



Property Owners Concerned About Land Study

Published 03/25 2016 04:17PM Updated 03/25 2016 04:33PM **(ABILENE, TX)** - Property owners on the outskirts of Abilene are concerned a new land study around Dyess Air Force Base could impose more restrictions.

The City of Abilene is preparing to begin a Joint Land Use Study for this land around Dyess. They have received a grant for the study through the Department of Economic Adjustment and will hire a consulting group for the JLUS.

The Abilene Chamber of Commerce explains why the City is pursuing this study:

As part of the preparations for a potential Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC), we asked Dyess Air Force Base to apply for a Joint Land Use Study Grant from the Department of Defense. According to the DOD website, the JLUS program was established to assist communities around Air Force bases to develop planning strategies regarding land use regulations. It requires a collaborative process that involves “all stakeholders, including the local elected officials, planning commissioners, local military base command staff, community business leaders, chambers of commerce, homebuilders, real estate interests, and affected residents.”

The JLUS will determine the best way to develop around the base, meaning property owners near Dyess could face new zoning laws, restrictions, and ordinances.

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These property owners are already under specific development guidelines that were established when the Airport Zoning Ordinance was enacted several years ago.

The APZO was created after the Texas Legislature decided cities could make development ordinances and zoning laws for properties that were within their Extra Territorial Jurisdiction which is a five mile radius outside city limits in each direction.

After the Texas Legislature ruled on ETJ, the City of Abilene created the APZO with property owners around the airports and Dyess Air Force Base. The City and property owners in the area met and discussed the ordinance, both sides making compromises until they agreed on the APZO.

These property owners are now worried because the JLUS could allow the City to add more restrictions on how and where they can build and develop.

Taylor County Commissioner Randy Williams says he has mailed letters to property owners near Dyess who could be affected by the JLUS, and now they are going to form a committee of volunteer representatives who will work with the consulting group to decide what new regulations, if any, should go into effect.

They will work on the study together for about a year, and when it is complete, it will be presented to City of Abilene and Taylor County Officials, and if these officials approve the plan, they will move forward begin to amend the current APZO.

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