Safety Measures

By GEOFF WESSEL
Staff Writer

A recently approved set of changes for the University-owned Horace Williams Airport focuses on increasing safety precautions and making the airport less of a disturbance for nearby Chapel Hill residents.

The changes arose from suggestions made by the airport's Advisory Board, which is comprised of both University officials and community representatives.

Approved by interim Chancellor Bill McCoy in late December, the changes create several new restrictions on the use of the small airport.

Stage 1 jets, which are noisier and less efficient than newer models, are banned from the airport, as well as planes that weigh more than 12,500 pounds at take-off, gliders, balloons and radio-controlled miniature aircraft.

Planes are not allowed to land or take off between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m.

"It's the first time that any outside group has worked with the University on the policies that govern the management of Horace Williams Airport," said Chapel Hill resident Edith Wiggins, a member of the advisory board.

"One of the most important things that happened was the willingness of the University to open up what it's doing for public input," she said.

The restrictions will attempt to reduce the amount of air traffic and

noise pollution.

The new hours of operation will not apply to Area Health Education Center Med Air planes or other planes on University health care system business.

Board Chairman Jonathan Howes said the changes were the ones on which the committee could reach a consensus.

"(The changes) are appropriate for what they were, but they don't represent any final conclusion," he said.

Howes said the advisory board would continue to suggest changes in the airport's policies. "It's an ongoing committee, and the approval of the changes in the operating policy by the chancellor is only one step," he said.

Several plane crashes, including one in February 1998 at Horace Williams, prompted the University and town to look into more effective safety measures for the airport.

The late Chancellor Michael Hooker created the advisory board in March 1998, in which the town of Chapel Hill organized to give the University feedback.

Town Council member Fred Black serves as an advisory board member. "I think (the changes are) a step in the right direction," he said. "We have a lot more work to do in order to accomplish what I think our goal should be, and that is to have as safe an airport as possible."

The University Editor can be reached at udesk@unc.edu.

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Edi Ntuen

The University of North Carolina and Wachovia would like to congratulate Edi Ntuen, the Wachovia Woman of the Week.

Edi is a sophomore on UNC's track team. She is studying chemistry and has a 3.0 GPA. Edi has devoted time to Special Olympics and the science outreach program at UNC. Edi was also a valuable asset in helping bring fifth and sixth graders from South Edgecombe County School to UNC to receive gifts, visit the Morehead Planetarium, meet with UNC student-athletes and have a dinner at Kenan Stadium. Edi's commitment to this project was steadfast and makes her a wonderful role model for all.

Wachovia is committed to supporting achievements by women and is proud to celebrate Edi Ntuen's accomplishments.

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