



Memorandum

To: Editorial Board
From: James R. Miron, Mayor
Date: December 31, 2008
RE: Opinion Editorial

As Stratford's first Mayor, I have been consistent as to my position regarding the Sikorsky Memorial Airport.

I have always insisted that since the airport is located in Stratford, the Town must have a meaningful role in all decisions involving airport growth and development.

From the time I campaigned for Mayor, to the present, I have never wavered from my position on the Sikorsky Memorial Airport.

My position can be summarized as follows:

1. The runways at the airport need not, should not, and must not ever be lengthened.
2. The existing infrastructure of the airport (i.e. the runway surface conditions, terminal buildings, service buildings, hangars and other related areas) must be improved and upgraded.
3. Both airport and non-airport business related expansion that does **not** include any **runway** expansion should be encouraged as an economic development mechanism.
4. If necessary, runway safety areas should be considered and supported provided that the process is open, transparent and Stratford residents have meaningful input into the process and legal assurances are put into place to guarantee that the safety areas could not be used for future **runway** expansion.
5. Airport ownership and/or control, in whole or in part, be vested in the Town of Stratford.

My positions, as outlined above, cannot be understated. It is the position I have had since I became a candidate for Mayor. My position is clear and simple in a matter that has, historically, been adversarial and complicated between the Town of Stratford and the City of Bridgeport.

I am committed to continuing the dialogue with Mayor Bill Finch that was started with Mayor John Fabrizi.

Our dialogue has looked into a number of possible ways to transfer ownership including a regional airport authority; co-ownership of the airport between Bridgeport and Stratford; and outright transfer of the Sikorsky Memorial Airport to the Town of Stratford.

To date, it looks like the regional authority idea will not fly (pun intended) as the other municipalities in the region are not in the fiscal position to contribute to the Sikorsky Memorial Airport.

Co-ownership of the airport between the Town of Stratford and City of Bridgeport is a possibility if both the Town of Stratford and City of Bridgeport accept the other as equal partners.

However, in my opinion, outright ownership of the Sikorsky Memorial Airport by the Town of Stratford is the simplest, quickest and best option.

In order to assure and encourage the City of Bridgeport and The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to support the transfer of the Sikorsky Memorial Airport from the City of Bridgeport to the Town of Stratford and in order to ensure the citizens of the Town of Stratford to support this transfer all parties should be willing to:

1. Guarantee that the airport will continue to operate as an airport on the existing footprint of the airport.
2. Guarantee that no runway could ever be lengthened.
3. Guarantee that appropriate runway safety areas be installed and restricted as runway safety areas only.
4. Guarantee that infrastructure improvements be made to the airport.

I have always been in agreement with the Connecticut Post editorial board, the Greater Bridgeport Regional Business Council and the tens of thousands of people who believe that the Sikorsky Memorial Airport is a regional asset.

Indeed, the redevelopment of the Stratford Army Engine Plant, the Shakespeare Theatre and development of Lordship Boulevard in Stratford as well as Steel Point and

other redevelopment projects in Bridgeport will be directly benefited by having a better, not bigger, Sikorsky Memorial Airport. These projects by themselves will not only benefit each municipality but also the region.

It is a fact that economic development in Stratford, Bridgeport and the region would be strengthened with a better – not bigger – Sikorsky Memorial Airport owned by the Town of Stratford.

I stand with the majority of the Stratford citizens that understand a better airport does not mean a bigger airport. I stand with the majority of Stratford citizens that recognize that jobs and other economic growth will occur with a better – not bigger – airport.

However, I also stand with the thousands of families in our Town directly in the flight path of the airport. We must be sensitive to their concerns and quality of life and work together with them to forge a better – not bigger – airport.

This is why it is absolutely critical that the people of the Town of Stratford be part of the future success of the airport as owner of this great town and regional asset.

Together, with Stratford as owner, we can help facilitate a better – not bigger – airport, job growth and economic development in the Town of Stratford, the City of Bridgeport and the entire region and state.

Mayor James R. Miron
Town of Stratford