

# AIRPORT

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concerned about the disruption to residents' lives.

Most residents of the neighborhoods near the airport are black, but Marshall noted that blacks have no representation on the Airport Commission of Forsyth County.

Rodney King, who lives on Shaw Road to the east of the runway, said that there was less activity at the airport when he moved in eight years ago. Now, he said, he hears loud jet engines between 5:30 and 6:30 in the mornings. He attributes the noise to engine testing on the jets that come in to Pace for maintenance. "I feel like my whole house is about to shake off the foundation," he said. "It was variable, but now it is the same thing every

day. These are probably bigger planes, and it is real bad. I'm down in the woods. If you walk in the woods, you can look over to where they are working."

Pace got the contract to perform maintenance checks on Continental's 737s in late 2007. Charles Creech, the president of Pace, said that although the company does do heavy maintenance, it does not do full-throttle engine tests of the sort that would make a lot of noise.

On the other hand, Creech said, people may be hearing the planes taking off and landing in the early-morning hours.

"If they have heard this in the last four or five weeks, they did hear us coming and going early in the morning," he said. "March madness is a good time for us." Planes would leave early to arrive in time to take basketball teams to their destinations.

Some of the Continental planes do come in the early hours — such as 3 or 4 in the morning— he said.

County Commissioner Ted Kaplan said he hopes that the airport can become an economic engine that will help the county as well as the people who live near it.

"There are always going to be people who complain about noise at an airport, but as much as it pains me to say, there has been an airport there since 1940," Kaplan said.

But the airport won't ignore the noise complaints, said Kaplan, who is the county's representative on the county airport commission.

"We are going to try to alleviate their concerns," he said. "The airport commission is going to request as part of a continuing study of our future a noise-reduction study by the FAA."

And at the site of recent construction, he said, the airport will try to plant trees to create a buffer to lessen the noise.

Larry Scantlin, the airport director, said that the airport will try to do what it can to make things easier for its neighbors.

Vivian Burke, the Winston-Salem City Council member whose ward includes the airport, said that the airport should try to be a better neighbor.

"We have been in that area and made investments in our homes," Burke said.

"If they are going to bring more planes in here flying close to those houses and working on those jets and making noise, they need to buy up those houses."

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## Sound and Fury

Noise from jets and construction irritates the neighbors of Smith Reynolds Airport

By Wesley Young  
JOURNAL REPORTER

Some Winston-Salem and Forsyth County officials say that Smith Reynolds Airport should play a much bigger part in the area's economic development.

But people who live near the airport are complaining about the noise that they already must live with as jets fly in and out for maintenance.

And they don't like the disruption caused by construction to extend a safety area at the end of a long runway.

"Nobody should have to live like this," said Emma Davenport, who lives across the street from an area that was once woods and where dump trucks now haul in loads of dirt.

"From 7 a.m., all you hear is the 'beep, beep, blam, blam' of the dump trucks," Davenport said. "The planes have gotten big coming in over there. When they come in, stuff is vibrating all over the house."

As city and county officials pursue federal economic-stimulus money to beef up the airport, a classic sort of confrontation between airports and their residential neighbors may be shaping up right here in Winston-Salem.

The airport lost its last regularly scheduled commercial passenger service — commuter flights to Charlotte — in early 2000. But big planes regularly fly in and out on their way to and from Pace Airlines. Pace has a contract to maintain jets for Continental



JOURNAL GRAPHIC BY RICHARD BOYD II

Airlines Inc., and uses the airport as a base for its own charter-airline service with a fleet of seven planes that it owns or operates.

The mayor of Winston-Salem, Allen Joiner, said that after FedEx Corp. opens its cargo hub in Greensboro this fall, the airport here can get extra business. That's what has happened in other areas chosen by FedEx for distribution centers, he said.

The current work that residents are complaining about does not involve a lengthening of the airport's longest runway, which extends from the area of Liberty Street to New Walkertown Road.

The Forsyth County Airport Authority, under a mandate from the Federal Aviation Administration, is extending that runway's safety area — a grassy area also

called the overrun. It will give airplanes more of a margin of safety in takeoff or landing. At present, it extends 100 feet past the southern end of the runway, but when work is finished, it will be 300 feet longer.

This work required the clearing away of trees across the road from the homes of Davenport and her neighbors.

Walter Marshall, a Forsyth County commissioner, said that many people who live near the airport had moved there during the years of little airport activity. Now, as officials talk about finding ways to make the airport a larger economic player, Marshall said he is