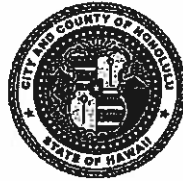


DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND PERMITTING
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

650 SOUTH KING STREET, 7TH FLOOR • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
PHONE: (808) 768-8000 • FAX: (808) 768-6041
DEPT. WEB SITE: www.honolulu.gov/dpp • CITY WEB SITE: www.honolulu.gov

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR



DAWN TAKEUCHI APUNA
ACTING DIRECTOR

September 20, 2022

The Honorable Brandon Elefante, Chair
and Members
Committee on Zoning and Planning
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street, Room 202
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Elefante and Committee Members:

Subject: Testimony on Bill 50, Proposed CD1 (2022)

The Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) provides comments on the Proposed CD1 to Bill 50 (2022). The Proposed CD1 amends Exhibit B to change the zoning designation for Tax Map Keys 9-8-016: 053, 054 (portion), 055, and 056 to add a maximum bonus height of 150 feet (zone change would be from B-2 60 feet to BMX-3 60 feet [150 feet], instead of from B-2 60 feet to BMX-3 60 feet). We support Bill 50 (2022) in its original form.

We appreciate the intent to make more properties desirable for redevelopment with transit-oriented development (TOD) objectives in mind. However, we have concerns about the proposed change in height at this location, as summarized below.

- The Aiea-Pearl City Neighborhood TOD Plan, as adopted by the City Council, does not recommend heights over 60 feet at the site. Although the actual TOD zoning does not always strictly conform to the TOD Plan, based on additional feedback and analysis during the TOD zone change process, we do not see sufficient reason for changing it at this time.
- The site provides an important transition between the TOD area and adjacent low-density residential neighborhood. Changing this transition to an abrupt wall of building density was not discussed with the community, or Planning Commission, and the impacts of the proposed heights on the surrounding neighborhood could be significant. The proposed change would create a peculiar canyon of higher to lower to higher heights in the station area.

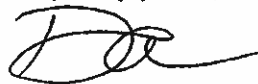
DEPT. COM. 687

ZP

- The site is over one-half mile from the rail station, which is near the extent most people are willing to walk to rail transit. We prefer TOD zoning with higher heights closer to the station first to help concentrate development, and consequently people, where they would more likely take advantage of and support the rail transit system. The proposed change may dilute this objective if the market is not strong enough to support full buildout of the station area. A future round of TOD zoning could accommodate the proposed change (we plan to return to City Council for subsequent rounds of TOD zoning, particularly when sea level rise regulations are in place).
- During this TOD zone change process, the DPP received requests from other landowners asking for additional heights than what we recommended in our draft bill for an ordinance, that were not approved. We are concerned about a consistent and fair approach for all requests.
- The landowners have not shared any specific project plans or detailed rationale to support a height increase that deviates significantly from the TOD Plan. We could consider the additional height in the future if, for example, they develop conceptual plans and renderings for the community to review and support. Additionally, should a viable project come forth in the meantime without the proposed heights, the Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 201H process for affordable housing projects is a potential option that could allow additional height on site.

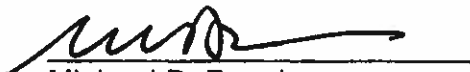
Thank you for this opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please contact Tim Streitz of our staff at, 808-768-8042 or tstreitz@honolulu.gov.

Very truly yours,



Dawn Takeuchi Apuna
Acting Director

APPROVED:



Michael D. Formby
Managing Director