

PLANNING COMMISSION
COUNTY OF HAWAI'I

HEARING TRANSCRIPT
MAY 1, 2009

A regularly advertised hearing on the application of **BETH-AN & CARY NISHIJIMA (REZ 09-92)** was called to order at 10:10 a.m. in the Aupuni Center Conference Room, 101 Pauahi Street, Hilo, Hawai'i with Chairman Rell Woodward presiding.

PRESENT: Rell Woodward
Takashi Domingo
Wallace Ishibashi
Andrew Iwashita
Shelly Ogata

Brandon Gonzalez, Deputy Corporation Counsel
BJ Leithead Todd, Planning Director
Norman Hayashi, Staff Planner
Jeff Darrow, Staff Planner
Maija Cottle, Staff Planner

And approximately 11 people from the public in attendance

APPLICANTS: BETH-AN & CARY NISHIJIMA (REZ 09-92)

Change of Zone from Single-Family Residential – 10,000 square feet (RS-10) to Industrial-Commercial Mixed - 20,000 square feet (MCX-20) district for approximately 22,800 square feet of land. The property is located along the northeast corner of the Kekūanāo'a Street-Laukapu Street intersection, diagonally across from the Big Island Candies complex, Waiakea Houselots 1st Series, Waiakea, South Hilo, Hawai'i, TMK: 2-2-35:1 and 103.

WOODWARD: The first application, applicants Beth-An and Cary Nishijima, change of zone application from Single-Family Residential – 10,000 square feet to Industrial-Commercial Mixed - 20,000 square feet. Maija, you're on.

COTTLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning everyone.

COMMISSIONERS: Good morning.

COTTLE: The first application of the day is a change of zone request. The applicants are Beth-An and Cary Nishijima, and they're requesting a change of zone from Single Family Residential - 10,000 square feet to Industrial Commercial Mix – 20,000 square feet for two properties that total 22,820 square feet.

The property is located in the Waiakea House Lots area of Hilo. And if I can direct your attention to the screen, you can see that the property is outlined in red. It has property frontage along Kekūanāo‘a Street, as well as Laukapu Street. This is the highway running towards Banyan Drive out to Volcano, and then Kilauea would be off the map to the left side.

The property is currently zoned Single Family Residential – 10,000 square feet, as well as all the properties surrounding it in yellow. Big Island Candies is located across the street and they’re, I believe, currently zoned Commercial, as well as all the other areas in pink have been rezoned to Neighborhood Commercial.

The General Plan designation for the property is Industrial. All of the area in gray on this map is Industrial. The Big Island Candies area is in High Density Urban; and then there’s Medium Density Urban surrounding that in orange.

The applicants are proposing to construct a two-story building. And the first floor will be used as a restaurant. The second floor they anticipate using as office and storage space. They’re hoping to relocate their existing restaurant, Nori’s Saimin and Snack Restaurant, to the new building on the first floor.

This is a site plan that was submitted by the applicant. It shows Kekūanāo‘a Street as well as Laukapu Street. There are two accesses that they’re proposing. One is off of Kekūanāo‘a Street on the right side of the property, and then at the very top of the property off of Laukapu Street. The site plan also shows the proposed building as well as the parking.

The applicant’s representative, Sidney Fuke, submitted a letter that you should have received in your folders; and he is requesting a revision to Condition E regarding the access onto Kekūanāo‘a Street. And he’s just requesting a little better definition at this time to limit right-turn in, to limit the access to right-turn in and right-turn out movements only, but allow full movements at the Laukapu Street access. And the Planning Department has reviewed that request, and we concur with it. So you should have a yellow revised Condition E sheet as well, with the exact wording of the new condition. The Planning Department is recommending a favorable recommendation for the change of zone request be sent to the County Council. Are there any questions?

WOODWARD: Any questions? Commissioner Iwashita.

IWASHITA: Yes. Maija, in the background report, this is Exhibit 3, the Department of Water Supply’s March 24, 2009 response or evaluation of the application, at the bottom of the first page it talks about the Department of Water Supply facility, a 6-inch waterline -- basically, not, my interpretation is it’s not able to meet the, what the letter says as the minimum of 2,000 gpm, I presume it’s gallons per minute -- be available at the site for fire protection. And it says that a 6-inch can only give a theoretical fire flow of 1,760 gpm. How do we, I don’t see anything being addressed. To me it’s, you know, fire safety has to be one of the primary

concerns here in terms of our addressing this. So how is this being addressed, or has this been looked into more? Or maybe I'm not understanding something.

COTTLE: Okay. The Department of Water Supply is requesting that the applicant contact the Fire Department to see how additional fire flow can be achieved, whether it be upgrading that waterline or maybe coming up with some other type of water system to achieve that fire flow.

IWASHITA: Okay.

COTTLE: So the way we addressed it in our conditions of approval is not necessarily that specific language, but we do have Condition O which says that the applicant shall comply with all county, state and federal laws, rules, regulations and requirements.

IWASHITA: As a follow-up, Mr. Chair?

WOODWARD: Yes, sir.

IWASHITA: I guess my take on this, I understand that's being addressed. But my take on this is that, you know, I don't know that it's feasible at all for the owner to create a water system that can provide this 2,000 gpm. And, you know, I mean, for the Water Department, to me, that it has to put in an 8-inch line or something, it has to completely redo its service on Kekūanāo'a Street. You can't just change a 6-inch line to an 8-inch line in a block. I don't think that's how hydraulics works. But I need more information on this, I guess, is what I'm saying. Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure if we can get it from staff, or from the applicant, or the Fire Department.

WOODWARD: One thing I might bring to your attention, we also have a letter from the Fire Department dated March 19th that addresses the question of water supply. It says approved water supply shall be required, etc., etc., "Water supply may consist of reservoirs, pressure tanks, elevated tanks, water mains or other fixed systems capable of providing the required fire flow." They don't mention what their requirement is, but we did get some information from the Fire Department, for what that's worth.

IWASHITA: Yeah, thank you, Mr. Chair. I did see that, except that I, you know, that's very general language. And, practically, I don't know that that's, you know, if it's doable or not on this particular project. So I'd just like that clarified some place along the line. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

WOODWARD: Yes, sir. Maybe the applicant's representative can help us address that. Any further questions for staff? Seeing none, I'd like to call up the applicant and Mr. Fuke, their representative, or maybe just Mr. Fuke. You know the routine.

FUKE: Sure.

WOODWARD: Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth today before the Windward Planning Commission?

FUKE: I do.

WOODWARD: Very good. Name and address, and then you may begin.

FUKE: Sure. Good morning, Mr. Chairman. My name is Sidney Fuke. I'm a planning consultant. My office is 100 Pauahi Street, located across of this building. I'm here representing Beth-An and Cary Nishijima on this particular project. Before going on, again, congratulations to all of you, and especially to Wally, Mr. Ishibashi, for his recent appointment to the Commission.

Specifically in response to Commissioner Iwasaki's (sic) question, I'd like to kind of make a couple of points. It is correct that there are several ways that it can be addressed; and I'm kind of reminded of two situations.

One, some of the Commissioners may recall that there was a rezoning request by Mr. Guy Nakao along Ponahawai Street, and there was also this same kind of issue. And what Mr. Nakao had to do was to prove to the Water Department and/or the Fire Department that the existing hydrant had sufficient pressure. So he had to contract with a separate independent contractor to do that fire test, do that fire flow test; and in that situation the fire flow pressure test was sufficient.

The other point to make is that even if that fire flow is not sufficient, you know, along Kekūanāo'a Street, fortunately this property has a waterline also on Laukapu Street. So what happens is that the respective engineer would have to work with both the Fire and the Water Departments to see how you can address the fire flow requirement. You know, you can probably have a loop system, or as like the Fire Department's standards call for some alternative methods to address that. The Fire Department must sign off on the building permit. And so during the course of reviewing the plans for the project if you don't have enough fire flow, then it has to be addressed before the Fire Department can sign off on the building permit. So what your staff had kind of pointed out on that particular condition that you have to comply with all applicable conditions, that's pretty much like how it's covered. So even if the property were zoned today and the applicant wanted to construct whatever they had to do, that would be the normal protocol.

The other thing I just kind of wanted to clarify was that, you know, in the staff's report it kind of pointed out that the first floor was a restaurant and I think it was storage. Or is it store? Storage?

COTTLE: Storage.

FUKE: Yeah. I'd like to clarify that the ground level was really intended to be like a restaurant as well as possible sale of some retail activities like, you know, the snacks; and the storage and the office would be actually on the second floor. So with that slight clarification

and the proposed amendment to the condition offered by your staff, the applicant reviewed all of the conditions and found them to be acceptable.

WOODWARD: Very good. Any questions for Mr. Fuke?

IWASHITA: I have.

WOODWARD: Mr. Iwashita?

IWASHITA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I know that this area is designated Industrial, right, on the LUPAG. And I guess my concern is that, as Mr. Fuke knows of, in terms of where Houselots is going. You know, the much maligned Hilo Community Development Plan designates this area still as Residential which I, even I, you know, acknowledge that's outdated. But to the extent we have, you know, we're going forward here, Big Island Candies is Commercial zoned right now. So I guess I'm concerned, I'm thinking of for a restaurant, retail sales and, you know, those kinds of activities, offices and so forth, that rezoning it to Industrial is an overkill, that we're really doing more than what we need to do. So can you explain to me the rationale why we're doing Industrial and why we're not doing Commercial?

FUKE: I cannot agree with you more that I think that just given the proposed use that probably a Commercial Neighborhood zoning or General Commercial zoning, as is across the street, would probably be more appropriate. However, given the fact that the property is within the General Plan Industrial area, unfortunately the applicant didn't have any other recourse but to come in for Industrial zoning. I think the beauty, however, is that whatever zoning is designated for that area I think the staff has looked at the surrounding area and has proposed like appropriate mitigative kind of conditions. And one of the mitigative conditions which reflects a transitioning in this Waikoloa, uh, Waikoloa, sorry, -.

IWASHITA: Too much business.

FUKE: In this Waiakea Houselots area, of course, it's like you will notice that there's this curb, gutter, sidewalk requirement, you know, fronting both Laukapu as well as Kekūanā'ō'a Street. In addition to that, you do have a requirement to comply with Rule 17, I believe, relating to landscaping; and that landscaping requirement has added requirements when your property abuts a residentially zoned area. And in this situation here, the property on the, I guess, on the east side, you know, Hoolulu Park side, is currently zoned Residential, and so there would be an added landscaping requirement along that section.

IWASHITA: Thank you.

WOODWARD: Any further questions? You want to ask a question, Commissioner Domingo, or no?

DOMINGO: No, Mr. Chairman -.

WOODWARD: Okay.

DOMINGO: In the event that you're open for a motion, then I would surely -.

WOODWARD: Okay, well, let me -. Thank you, Mr. Fuke. And just for the record we have nobody signed up from the public to testify, so at this point we can entertain a motion.

DOMINGO: Mr. Chairman?

WOODWARD: Yes, Commissioner Domingo.

DOMINGO: With regard to the application of Beth-An and Cary Nishijima, Rezoning 09-92, I would move for its, a recommendation of approval to the County Council with the inclusion of that, with the proposed amendment, Revised Condition E.

WOODWARD: Do I have a second?

OGATA: Second.

WOODWARD: Okay. Moved by Commissioner Domingo, seconded by Commissioner Ogata. Any discussion? Commissioner Iwashita.

IWASHITA: Mr. Chair, thank you. Can I ask staff to put up the -. Mr. Chair, I'm, I guess, conflicted about this application; and the reason for my conflict is that, you know, I do enjoy going to Nori's. The Oahu -. However, as the Chair knows and those who have sat previously in our addressing applications in the Houselots area, my concern about this area is that essentially -. And what has been put up there on the screen is a Google Earth photo, okay, of the Honolulu International Airport. And we all know, all of those go, the Industrial area that adjoins it along Nimitz Highway, and then this is also Industrial on this side, and then the Sand Island area down here, and then across Nimitz Highway is a military residential area, and so forth. You know, I can't help but think that, you know, Houselots is basically in the same kind of proximity to our Airport -. And, you know, this whole idea about zoning Industrial next to the Airport, there's some obviously common sense to it. But, on the other hand, this is Hawaii. When I go to Honolulu and I fly, you know, you get into your car or whatever, and you drive out to town, all you see is Industrial when you drive out of there. You come to Hawaii, and you get out of the Airport, and the first thing you see are big metal buildings. That's all you see for a couple of miles almost; and, you know, it makes no sense to me. We have an opportunity on our island that Oahu had back in the early sixties, probably in the fifties. Honolulu passed its first General Plan in 1977 and, you know, this is what you got, that kind of a thing. We're doing the same thing here. And, you know, that's my conflict, is that I really believe that the Community Development Plan process that has, you started and is really being implemented in the West side now, fully, pretty much, except for the appointment of the action committees -- and it has been done in Puna, starting in Kau -- that we really need to do that here in Hilo now. And, you know, it's going to start in Hamakua, hopefully, when this budget passes. But there's no, no effort being made now. Budgetary constraints, I understand. But we really need to do that. Because,

like I said earlier, Oahu had its General Plan from 1977. And everything, all of this development, and the development we see there, that's what we got, that's what they got, the same process that we have here today, Planning Commission, Council approval; and everything is planned. For one, I don't like how it turned out on Oahu, just for myself, you know.

And my real issue is that, you know, we're doing this one by one. There are all these conditions in this proposed approval. You know, and all you've got to do is expand that by 100 or 1,000 times and you're going to get what you see. You're going to get this, all of this. And, you know, and our staff shows the Industrial designation for the area next to Kanoelehua, you know, heading back into this property, this is the boundary of it. And it just, I think if we did the community development plan process, that some people in the community might think there's a better way to do it, and we may come up with a better way to do it.

So, you know, I know these are tough economic times. And our past Director I thought made a pretty wise observation, is that we're going to actually see maybe an increase in entitlement applications, which is what this is. You know, changing the zoning from Residential now to Industrial locks this property in for Industrial use. So we may have a restaurant, you know, for a few years. Depending how things go, it may end up looking just like that. And we all know in that Industrial area there are restaurants in there. Right? So, you know, it's going to be do we really want to go down that road, or do we really want to put some meat into all this talk about sustainability? Cause right now it's only talk. If we don't start doing something from the Planning Commission and the County Council, that's all it's going to be, is talk. We really need to, you know, stop and take a look at what is happening. Actually I think as Chico Marks has said, you know, "Who you're going to believe, me or your lying eyes?" And for us, you know, as a Commission, for the Council, and for the community, those of you here, you know, all you've got to do is look at Honolulu, look at Maui. And we don't, our eyes, you don't need imagination. All you've got to do is look. And if we don't do anything different, in my mind the community development plan, if we keep just doing this one at a time, that's what we get, guarantee, just look. So that's my conflict, Mr. Chair. Thank you for your patience.

WOODWARD: Thank you. Any further comments?

DOMINGO: Yes.

WOODWARD: Commissioner Domingo.

DOMINGO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just one question of staff. MCX zoning, you know, that's a combination of Industrial and Commercial uses. When we look at Industrial uses, are we talking about Heavy Industrial or just Light Industrial?

COTTLE: Light Industrial.

DOMINGO: Light Industrial. The question asked of Mr. Fuke in earlier, no, just going back, yeah, and in speaking for the motion, the question I asked of him was where do you see or what direction, where do you see the Houselots going to? And I think that was asked because

there have been a number of actions taken with regards to parcels in that area which were given MCX zoning. As I recall the past, I think it was in early nineties or mid-nineties, we started to see applications coming in from owners within the Houselots area, and it so happened that they saw an opportunity to buy land in that area. And now if anyone is familiar with history, and if there was a need for any property in which they could have Light Industrial uses or Commercial uses -. You know, the lands in that particular area usually belonged to Hawaiian Homes or the State. And here we see a pocket of individual private lands, property, that are being sold and it was, and it is through the demands and the requests of people who needed lands to conduct other kinds of activities other than Residential. And then that's why we've seen a number of uses, and we've seen that being generated more and more as time goes by. And, you know, sitting in this Commission for probably a year or so, I've noticed that, a number of uses, office, kennels and other kinds of uses. And during that time in the early nineties and mid-nineties there were pockets of resistance from individuals who were concerned that their neighbors, within their immediate neighborhood, would be impacted by such kind of a zoning; and they couldn't accept that change.

But time has changed. And I think some of these individuals have sold, or they have passed on and then their families have then sold the lands to people who are, who want to buy and invest in it, and either do Light Industrial or Commercial uses. And so what we're looking at is a transition into that kind of uses, Light Industrial and Commercial uses. And I think it's appropriate at this time that we consider that. And I believe the Council throughout the years has seen that, and they have not responded to it. They have had numerous, a number of occasions in which they could have done something through a General Plan review process; and that has not, and the idea of just holding it strictly for Residential has not been emphasized through their proceedings. So what we've seen here, and I think which is generally accepted by a majority of the people, is a use that's gradually changing.

And the MCX zoning is not the zoning that was within the Zoning Code ever since the General Plan began. It started around that time also because people expressed needs to hold other kinds of uses other than Commercial uses. So this Mixed Use zoning is something that's perfect for individuals who through their small businesses through their meager means can establish their own business, own their own property, and do what they need, rather than be subject to leases from year to year or for a number of years. And every time those leases expire they are faced with additional charges and increase in lease rental. So I think this is a wonderful opportunity that will let it be open to the public so they can enjoy that benefit. So therefore, you know, I strongly speak for the motion and hope that the Commissioners will do so. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WOODWARD: Thank you, Commissioner Domingo. Any further comments?
Commissioner Iwashita.

IWASHITA: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Jeff, can you put up the Hilo one now. I really appreciate Commissioner Domingo's comments. And, you know, we do have a history in the Houselots area. If you look at what's up now it's, again, the aerial or satellite view of the Hilo Airport and the adjoining area. I guess right behind this, it's sort of hard to see in this light

condition where the proposed project is for rezoning. The history of Houselots is it was a long time ago, I'm not sure exactly the timeframe, Medium Density Urban. And all of the apartments and businesses close to Edith Kanakaole Tennis Stadium going up at that time and because of circumstances that arose from those developments, the Houselots community got together and convinced the Council to turn it back to Low Density Urban, which you can't do commercial development. And so it stayed that way until 2005. In 2005 the General Plan was amended, and without the request of the community the Houselots area was again upgraded to Medium Density Urban. So that's why we see recently all these other applications along Manono Street and so forth that you're seeing for rezoning to commercial development. And so, you know, again, it's, the planning process is there. My, the point I'd really like to make is that as a Commission and our obligation, you know, to look at the big picture in this and apply it to each application, that, you know, the best way to proceed and the best way to get a sustainable, desirable community environment in the Houselots area in my mind is to do the community development plan process.

One of the other concerns is that, you know, if you look at, Houselots is Houselots because it's mostly houses. It was developed as a residential community. We all know that on this island and throughout the State, and on this island especially, we have a tremendous homeless population, we have high housing costs. People, Puna is a big growing area now because trying to live in Hilo and the cost of living in Hilo is so high. And what we're doing now, you know, is taking out a big chunk of residentially zoned land that most of it is still being used for residential purposes, and we're saying, well, times have changed, you really need to look forward and, you know, promote more commercial development in this area. I'm all for commercial development. We need to develop our economy and have, you know, a very multi-faceted economic base going into the future. I still question whether we should all accept that this entire, we're not -. And we're talking about, we're not just talking about this area along Kanoiehua as Industrial, we're talking about this whole Houselots area basically ending up looking like the area adjacent to Honolulu Airport. That's what we're talking about. And, you know, one step at a time, that's how it happens, one step at a time. And we can always go back to the General Plan and say, well, that General Plan is the law, General Plan is the law. Also part of the General Plan, the implementing part of the General Plan is the community development process. That was set up in 2005. The money wasn't put into it, it should have been done as far as I'm -. This is 2009. You know, for whatever reasons the choices were made not to do the community development plans until just the past couple of years.

And in my mind, you know, I'm almost off of this, my first term, my five-year term is almost done. And what I've seen basically over these past four years or so has been that basically we keep going down the same road that Honolulu went down starting after Statehood, you know, and from its 1977 General Plan adoption, and what Maui has done since 1969. The first time I saw it, you know, and the development that occurred there in the last 4 years, that has all been planned, all of that. And we have all the same plans, General Plan, LUPAGS, we have all the same tools to get us to where they are today. And so that's why I'm really advocating that we should all stop and take a cold hard look at what we're doing. Because each one, I'd love to have this on Kekūānāo'a, I could -. You know, that'd be great. But on the other hand, you know, it is a part of the step towards, in my mind, in 10 years we'll look back, you know, and say what happened, you know. But it happened a piece at a time.

That, you know, I lived on Maui from 1978 till 1985. And at that time in, they had done from '69 to '70, they had taken Kihei Road and sent it down to Wailea, built the condos and the hotels. It wasn't that bad. It was pretty nice actually from my recollection. But in the time that I lived there, those seven years, they made the entitlements to build out the rest of Kihei and Wailea. And you have what you have today. You know, I went back in 1990, I was shocked because they had basically strip mall development all along Kihei Road and two street lights when there were none when I left. And, you know, it was built in five years. So, you know, we need to look at what we're doing. I really want to encourage development. I think that's, we obviously need to do that. But we need to do it in way different from how they've done it on Oahu and Maui. That's my point, and that's my reservations about going down this road. So, again, look at what we have today and you just look at Honolulu, and see what we'll have in five or ten years. As long as the economy keeps plugging along or recovers, that's what we're going to get, maybe 15 or 20. But it's going to come as long as we keep doing what we're doing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

WOODWARD: Thank you. Do we have any other further comments?

DOMINGO: Mr. Chairman?

WOODWARD: Commissioner Domingo.

DOMINGO: I think, you know, I'd just like to clarify the issue here. And in deference to Mr. Iwashita, I think if that is a strong sentiment, if that'd be the strong sentiment of this Commission then probably the recommendation that should be going to the Council would be to review the General Plan specifically for that area. And if it be the wishes of the general public that they be for residential uses so be it, and let's amend the General Plan to reflect that. But rather than just going straight into drafting a community development plan for that particular area, what will actually happen is that CDP would reflect what's contained in the General Plan right now. And what the General Plan permits right now is for these proposed uses to be entertained in different venues. And I can see that if we take this, follow this action, then the other three issues that'd be found on our agendas would then fall within that same, same category. And we would have to treat those issues the same way because they're in the general area of the Waiakea Houselots area. So what I'm saying is that I think what we're doing today is, if we adopt this first, vote for the first issue, I think we're doing the right thing, and we're not doing anything contrary to what is proposed in the General Plan. Therefore I speak again strongly for the motion for its adoption. Thank you.

WOODWARD: Thank you. I'd like to make a couple of comments. One is the last Hilo Community Development Plan was made in 1975, so that's really dated information. This area has been zoned according to the Land Use Pattern Allocation Guide Map, the LUPAG Map, for Industrial. And if you could see looking at the picture that you showed, Commissioner Iwashita, that area has largely been taken over by warehouses, commercial uses; and so I have no compunction about approving this. I think that area was zoned Industrial for a reason and I don't -. I understand your concerns about spot rezonings, but I think this fits the general pattern

that has developed in that area of the community, and I would be in support of the measure. Any other comments? Commissioner Iwashita.

IWASHITA: Just a clarification. I'm not arguing this is spot rezoning. I fully agree with the staff report and Mr. Domingo's position that this proposed zoning change conforms with the General Plan, the LUPAG, and all of that. I have no issues with that at all. My point is that we can keep doing -. You know, basically, we all need to understand that we really need to do community development planning. In my mind that would really clarify where this area really should go, how it should really look in 20, 30, 40 years, and whether or not changes should be made to the General Plan in order to achieve it, maybe not. But, you know, this is not spot zoning. I'm not saying it's spot zoning. I'm saying that we need to be cautious and by saying, you know, by saying -. Obviously, you know, the Department, when an application comes in and it conforms to the General Plan as this one does, it conforms to the LUPAG as this one does, it's a matter of processing what the proper conditions are and all of that; and the staff did a fine job doing that. I have no issues with that.

My concern is beyond that, you know, constitutionally. Under the Hawai'i Constitution we have an obligation as public officials to protect the environment and to do those things that, you know, implement protecting the environment. In my mind when we went to the last HCPO Conference on Maui in Wailea the bigger point made was, you know, sustainability, that we need to look forward and see whether what we're doing is, you know, contributing or developing a sustainable environment, or taking away from it. My point simply is that this sus -. Although, you know, the Honolulu General Plan, the Maui General Plan, if you look at it, they all have these beautiful words about protecting the environment, and preserving the culture, and doing everything Hawaiian, and all of those kinds of things. Never happened in Waikiki, didn't happen on the Ewa Plain, it didn't. You know, it just didn't, it's not happening over there. It didn't happen. Same thing on Maui, in Kihei, and all of that, it didn't happen; and it has all those beautiful words in there. Our General Plan has all those beautiful words in there.

And if we're going to be serious about sustainability then let's do something about it. That's what I'm saying. And continuing to approve zoning changes according to a General Plan and LUPAGS that were developed, before there really was global climate change concerns and all of that, does not do it in my estimation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WOODWARD: Thank you. Madam Director, did you have something to say?

LEITHEAD TODD: Yes. I was just going to say that this is based on a General Plan which was adopted in 2005. So that's not 20 years ago, that's four years ago. There were multiple opportunities for the community to comment on the Plan; and I think the plan reflected what had been changing in this area for a number of years.

A discussion on what had been occurring in this area occurred multiple times on the County Council, both during Mr. Domingo's tenure on the Council and continued during my tenure on the Council. And in terms of whether this is a little lead down the road towards Oahu, I think this is the opposite. What this provides is a wonderful dining experience as you come out of the

airport. And so, you know, you land in Hilo, Kekūanāʻa is the way out, you know, that will be a major road coming out of the airport. You come in, you drive, you get the gas station on the corner and then you come down and you get to see Nori's Saimin. I suspect that there are a lot of people from Hilo that will pull in as they get back from Honolulu, stop for a little bit of Saimin. I think it's a wonderful location for this. And I think it's kind of consistent with what I'd love to see in this area, which is a mixed use area.

But it also reflects the need of businesses to try and find fee simple land where they can try and calculate what their costs are over the next 30 years. The difficulty that other property owners or businesses have had with State leases and DHHL leases has been when it has come time to renegotiate the leases. And I think people can remember this, the people on DHHL Land got hit with leasehold rents that went up five times over what they already had, and it forced a lot of them to start looking at relocating. What we have here is a business owner who has outgrown her existing area, parking is very difficult, and very great difficulty getting into Nori's because of parking. This fits in with what's happening in the community. It allows her to grow her business; and I think that it will be welcomed as we have that entrance into the greater Hilo area coming out of Kekūanāʻa. Thank you.

WOODWARD: Thank you, Madam Director. I'd like to make just one brief comment. I certainly agree with Commissioner Iwashita that community development plans are the way to go. However, as I say the last community development plan for Hilo was in 1975, the next one will not be ready, at the earliest, for another three years. And so I think if we're going to wait for that we're going to be delaying a lot of things that need to get done. Commissioner Domingo.

DOMINGO: Mr. Chairman, I move for the question.

WOODWARD: Any objection? Okay. Maija, vote please.

COTTLE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Commissioner Domingo.

DOMINGO: Aye.

COTTLE: Commissioner Ishibashi.

ISHIBASHI: Aye.

COTTLE: Commissioner Iwashita?

IWASHITA: Kanalua.

COTTLE: Commissioner Ogata.

OGATA: Aye.

COTTLE: And Mr. Chairman?

WOODWARD: Aye.

COTTLE: And Commissioner Iwashita?

IWASHITA: Kanalua.

COTTLE: Motion passes, five-zero.

WOODWARD: Very good.

The discussion ended at 9:59 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon M. Nomura, Secretary
Windward Planning Commission