

Observer-Reporter, Tuesday, January 20, 2011

Greene County Airport Plans Ready for Takeoff

By Cara Host, Staff writer chost@observer-reporter.com

WAYNESBURG – Commissioners still want to develop a small business park at Greene County Airport, but they have apparently scaled back the plans in a cost-saving measure.

At their meeting today, commissioners are expected to ask the state for \$250,000 through the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program and to hire an engineer to prepare construction specifications. Pennoni Associates of Philadelphia will be paid up to \$15,000 for the work.

County leaders want to free space along Route 21 by demolishing the older hangars there and building new ones elsewhere on the airport property. Earlier plans called for relocating all of the hangars to an area north of the runway and to construct a new road off Progress Drive to access that area.

County planners are now looking into demolishing the World War II-era hangars in the western part of the airport and expanding the newer hangar area to the east. A new entrance to the airport also will be built.

"We think this is more cost effective," said Commissioner Pam Snyder. "We really want to get started replacing those hangars and moving forward with this project."

Relocating the hangars is supposed to free space along Route 21 for the possible development of various retail and aviation-related businesses. Commissioners hope to begin construction this summer.

Plans to replace the aging hangars have been discussed in some form for several years. Five years ago, the county received its first wave of grants in the form of \$200,000 in federal transportation funding. The county has obtained roughly \$600,000 from state and federal sources for airport development. Some of that money was used to resurface the runway, which was completed last fall, and make other improvements.