

Airport Experience Working Group

Report and Direction

**No one comes to Aspen to visit the airport, but let's make sure
that the airport isn't the reason they don't come back.**

Preamble

The Airport Experience Working Group (AEWG) is made up of 15 community members who met over the course of eight months to determine if the existing airport experience fits the needs of the community at large and determine what improvements are needed for the future.

The AEWG worked under the premise that the existing airport passenger service (number of carriers, direct flight destinations, and passenger volume) fits the needs of the community and should be maintained to allow for diversity and vitality.

The AEWG strongly supports the environmental direction of the Community Character Working Group of a minimum 30% reduction in aircraft emissions. The group acknowledged that 0.8% growth is expected and should be planned for, but not immediately built to. Our goal is to maintain the current level of air passenger service and prepare for the future growth.

The AEWG felt the work the Focus Group did with transportation to and from the airport is comprehensive and should be incorporated into the overall vision to enhance the airport experience.

The AEWG framed our recommendations in alignment with the guiding principles the Character Community Working Group articulated in their report.

What Should a Warm, Welcoming and Comfortable Terminal Look Like?

1) How could it best "fit" the community?

- a) Reflect the Local Culture and Values: *The AEWG kept the local culture and values top of mind when making recommendations regarding the guest experience. The first sense of arrival is exiting the aircraft, and although the group recommended that exiting the aircraft is via jet bridge, the group would like the jet bridges designed to allow for fresh air and views. The group also would like the terminal to fit with Aspen/Pitkin County Airport Design Guidelines (Meeting #3 PowerPoint) in scale while accommodating the capacity and guest experience recommendations listed above.*
- b) Environmental Responsibility: *The AEWG supports the incorporation of the highest levels of environmental stewardship in the design and materials of the terminal and support facilities. The AEWG voted that the design aesthetics align with the Aspen/Pitkin County Airport Design Guidelines as referenced in Meeting #3 PowerPoint.*
- c) Economic Vitality: *The AEWG supports the Community Character Working Group's goals on economic vitality. Maintaining existing levels of passenger service while building in the flexibility for a possible 0.8% growth provides a healthy level of access and competition between carriers.*
- d) Design Excellence: *The AEWG acknowledges it does not have the design expertise to guide the process and would like to give the designers flexibility and creative options. AEWG would like to*

see several options produced for the various working groups and community at large to critique. While the terminal ultimately can't be designed by committee, the aesthetic can be guided through an iterative process. AEWG also recommends the design aesthetics align with the Aspen/Pitkin County Airport Design Guidelines as referenced in Meeting #3 PowerPoint.

- e) Responsibility to Preserve Our High Quality of Life: The AEWG believes the recommendations it has submitted will balance the requirements of the Community Character Working Group in the best possible manner. These recommendations allow us to maintain our existing level of air service, plan for small growth increases, implement the highest environmental standards and provide the best guest experience.*

2) What are the terminal and landside options?

- a) Adaptable and Flexible for the Future: The AEWG agreed that the existing conditions of the terminal are not a good fit for the community from a guest or employee perspective. The terminal does not meet the space requirements for the current level of air service and passenger flow, does not meet the basic needs of the employees and does not work well with the current level of security screening and passenger segregation required by the TSA.*
- b) The AEWG felt that the existing eight gates need to be maintained into the initial design of the terminal to service a similar level of passenger traffic. Currently, there are 8 airplane parking positions and 7 doors to access the airplanes. The AEWG would like to design flexibility into this layout that allows for planned expansion as needed. Please note there was one no vote on this motion and a minority opinion report (preferring 7 gates) was submitted.*
- c) The AEWG felt that two baggage claim carousels met the expectations of disembarking passengers. Currently there are 2 baggage carousels. Each carousel can be used by more than one flight, meeting the requirements of multiple incoming flights at the same time.*
- d) The AEWG deferred to airport planning professionals to determine the overall size of the terminal based on existing passenger traffic and 0.8% future growth. The functionality should include adequate space for security, sterile space, ticketing, luggage holding rooms, concessions, customer amenities, circulation and overflow space, employee working space, break rooms, training facilities and pet relief areas. The AEWG voted that the design should incorporate best practices worldwide for employee accommodation and operational efficiency.*
- e) The AEWG acknowledges that the terminal layout should be left to professional airport planners with input from the recommendations made above. The AEWG voted to endorse a typical passenger terminal layout with added comments and additions as indicated on the attached graphic layout.*
- f) The AEWG specifically voted for the flexibility to add stories that keep within the Aspen character to support appropriate massing while taking into consideration topography and phasing. The goal is to accomplish the functionality requirements in a smaller footprint.*
- g) The AEWG voted for "open air" jet bridges vs loading from the tarmac with the caveat that the design is modified for the ability to open to fresh air and a visual experience of mountains possibly achieved with windows (please note a minority opinion was filed regarding jet bridges vs loading from the tarmac {see addendum D}).*

- h) *The AEWG voted that car rental concessionaires be placed adjacent to the baggage claim carousels. Additionally, a welcome booth, concierge or information desk should be placed where visible and accessible.*

Areas of Consideration Beyond the Scope of the AEWG Directive

Transportation to and from the airport is critical to the guest experience but out of the scope of this work groups area of focus. The Focus Group did an excellent job of outlining options some included in this document's recommendations. A centralized hub within a contained building for drop off, pickup, ride sharing and easy access to RFTA would help limit traffic on Highway 82.

The AEWG would like to see a convenient area for cabbies, bus drivers, hotel shuttle drivers and ride share drivers to congregate, use restrooms and enjoy a meal. Fundamental to the guest experience is an enthusiastic and engaged workforce and steps to make the workplace enjoyable contribute to the guest experience.

The AEWG recommends a pet relief area be incorporated in the terminal design.

The AEWG recommends that consideration be given to an airline club area or lounge that is operated by the airport.

New cutting-edge information was presented in the Aspen Institute's Seminar "The Future of Aviation in a Carbon Constrained World." This seminar showcased a series of presentations by experts in aircraft development, environmental efficiency and future design parameters. Much of the information was completely new to members of this working group, including advances in electric aircraft, biofuels, route selection and scheduling, composite materials and advanced aircraft design. The information reinforced how fast the aviation industry is moving forward. While these new technologies will not affect the design of the new terminal's footprint, these advances should be considered when the overall vision of the future airport is approved.

Motions*

**Motions were arrived at and voted on by the AEWG through discussing the overall values of the community, planning direction, and success factors.*

- Eight gates with planned expansion as-needed in the design.
- Support additional stories that keep within the Aspen character to support appropriate massing taking into consideration topography and phasing.
- Design should incorporate best practices worldwide for employee accommodation and operational efficiency.
- Rental housing dedicated to Airport Workforce Employees should be incorporated into this process.
- Go with jet bridge vs. tarmac with caveat of modification to design for open air/fresh air and visual experience with views or mountains, maybe with glass.
- Two baggage carousels with possibilities of expansion.
- Rental car counters are adjacent to baggage claim area.

- Design aesthetics align with the Aspen/Pitkin County Airport Design Guidelines as referenced in Meeting #3 PPT
- Endorse Typical Passenger Terminal Layout with added comments and additions as indicated on the Layout graphic.

Recommendations

- Need an overflow area for luggage that meets safety and TSA requirements
- Must have a welcome booth more visible area in baggage claim
- Airport should be planned to support multimodal forms of transportation in the future
- Hotel shuttles/taxis/rideshare all share the same facility (easily visible islands for all options)
- Expand curbside check-in for all airlines
- For safety, have clear sidewalks with either shelter/overhang or with geothermal design
- RFTA airport-specific bus that picks people up and drops them off at Ruby Park and Brush Creek.
- More taxis. A lot of times you wait for the taxi to come back to leave the airport.
- Should be thinking into the future with autonomous vehicles. If you have plentiful parking, people will use it. If you limit parking and make it premium, then only those who need it will use it. Value hunters will find other options such as RFTA.
- Need to consider older demographic and carrying bags long distance.
- Enhance short-term, employee, etc. parking. Long-term should be found somewhere else and public transit can be stressed.
- Have a discussion on Commercial vs. GA users and how the airport can be built.
- Terminal layout: seems like a lot of space is being taken up for airport staff offices, etc. Can we make it three floors or put the offices in a lower level? Note how important natural light is for employees in offices.
- Develop ASE Airport App.
- Automated kiosk as much as possible.
- Private lounge, which is an expensive space, but all airlines have stated that they would like to have this space.
 - **Idea:** a lounge run by Aspen (not airlines) and County/Airport keeps any profits.
- Figure out how concessions can make a profit
- Recomposure area (post security screening check point)

ADDENDUM A MEETING SUMMARY

Group Meeting Summaries:

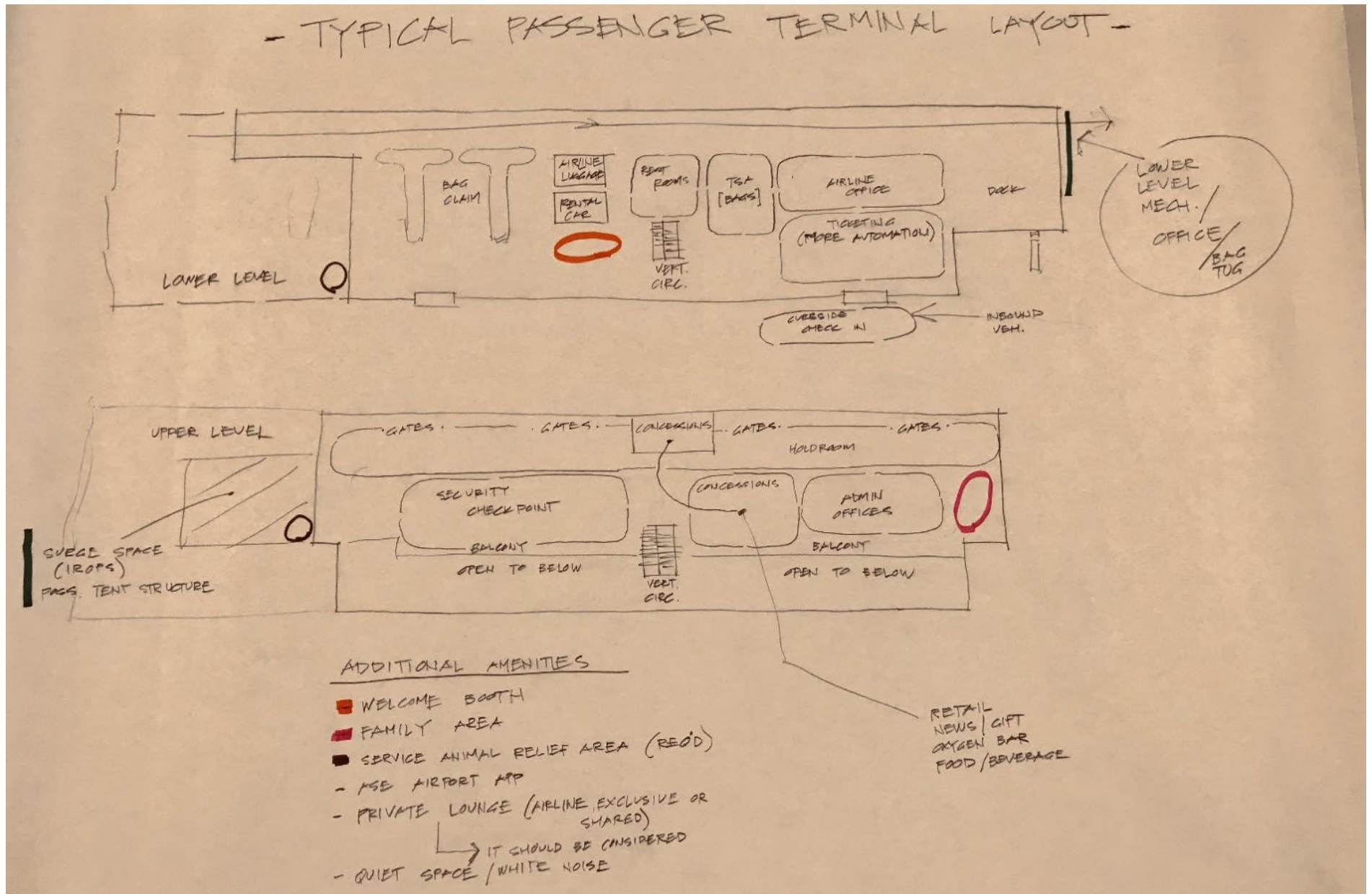
Meeting 1, September 24, 2019: *This meeting discussed existing conditions and the goals for this workgroup. Several studies were presented on gate turn information, 2018 EA and Record of Decision, FAA Airport Terminal Planning Advisory Circular and terminal planning guidance. Deliverables to the Airport Vision Committee include terminal building priorities, customer amenities, sustainability measures and architectural and aesthetic guidelines.*

Meeting 2, October 2, 2019: *Rules for voting were discussed and the group voted on how many gates (please note a minority opinion was filed regarding the number of gates {see addendum D}), terminal sizing, and back of house space requirements. The AEWG also asked that employee housing be included in the larger discussion.*

Meeting 3, October 21, 2019: *The focus of this meeting was on describing the functional components of the terminal areas and aligning the recommendations with the recommendations of the Community Character Working Group. At this meeting, it was decided that jet bridges were a better option than accessing aircraft from the tarmac, with safety the predominant concern. We agreed that 2 baggage claim carousels would be able to service the anticipated requirements of passengers. Finally, rental cars, a visible welcome booth and easy access to ground transportation options should all be located within the same area. We agreed that as a group we do not have the expertise to create a design aesthetic, but we would defer to professionals to provide several options for review. We focused on the Community Character guideline that adaptability and flexibility should be fundamental to the design.*

Meeting 4, October 30, 2019: *After diving deeper into the site and terminal planning, the group voted to approve the Terminal Layout Graphic. This graphic is addendum B. During the November 6th meeting the group asked to have the graphic simplified and cleaned up. This graphic is addendum C. Airfield and Highway 82 setbacks determine where a building can be located. The group understands the options for the terminal location are limited by these constraints. The group requested again that several options be developed by professional airport planners in conjunction with architects and designers. A committee could then review and chose or blend characteristics into a final design and building plan.*

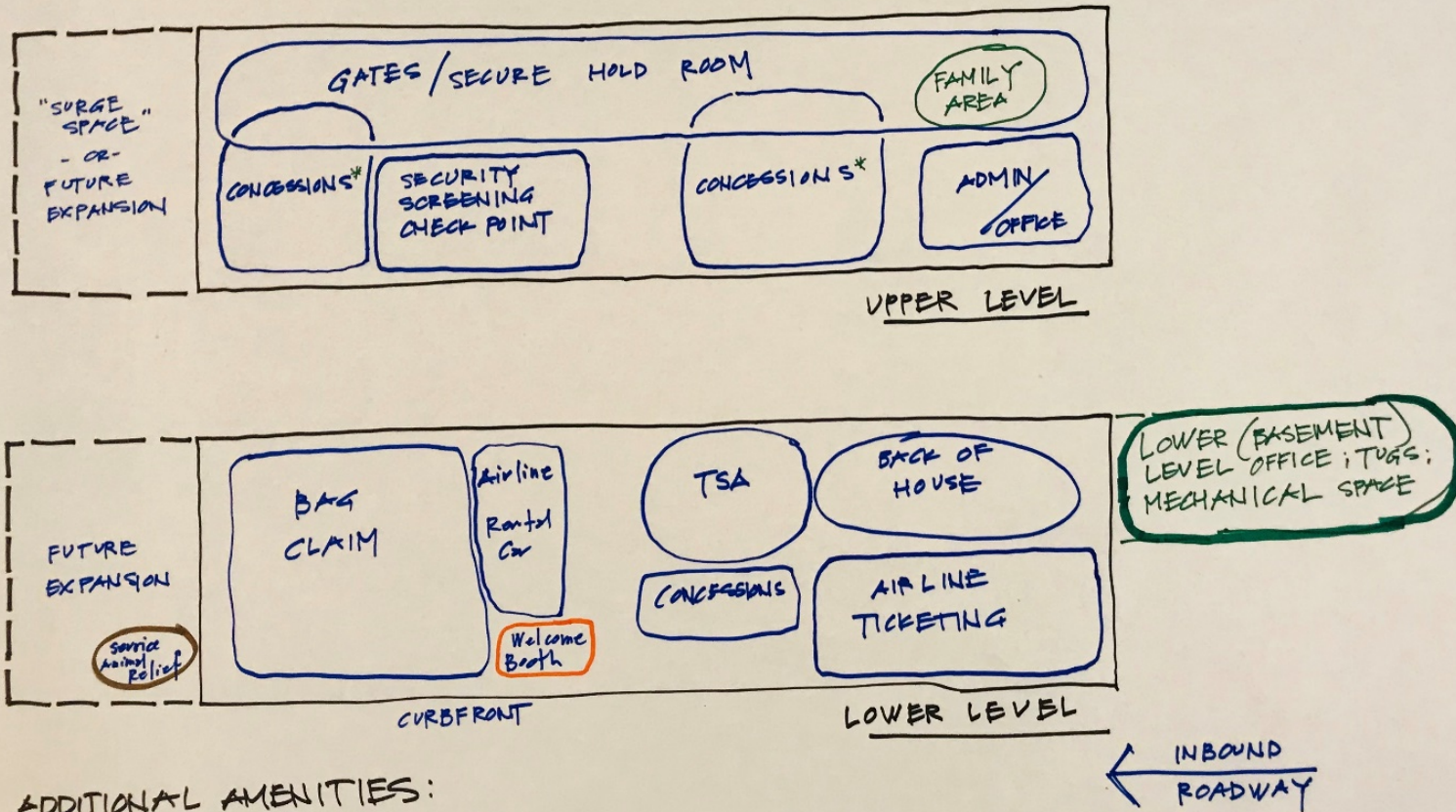
ADDENDUM B TERMINAL LAYOUT (AS VOTED):



ADDENDUM C TERMINAL LAYOUT (SIMPLIFIED):

AGE VISION PROCESS
AIRPORT EXPERIENCE GROUP
10.30.19

- TYPICAL PASSENGER TERMINAL LAYOUT -



ADDITIONAL AMENITIES:

- AGE AIRPORT APP
- PRIVATE LOUNGE (CONSIDER IT)
- QUIET SPACE

*CONCESSIONS: Retail; News; Gift; Food & Beverage

ADDENDUM D MINORITY REPORTS

Mr Brian Pettet, Facilitator for the Experience Committee of the Aspen Airport working process

November 3, 2019—sent by e-mail—original available in hard copy if requested.

Dear Brian,

I am writing to you in my capacity as a member of The Experience Committee (Committee) of the Aspen Airport working process, and to you as our facilitator. It is my desire that the below memorandum be forwarded to the Vision Committee as a Minority Report of the Committee. I understand that you agree to so forward it after seeing if any other Members of the Committee may wish to sign on to it. I welcome any additional signatures. I am also very willing to appear, if requested, at a Vision Committee meeting to offer an oral presentation and to answer questions.

As you will recall during the meeting of the Committee, held on October 2, 2019, the question was posed to the Committee of what might be the appropriate number of Gates for the airport terminal, should the airport be redeveloped. The Committee was asked to discuss this question and to vote on it.

After limited discussion I made a motion to put the number of Gates at 7. This motion was seconded and discussion ensued. I add here, as I did in discussion at the meeting, that at a previous meeting of the Committee, held on September 24, 2019, a consensus then was for this number with a possible addition of an 8th. Essentially what the current airport terminal affords. I note here, and I did not mention this at the meeting as a matter of respect for my fellow Committee Members, that between the two meetings the Members present changed.

During the discussion of my motion it became clear that a strong majority of those present favored more Gates and with unlimited future possible expansion. I appreciate that unlimited isn't likely what they meant but that is what the motion that was voted on says as it places no ceiling on the number of possible Gates.

In the Committee discussion of both my Motion and the later Motion I explained, as clearly as I could, that I could not vote for any larger number of Gates. I couldn't vote for them unless I understood what the design issues were in sizing a new terminal with more than the 7 Gates, and a dormant unused 8th (what we have now). That I couldn't vote without the additional design and built coverage details for all of the external needs of growth for parking planes, tarmac access, support services, and off premises transportation, which every Gate more than 7 would necessitate. Essentially, I felt that without understanding all of the design and built environment coverage issues inside and out I/We, as Committee members, couldn't form an opinion and thus we would be voting on emotion alone and not on fact. I also suggested that the limited growth plan we were to assume from prior meetings suggested that 7 would be fine. Finally I added that without all of the costs associated with an 8 or more Gates growth plan it was folly to act as if we had no interest in costs.

My motion was defeated with my voting Aye, and possibly one other person but I am not sure, the minutes will answer this question.

A second motion was made for 8 Gates and room for more for growth, I believe the motion mentioned essentially building for unlimited growth as it placed no ceiling on the number. During discussion of this motion I again raised the fact that we had no information on what an 8 Gate growth and future growth plan would require for the size of a terminal and exterior support for such a number of Gates and thus I couldn't vote for it. This motion was carried with only my Nay vote.

I asked the facilitator and resources if they had the information I sought, and if so would they please enter it into the discussions. They advised it was not germane and that the Vision Committee was asking the Committee for its opinion without any of this information being needed.

I then asked the Committee to understand that I would leave the Meeting as the next questions now assumed a terminal size and design and an airfield to support it which I had no way of comprehending or forming an opinion on. Essentially that without facts all we would be doing was star gazing and I could not do that in good conscience.

Finally, I asked our facilitators to confirm for the Committee that essentially every recommendation our Committee would make to the Vision Committee from here on rested on how many Gates our Committee advised it was correct sizing and that our Committee's vote on the number of Gates was thus, in my opinion, the most critical vote we would ever take as a Committee. I asked the Committee to reconsider as we didn't have the information needed to make such a critical decision and to hold off on a recommendation until we had it. All members of the Committee decided to proceed without it. Our facilitator did attempt to make the Committee aware of how critical this vote was to all of our further deliberations during the remainder of our existence, however, I have no idea whether my fellow Committee members heard him attempt to do so, or, considered this excellent advice after I left.

I believe it would be best if the Committee was given all of the information to understand the above design and coverage issues needed along with a strong sentiment from the Vision Committee on its view of the number of Gates for a limited growth development plan. Also that the Committee be asked to rescind its recent votes on the number of Gates and reconsider the whole question and after doing so any other votes it may have taken that would be affected by its reconsideration.

I now add a second Minority report. During a meeting of the Committee on October 21st, which I was unable to attend due to a meeting I had scheduled before I was advised of this meeting and which I couldn't change, a vote was taken on jetways. The vote was 5-1 for jetways. I would like to record my vote as opposed to jetways, so the tally is 5-2. I add that I see no need for the expense of jetways. I also enjoy walking to and from the planes and the experience of the mountains and views it offers. Having walked to more than 350 flights in and out of the airport I can report never having been in the least inconvenienced by not having jetways.

I respectfully submit both of these Minority reports to the Committee members and to the Vision Committee.

James E. Hughes, Jr.