

County of Kauai
Planning Commission
4444 Rice Street, A-473
Lihue, HI 96766

May 25, 2017

Aloha Honorable Planning Commission Chair and Commissioners,

In reviewing supplemental #5 provided to you by the Planning Department, it has become evident that the intention to up-zone the area around Kapa'a Middle School to accommodate the development of Hokua Place is still a recommendation that is on the table.

As has been evidenced by the last three Planning Commission meetings, this is clearly a contentious issue. And, given the fact that the General Plan is a guidance document, why is this type and level of an issue appearing in the Plan at all? It is not much better suited to having its own hearing(s), as would any other up-zoning issue.

There are three problems with the way Hokua Place has been addressed in supplemental #4 (and by default maintains the same status at the time supplemental #5 was released):

1. It is clear that the Planning Department's decision to take a position on Hokua Place is **not founded on sound rationale**. Between supplemental #3 and supplemental #4, there was a 180 degree shift on the Planning Department's position. There was no clear reasoning given for making this shift other than the fact that the developer and his cohorts made a good show at the Planning Commission meeting on April 14. It appears that whomever walks in the door last swayed the decision of the Planning Department on this issue. This is nothing new except we now have a Draft General Plan document that lays out a vision, goals and policies for which this latest decision on Hokua Place is inconsistent. Hokua Place exacerbates many of the very problems the General Plan intends to address including the issue of traffic, infrastructure needs – and most of all the need *not* for more housing, but affordable housing. Please, provide some insight as to how the up-zoning of Hokua Place is justified.
2. The **spill over** from this decision by the Planning Dept. to support Hokua Place has also impacted other community designations and land use zoning recommendations from the Planning Department in regards to Kapa'a including (all cited from supplemental #4):
 - Neighborhood Center/General applied to previous Urban Center in Kapa'a Town and added to a portion of Olohena Road near Kapa'a Town;
 - Neighborhood General applied to previous Urban Center designation around Kapa'a Middle School;
 - the previous Urban Center designation on and surrounding the Kapa'a Middle School has been updated to Neighborhood Center and refined to be located

within a quarter-mile of the Neighborhood Center designation near the roundabout;

- Goal: Accommodate East Kaua'i's projected housing needs (4 new subsections)
- Kapa'a: ["Small Town" designation changed to "Large Town"; Kapa'a: change level modified from "Incremental" to "Transformational"]

So how did we get from Hokua Place "to remain as an agricultural land use designation" (supplemental #3), to changing the designation of the entirety of Kapa'a town and surrounds (supplemental #4) – all for the sake of accommodating a single development that is not serving our community needs and desires as expressed in the General Plan?

3. This new set of recommendations is **unprecedented** in this Plan. Nowhere else in supplemental #4 or #5 (or the rest of the Draft General Plan for that matter) do we see reference to **changing a land use designation for a specific project** like this one for Hokua Place. And just to remind you, in supplemental #3, this was statement made by the Planning Department: *"Given the community sentiment after the map alternatives were presented publically, the land use maps have been adjusted to reflect the second alternative, in which the Hokua Place site is assigned an Agriculture land use designation rather than Urban Center. The community comments received on the General Plan Discussion Draft support this direction."*

Recommendation: Given the "community sentiment" after the map alternatives were presented for Hokua Place, the lack of sound rationale for making a flip-flop decision on the up-zoning of Hokua Place, and the fact that the 2035 General Plan is the wrong place to address a specific development project, I urge you to remove it from the General Plan altogether. In the long run this may hold up all the excellent progress on the 2035 General Plan. It would be better to hold separate meetings on Hokua Place just as you would with any other development project that proposes a land use designation change. Put Hokua Place, and all the associated Kapa'a town designations, on it's own track. The brevity of this type of decision that has so many other implications for the entire east side of Kauai deserves its own scrutiny and consideration.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue.

Respectfully,
Anne Walton
Wailua Homesteads