

BILL024(24)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 363

PLANNING AND THE ECONOMY (P&E)

PLANNING AND THE ECONOMY (P&E) Meeting

Meeting Date: Aug 12, 2024 @ 06:00 PM

Support: 1

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 2

Name: Keith Matsumoto	Email: keith.matsumoto@pichtr.org	Zip: 96814
Representing: PICHTR	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 7, 2024 @ 06:08 PM
Name: Valerie Wong	Email: valwong210@icloud.com	Zip: 96815
Representing: Self	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Aug 8, 2024 @ 09:07 PM
<p>Testimony:</p> <p>The Urban Core is already overbuilt and too saturated.</p> <p>1) when ground is covered with concrete, asphalt, etc, water can't soak into the ground causing potential flooding.</p> <p>2) traffic is congested, making it difficult for firefighters, police, ambulances to reach problems in a timely manner...add roadwork or an accident, and you add to the disaster, resulting in more deaths and destruction.</p> <p>3) traffic also adds to air pollution and is detrimental to our tourism industry.</p> <p>4) the Rail will be a burden to generations of taxpayers. We need affordable housing to be built west of the airport along the Rail, we need riders to help pay for the maintenance of the Rail.</p>		
Name: Winston Welch	Email: winstonwelch@gmail.com	Zip: 96815
Representing: Self	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Aug 12, 2024 @ 03:29 PM
<p>Testimony:</p> <p>Dear City Council Members,</p> <p>Thank you for bringing a Planning and Zoning Committee hearing to the local neighborhood where you can see for yourselves how the proposed PUC DP would radically transform the neighborhood and life for its residents.</p> <p>Neighborhood Board #5, Diamond Head/Kapahulu/St Louis Heights has been overwhelming clear that we do not wish to have the PUC DP densification plans for our neighborhood enacted as they are proposed and has passed a resolution to that effect, which we urge you to read along with other testimony on this. The reasons for this are multiple, but essentially, the plans for densification would dramatically and irrevocably negatively alter the character of this established and stable old lower density neighborhood, especially that on the Diamond Head side of Kapahulu Avenue from the zoo to the freeway.</p> <p>The predominant zoning is for 25 feet height limit and this allows for mostly single and two story homes with cohesive, stable, long-term residents who know each other in many cases for decades. Although there are some multi-story buildings in the area, they are the exception. Where those multi-story buildings do exist, it is absolutely true that the</p>		

feeling of a single homes street and neighborhood is vastly different from one where there is an apartment block, even when that apartment block is two or three or more stories high. Note that many lots in the area do have ohana units or additional ADUs depending on changing definitions and many are multi-generational now.

When we are considering that huge areas of the neighborhood would be allowed four or more stories under the PUC DP, the entire feeling and composition of the neighborhood would be destroyed. The huge majority of residents and owners of properties in this area have no idea of the proposed changes but would wake up to the possibility of a 4 or 6 story massive apartment building across the street or next to their home where a single family home stands now. It is unconscionable that DPP has not at least mailed out a simple post card detailing the types of changes they envision for the neighborhood and this must be rectified before any possible changes are effected. The spurious claim that there is no budget to mail the hundreds of homes in the proposed change zone is completely unreasonable and is contrary to common sense and the intelligence of normal people. Such proposed massive changes must be widely heard. While it is very laudable for having a Planning and Zoning meeting in the area, most people have no idea of the mechanisms which might dramatically affect their properties, their property values, their neighborhoods, and their lives. It is incumbent upon DPP and the City to undertake a personalized letter to each residence for any proposed changes for deep and serious discussions.

That said, and since that has not been done, we urge the Planning and Zoning Committee to alter the PUC DP to remove height and density increases of the neighborhood on the Diamond Head side of Kapahulu entirely in the residential zones where the limit is generally 25 feet now.

While some modest increases in density might be possible along Kapahulu itself, it certainly cannot be six story buildings which would completely change the character of the streetscape. Right now it is mostly two story structures of small businesses with the occasional higher building that sticks out like a sore thumb. Filling the street with such additional sore thumbs is not the answer, but rather very thoughtful, deliberate buildings, might be infilled where desirable by the community but would not be more than 3-4 stories at a maximum, and even then, that would dramatically change the landscape. And this would only be immediately along Kapahulu itself. There should be no increase in height limits along Kapahulu either and in fact, we should codify that future buildings cannot be higher than 3 or 4 stories where DPP envisions much higher buildings in its plans. It should remain the same as it is now or capped as 3-4 stories max.

The area behind Safeway has a more mixed environment of single family homes, low-rise apartments and a few high rise apartments which are completely at odds with the surrounding areas. Again, while some very modest increases in density might be possible in that area, we must consider the effects on existing residents, infrastructure and character of the neighborhood.

We also know that the infrastructure of the area cannot handle more cars on the road, any more off-street parking, sewer capacities, almost total lack of parks, and so on. Please stand at Kapahulu and see the unrelenting flow of traffic as it is now and please look at any street in the proposed areas for change to see that there is little to no available street parking

now as it is. Where would all these additional people park at a minimum? No one has asked for these changes in the neighborhood--they are being proposed by people who have different agendas who do not live here.

We have not addressed the similar effects of such a massive change along Waialae Avenue from Market City to essentially Kahala Mall, but again, these dramatic changes proposed need to have serious and deliberate discussions where area property residents and owners are individually notified of such proposals before ever advancing.

At this time, we would seek to have the entirety of the areas east of the Manoa-Palolo Stream to not be included in the PUC DP proposed changes until such a convening of individual owners takes place. Any proposed plans could always be added later, but it is clear that the neighborhoods east of the Manoa Palolo Streams are entirely different in character than the rest of the PUC. Please do not proceed with any changes at this time.

I write as a private citizen and resident of the area for more than two decades, with my testimony informed by my many years of service on Neighborhood Board #5, where I currently serve as Chair.

Thank you again for coming to our neighborhood and if you have time, please drive around the streets in question after you read other testimony relevant to this area so that you can see what we are contemplating would be a major and permanent change to the character and composition of this established and stable lower-density community abutting the rest of the city.

Winston Welch



August 7, 2024

Honorable Esther Kia'āina, Chair
Planning and the Economy committee
Honolulu City Council

Subject: Testimony In SUPPORT for Bill 64: Amendment to allow a caretaker facility on an ancient Hawaiian fishpond currently zoned preservation.

Aloha, Chair Kia'āina,

I am writing in support for Bill 64 which allows a caretaker facility at an ancient Hawaiian fishpond that is currently zoned as preservation.

Once a thriving resource for food production, ancient Hawaiian fishponds are vanishing in the 21st century. The Pacific International Center for High Technology Research (PICHTR) is part of a committed community that has been involved in the restoration and continuing research at Waikalua Loko l'a for some time. We are currently engaged in a National Science Foundation project that will be based at the fishpond and is focused on developing project-based high school curriculum and research to grow limu in controlled environments to enhance growth and propagation of the important ocean resource.

These resources are even more valuable today than ever. We have come to know Waikalua Loko l'a as a place to teach and share knowledge with the hope of providing food again to the community. However, this valuable resource is at threat from vandals and others doing damage and stealing from the site. The proposed amendment will help to give the landowner, Pacific American Foundation, and opportunity to better steward the resource and protect it for the years and generations to come.

I humbly ask for your support to pass the Amendment as we continue the journey of restoration and revitalization together to benefit the Ko'olaupoko and wider community of Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

Dr. Keith Matsumoto
Programs Director