GOV. SARGENT HALTS LOGAN EXPANSION

Strong opposition from Governor Sargent has put a stop to the proposed new $45 million runway at Logan Airport.

The governor has also seriously challenged other expansion plans at the airport and called for a sweeping program of noise abatement.

In a policy statement last Thursday night, Sargent announced his opposition to construction of the runway and a proposed $85 million South Terminal.

The strongly-worded speech came some 40 hours before a public hearing was to be held by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Federal Aviation Administration to consider whether the new runway should be built. The Mass. Port Authority, in turn, got permission to withdraw its application for the hearing.

The hearing promised to draw as many as 1000 citizens, most of them opposing the runway. Various elected officials and departments of the city and state were prepared to argue against the project.

Prior to the speech, Sargent's position on the runway and Logan Airport in general were a well-kept secret. Various elected officials and departments of the city and state were prepared to argue against the project.

反应 from the front lines: governor's new policy great, but...

by Lisa Jones, Marie DiFlumeri, and Nossik Nacobian

Reactions to Sargent's statement and the Port Authority's response by residents in St. Mary's Parish area range from total skepticism to cautious and qualified optimism.

In interviews Sunday with Community News reporters, residents of Coleridge, Bennington, Horace, and Homer Streets questioned the ability of anyone to stop Logan Airport's expansion, and Governor Sargent's motives and convictions in opposing construction of the parallel runway and expansion of the airport.

The people in this area of East Boston live directly under the flight path of the proposed runway. They, and residents of Point Shirley in Winthrop, would have suffered the worst noise exposure.

Following are statements by residents:

Mrs. Mary Cummings, 148 Coleridge St.:

"No one can stop the airport. You can stop them to a certain degree, but after a while they'll expand again.

"If people are willing to sell their houses, the Port Authority will keep buying them and expand."
Logan’s own estimates, sixty per cent of all Callahan and Sumner Tunnel traffic is airport traffic. Imagine those tunnels if that traffic is in­creased.”

Sargent also pointed to a scaling down in size of a proposed new Inter­national Terminal. He said he would have his new Secretary of Transporta­tion, Alan Altshuler, review both ter­minal project proposals with the Port Authority.

Compensation for noise suffering.

In the area of noise problems, Sargent has asked his new Secretary Altshuler to negotiate with the NPA to set up a Community Assistance Fund from Logan income. The money will go to­ward soundproofing schools, hospitals and, “perhaps,” places of worship.

Neighborhoods that have “suffered in the extreme,” he said, could re­ceive more recreation facilities in compensation for suffering from noise, “in East Boston, for example, perhaps there can be established a policy for land replacement by the Port Au­thority for that land taken for the airport.”

Noise abatement.

Sargent also promised to move in other areas to lessen noise problems. He said he will file legislation to regulate noise at the airport, and "planes will either conform to these limits or be banned from Logan...Air­lines will have this choice - reduce noise or go somewhere else.

The governor also said he will have Sec. Altshuler work with state and federal officials to cut down on the number of flights at Logan by trimming "overscheduling" by competing airlines.

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Sarge promises noise limits, soundproofing, land replacement

Other construction challenged

In the area of terminal construc­tion, Sargent took a stand somewhere between the Port Authority's expansion plans and demands from East Boston that no new construction should pro­ceed.

In opposing a proposed new South Terminal, Sargent said, "While I op­pose a totally new domestic terminal, I suggest consideration of double­decking the existing domestic ter­minal." He said this would cost about a quarter of the projected $85 million cost of the terminal.

Sargent said his decision in this area was based on fears that new ter­minals would mean more autos to and from Logan.

"An expanded Logan means expanded Logan parking...More available parking should make it possible for airline pas­sengers to drive to Logan. Today, by Logan's own estimates, sixty per cent of all Callahan and Sumner Tunnel traffic is airport traffic. Imagine those tunnels if that traffic is in­creased.”

Sargent also called for a scaling down in size of a proposed new Inter­national Terminal. He said he would have his new Secretary of Transpor­tation, Alan Altshuler, review both ter­minal project proposals with the Port Authority.

People's query: how long will it last?

FRED LANE: "The people of East Boston gotta keep fighting."

Mr. Bernard Ballan, 163 Corderidge St.:

"I doubt that withdrawal of the request for the permit is a turning point. Most people here think that someone's going to take their homes away from them.

"It's necessary to know what Mass. Port is going in order for people to stop them. We need a place that a person can call if he sees someone doing something over there.

"An individual can't do anything by himself. This isn't a well-knit community where everyone gets together and does things.""  Guy Cambocciaro, 569 Bennington St.:

"Can't stop progress. After a few months the fight will start all over again."

Evelyn Picardi, 34 Horace St.:

"The governor's statement is just a political pitch. There's no way of stopping the airport."

"If you put restrictions on planes, you may be jeopardizing the lives of passengers and people in East Boston (due to unsafe proce­dures)."

FRED LANE: "The people of East Boston gotta keep fighting."

Mrs. Mary Scigliano, 149 Coleridge St.:

"I think it's a good thing, but I don't know how long it will last."

Mary Cummings: "No one can stop the airport."

Bernard Ballan: "This isn't a well-knit community."

Everyone is on an ecology kick. "Governor Sargent didn't do it for us, he did it because he had to.

"He's good if the runway's stopped. Stopping the airport's ex­pansion is a victory but the people of East Boston gotta keep fighting. The Port Authority is pretty strong."

Jim Goodring, 30 Horace St.:

"They can't take my house away from me!"

Residents of other areas of East Boston echoed the sentiments of people who would have been affected by the new runway.

San Tassone, 237 Chelsea St.:

"I think it's a good thing, but I don't know how long it will last."

E. BOSTON LEGISLATORS COMMENT

Sen. Mario Umana

"As far as I am concerned, the Governor gave the people of East Bos­ton a long needed morale boost."

"It's high time someone in a high state position acted on the Mass­achusetts Port Authority. I just hope this isn't a tall tale. Perhaps for at least three years they will not build a runway. Perhaps longer.

"I am in favor of a high speed rail system and particularly a second airport."

"I would suggest to the people of East Boston that now more than ever they would not give up. Many had a defeatist attitude. It's more evident than ever we can stop them. We must organize for future emergen­cies."

Rep. Mimie B. Pitaro

"I am elated at the latest stand since it is a victory of the people's fight for survival. A few years ago, when we organized the Legislative Com­mittee of the Neighborhood Council our first act was to take an aggres­sive, positive offensive against the Mass. Port Authority."

Fred Lane, 57 Horace St.:

"It's good if the runway's been stopped. Stopping the airport's ex­pansion is a victory but the people of East Boston gotta keep fighting. The Port Authority is pretty strong."

Rep. Emanuel Serra

"The Governor's statement is what we've been hoping and working for.

"In effect it has stopped a run­way from being built. Equally impor­tant is that it has diluted the atti­tude that it was useless to fight the power of the Mass. Port Authority."

"The Governor is to be applauded for his statement. It took a great deal of personal courage to make such a commitment...

"Without dispelling the hope that we all must feel at this point, it would be foolish if we dropped our guard and became complacent. We haven't pulled their claws, only dulled them.

"At that time we met with a great deal of pessimism...It has been a long uphill struggle...but today's victory is a justification for all the hard work in the past few years."

"It is indeed encouraging to know that the Governor, who was so long si­lent, has raised his voice strongly, loudly, and courageously in our sup­port. However, we cannot relax for this is by no means the end of the struggle."

MPA will bow to Sargent, or he'll fight

by Moniek Hacopian and Peter Nevanth

The Mass. Port Authority seems to have gone on record with some grace Gov. Sargent's strong opposition to its plans for the future of Logan Airport.

In a press conference Friday, MPA board chairman John Larkin Thompson summed up his reaction to a batch of proposals and directives from the governor:

"If there are better ways to do something, we're prepared to do it."

Thompson admitted that the governor had forced the authority to look at "other alternatives" than what was on the drawing table.

News commentary

Sargent's statement was obviously designed to put the MPA down in the softest way possible. Even while opposing the runway, Sargent said it should be reviewed by the federal government - - on the off chance that the runway is what the MPA says it is, something that would reduce noise by bringing in more flights over the ocean.

And Sargent's new Secretary of Transportation, Alan Altshuler, said on WHDH-TV Saturday night that the runway could be built if the MPA proves it would be environmentally beneficial.

"We find this hard to believe," said Altshuler, "but should the MPA be able to prove it to our satisfaction, we'll be open to that consideration."

MPA cooperative

Other MPA statements suggest that the authority is going to be cooperative with the governor, at least to some extent. Port Authority director Edward J. King Monday morning said that he was open to changing plans for the terminals - - and that the MPA would "certainly consider" the governor's proposal for double-decking a present terminal rather than building the new South Terminal. He said a re-study has "already begun."

However, Thompson, in the press conference Friday, seemed to gloss over the fact that Sargent had taken such a strong stand. He, like King, said the terminal projects were "already being designed." The fact is, that up to a week ago, plans for a completely new South Terminal were going full speed ahead.

Thompson also dwelled on Sargent's promise that the runway proposal, even though dead for now, should be reviewed by the federal government. The MPA chairman said the authority will be holding its own hearing on the runway sometime in the near future.

Sargent and the top MPA brass met several times prior to the governor's speech, and it's very likely that they hit on this "federal review" as a compromise and face-saving device.

What the "federal review" may end up being is simply the federal government paying for the $160,000 "environmental impact" study done two months ago on the runway by consultants Lan­

Drum and Brown. To date, the government has been reluctant to give the MPA some of its airport planning money for this grant - - under pressure from aides to Mayor White, who contended the study was a farce and were willing to go to court to prove it.

Salvucci: Sarge will fight if need be

White aide Fred Salvucci was involved in much of the negotiations that led to Sargent's policy decision. He trusts the governor's sincerity and thinks the MPA will have little chance of getting him to back down.

"Thompson is still playing as if somehow he's going to handle this problem with public relations. It's too early to tell what the MPA is going to do, but I'd say that if they try to fight him (the governor), they're dead. He's been so explicit and complete that we're sure he's prepared to fight the thing out if he has to."

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THE HEARING - The two top MPA executives, director Edward King and board chairman John Thompson, sounded cooperative as they agreed to cancel runway hearing.

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All in all, it was a mighty fine week

Last week should go down in East Boston's history as one of its greatest weeks.

The Governor's statement on Thursday and the MPA's step-back, mark the first major setback in the steamrolling expansion of Logan Airport. East Boston and neighboring communities appear to have won a great victory.

Also, on Thursday, the Mayor's Office announced that the elderly housing project for Maverick Square had finally been approved by the federal government and $3.1 million set aside for purchase and development of the .96-acre waterfront site.

This is also a victory for East Boston residents who have been lobbying for years to get some housing for the elderly here. With one of the highest concentration of senior citizen areas in Boston's neighborhood, East Boston is one of the few without any housing for the elderly.

On Friday, July 9, the East Boston Neighborhood Council's Impact Project received formal notice of approval of a $1.3 million grant from the federal Office of Economic Opportunity for establishment of a local Community Development Corporation (CDC).

At a celebration party at the Impact office on Friday, Mrs. Anna DeFronzo of Lamson Court, asked with obvious joy and relief, "Can you believe it? We finally did it. This is a great day for East Boston. The people have won."