

**THE HUNTERDON COUNTY NEWS**  
**- Breaking News -**

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**09/19/06****TITLE: READINGTON APPEARS TO BE MOVING TOWARD SOLBERG TAKING****DESCRIPTION:****Time: 08:15:53****ARTICLE**

HC - With little surprise to anyone the Readington Mayor seemed to indicate last night that the township is moving towards eminent domain as a means of taking the Solberg airport property.

And to be clear for all those forum fans the mayor did not come out and state that directly, but if you have been following the situation since its inception it's not a stretch to read into his words,. "we made an offer to the Solberg's, we gave them an extension of time to assess the offer and then we received a letter form their representative which was vague and the only way we can take it is that it is unresponsive and not a viable indicator of their intentions."

The township committee held a referendum vote on whether to spend approx 22 million to purchase the property either through negotiations or as specified in the bond, through the eminent domain process. The Solberg's, as they have stated since the beginning, really have no intention to sell the township the property rights and have been jerking the township around asking for extensions.

Potential pitfalls in the process for taxpayers is the low price that appraisers came up with when evaluating the property, the approx 22 million number. Off the record reports in the Hunterdon Community which we deem to be reliable have a developer making an offer on the property in the neighborhood of 39 to 43 million dollars. Should the domain process proceed before a jury the township may be hard pressed to defend their 22 million dollar position, leaving the taxpayers in a hole of around 18 million dollars, without taking into consideration the piles of money that are going to and up in the pockets of the litigators.

A local group of residents have filed suit to try and prevent the township from spending more than the money specified in the referendum.

The township states that they are fearful that the owners are going to expand the property into a major airport, though there is no physical evidence of that, no approvals from state agencies, no approved plans etc.... And for those of you who have lived in the county for some time you realize this kind of back and forth jargon has been going on about the "Expansion of the Airport" since the early 1970's