

Kaua'i Planning Commission
4444 Rice Street, Suite A473
Lihue, Kauai 96766

June 13, 2017

Honorable Chairperson and Commissioners:

Throughout the past year the sentiment that has been echoed in this room is that the communities of Kaua'i are looking for a sustainable future where growth is controlled and managed with the idea that quality of life for Kaua'i's residents is a priority. Why is this not reflected in the General Plan? You say you are listening to the community, but clearly you are not hearing.

So what is it that you are hearing? Is there another conversation going on in the back rooms of the Planning Department? Is the revolving door to the Planning Department clamoring with developers and the tourism industry? Why is this conversation not taking place in the public arena, and why is it driving our General Plan? Now we have a Plan that has become a developer's dream.

This General Plan that we thought had such great potential is built on a very unstable foundation including:

1. Misinformed data (e.g., visitor numbers), and outdated data (e.g., shoreline erosion data that is so old it is obsolete)
2. Poor to no rationale to support complete turn arounds on the Planning Department's recommendations (e.g., Kapa'a Middle School area land use designation flopping back and forth between Ag and Neighborhood General without any supporting documentation)
3. The fact that no consideration was given to the implications of re-zoning "Residential Community" areas to "Neighborhood General" (e.g., of what you will get from that is something like the Lihue area behind County buildings where affordable housing is being turned into businesses while storefronts sit vacant on Rice St.)
4. Inconsistencies including narratives that don't match up with the land use maps (there are at least 2, see if you can find them)
5. New zoning categories that have no definition (e.g., Provisional Ag)
6. Town designations changing from "incremental" to "transformational" which is inconsistent with what the community recommended, but works to the benefit of the developers

And the list goes on

From the very beginning, many community members ridiculed those of us who have been engaged in this General Plan Update process for laboring under the false assumption that this General Plan will actually do something. I guess we have proved them wrong because it does actually do something – it sends the signal to the big land owners and developers that this is their island. If we could go back in time to Supplemental 3, there seemed to be hope for this Plan. But something happened after that point, and the Plan began to move in a new direction, for no apparent reason.

All of this has taken place without even mentioning the fact that we have 10 important sectors in this Plan that have not even yet come up for discussion in the seven Planning Commission meetings on the General Plan. In my best estimation, these sectors should have been thoroughly discussed *before* the Future Land Use issues. A truly integrated General Plan would establish its intention in regards to growth based on how it is first going to address transportation, watersheds and infrastructure needs, amongst other issues, *then* determine how the Future Land Use designations maybe modified in a more realistic manner that complements the sectors, and the desired future growth for this island.

In addition to my oral testimony, I have provided eight pages of written comments, which you will find in your packets. I hope you will consider these along with the detailed comments I have provided over the duration of the last six months of hearings on the General Plan, including my complete re-write of the Implementation and Monitoring section.

To take you back to the very words found in the Draft General Plan: *Kaua'i's natural environment has always defined the character of the island. Its built environment consists of small, mostly rural communities separated by expanses of open space and working agricultural lands. Each community maintains a unique sense of identity and has features and qualities that its residents would like to see preserved.* Let's get back to where this General Plan started.

Best regards,
Anne Walton