

**Kakaako Mauka Area Plan and Rules Revision
Community Meeting
Tuesday, December 12, 2006**

The following is a compilation and summary of the recorder's notes from the four break-out groups. Each group was comprised of approximately 8–15 members from the community; the groups were randomly formed through color-coded nametags passed out at the sign-in table. The groups were facilitated by HCDA staff (Deepak Neupane and Daniel Dinell) and PlanPacific staff (John Whalen and Robin Foster).

Comments on the Urban Design Concept Plan (“UDCP”):

- The UDCP focuses on, and takes into consideration the small lots in the area.
- The UDCP acknowledges the need to address parking in surface lots and/or parking structures as parking is necessary for businesses to survive and prosper.
- Approves of the linear park concept along Blaisdell Center and down Kamakee Street with accommodations for bicycles.
- In favor of the proposal to joint develop Mother Waldron Park with the Pohukaina School site as public use.
- Development options provided under the UDCP are much better than being forced to sell off land to a big developer.
- The UDCP places importance on making connections, encouraging walkable neighborhoods, less use of autos and less need for parking.
- Approves of the streetscape plan (trees and medians) as they will promote traffic calming.
- Approves of the under-grounding of utilities.
- Favors dedicated bike lanes.
- Approves of the well-defined street grid in conjunction with zero lot line.
- Favors the programming of streets with two-way traffic instead of couplet.
- Approves of retail liners around buildings.
- Approves of increase density for development lots.
- There is little thought on the need to preserve things that are already within the District. This includes all the things that make Kakaako special. The Plan needs to strive for a good “fabric” and that is not reflected at this point.
- The City and State are wasting money by not incorporating Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) guidelines early in the planning process. Often, either the government or a developer is allowed to build without following proper guidelines and then have to rip things out later and rebuild. There are no assurances built into this plan to ensure ADA compliance.
- The parks are not defined. Kamehameha Schools should be asked to dedicate land for parks.
- Public facilities are not defined. The district needs grocery stores, churches and schools. Also, public safety facilities need to be identified, including fire stations, police stations, emergency medical services, civil defense and schools as they often double as civil defense shelters.

- The zero lot line at Curtis Street causes queuing congestion. In general, doesn't like zero lot concept, because buildings will not have passenger loading area causing people to use the street as drop-off area resulting in traffic congestion.
- Making exceptions to the Rules, including vistas (view corridors). HCDA makes rules and then allows exceptions to the rules, thus making the rules useless.
- Object to 400-foot height limit.
- The Mauka Area Plan should provide alternatives to promote "reserved housing".
- The Concept Plan provides too much preference to cars.
- Kawaiahao Street can't be a local street as shown in the plan (40-foot ROW).
- Alleyways should be considered.
- The relationship with Fort Armstrong and cruise ship facilities is lacking.

General District Issues and Questions Raised:

- Infrastructure:
 - The sewer moratorium prevents redevelopment (e.g., Sheridan Tract); small properties are restricted, yet larger projects (e.g., Moana Pacific) have been going forward.
 - The maintenance of utilities has been bad. New projects should not be implemented until improvements are made.
 - Drainage in central portion of Sheridan Tract is in bad condition; flooding during rainy periods.
- Improvement Districts:
 - Improvement District (ID) assessments are onerous. Small businesses are required to pay for utility improvements (IDs), thus impacting its capability to remain in the district.
 - ID-11 should be delayed due to the current plan concepts; some of which run counter to the proposals?
- Small Lot and Businesses:
 - There should be a government assistance center(s) to help small property owners. HCDA should be proactive about redevelopment.
 - Small Businesses are important, yet mostly lip service provided. The UDCP should address how small businesses benefit from its proposals.
 - The Plan should address issues from the perspective of tenants and not just landowner. For example, a Ward Warehouse tenant of Victoria Ward has to pay 100% of the assessment because the landowner simply passes it through; they already pay high rents, together these things adversely impact small business viability in Kakaako.
 - Small property owners are severely impacted when property taxes go up and property values cut into his business profit. A Queen Street owner's property taxes increased 30% last year.
 - Keep Sheridan Tract area low-rise at 45 feet.
- Housing:
 - A housing strategy should be provided in the UDCP, as affordable housing is needed within the District.
 - Housing should include people (not only urban design); in particular, the UDCP should include a family element.

- The Hawaii Housing Finance & Development Corporation (HHFDC) is proposing to develop an affordable housing rental project on Pohukaina site. HHFDC wishes to extend its hand to community, but wants to understand the Plan's proposed Mother Waldron Park expansion and possible school component; it currently isn't clear, yet HHFDC has a mission to provide more housing opportunities for Hawaii's people. The following response was provided from an HHFDC staff person on the proposed housing project at Pohukaina School:
 - *Request for Proposals (RFP) already issued*
 - *No preference, but target group are those earning less than 140 percent of median income with all units being rental*
 - *Project philosophy – less is more, include possible community center and balance with park space ; HCDA decide land mixture and community facilities*
 - *HHFDC seeking input and comments*
- Transit:
 - A comprehensive review needs to be done to assess the impacts of the City's transit plan. Analysis should be provided with and without rail. The analysis needs to include the following:
 - Complete traffic management system including buses, etc.
 - Impact to small lots; particularly concerning as it will go through areas with high concentration of small lots.
 - Review City Council bill that places a moratorium on construction along proposed rail alignment. An assessment should be done on its impact on small businesses.
 - Noise from the transit system will be a major problem for residents.
 - Pedestrian congestion around transit stations will be a problem.
 - Recommend that rail be built underground through downtown Honolulu and Kakaako.
 - The Concept Plan should recognize the importance of having a rail station at, or near, Ala Moana Shopping Center.
 - HCDA should review transit oriented development opportunities and sale of air rights around transit stations.
 - Subway/underpasses for rail transit and pedestrian crossings should be considered. This would reduce automobile-pedestrian conflicts.
- Transportation and Street System:
 - There is talk about the hierarchy of streets, but details on the actual widths for the various street types and sidewalks should be provided.
 - Undetermined/unknown street ownership is a problem (e.g., Kawaiahao and Waimanu).
 - More thought should be given on how South and Auahi Streets are treated in the UDCP as Restaurant Row is a major destination and facility.
 - Discussion on Ala Moana Boulevard is too brief and leaves many questions. The following issues should be addressed in the UDCP:
 - Does it maintain highway status?
 - What will be the treatment?

- Are traffic flows affected?
- Consideration of grade separation
- Is there a plan to reduce cross-congestion?
- The alignment of Queen Street near the IBM building needs to be explained.
- An efficient traffic management plan should be developed (e.g. too many traffic lights along Ward Avenue and Punchbowl Street).
- One-way traffic flow is faster than two-way. Switching one-way direction is good (e.g. Pensacola Street Mauka direction and Piikoi Street Makai direction). In general, one-way street is fine after getting used to the traffic flow.
- Concerned that the conversion of one-way streets into two-way streets will take away lanes and cause traffic congestion.
- Questions were raised regarding Promenade Streets and parkway medians and its possible impact on right-of-way widths, traffic and loss of property frontage.
- A 15-foot sidewalk is a “big” sidewalk.
- Medians act as “islands”, but if too wide, they don’t help because the total width of the street still remains the same.
- Parking:
 - Current parking within the District is inadequate. The District needs parking facilities and an overall parking plan. Accommodations should be made for customer, employee and delivery parking.
 - New high rises have aggravated a bad parking situation.
 - Large property owners should be required to build additional parking and dedicate it to public use.
 - A Waimanu Street property owner has loss on-street parking as a result of the Queen Street Extension project. Lacking parking, his property is not attractive to businesses and its lease value has declined.
- Pedestrian Safety:
 - PlanPacific mentions pedestrian safety, but specific plans should be identified in the UDCP.
 - Pedestrian safety should be a priority. For example, provide an advance green left turn signal movement at Ward Avenue and Auahi Streets so there is less conflict between pedestrians and vehicles on the busy Diamond Head side of the intersection.
- Bicycle Plan:
 - More detail is needed on the bicycle/pedestrian path between McKinley High School and Blaisdell Center. The path should take into account safety concerns and crime prevention.
 - Opposed to dedicated bike lanes; bicycles and automobiles should share the same right-of-way. Suggests that bike lanes be placed within wide sidewalks.
- Urban Design and Form:
 - Detailed information on proposed maximum density should be provided in the UDCP.
 - Increase in building heights could block views.

- Regulatory controls should be clarified (e.g. how much control does the City have in Kakaako?).
- HCDA should look into a Main Street program (use of historic buildings) along Queen Street for small landowners.
- Landscaping and Parks:
 - Additional parks should be provided as there will be a large number of people living in the district.
 - Positive comments on street trees expressed, but concerns were raised about maintenance and liability.
 - Developers should be charged an impact fee for parks.
 - A “bark” park for dogs should be planned for the district.

General Comments:

- General concern that the concepts sound good on paper, but concerns were raised if HCDA be able to implement the concepts.
- The UDCP should be coordinated with large landowners (General Growth and Kamehameha Schools).
- Construction activities hurt businesses; multiple construction projects disrupt neighborhood businesses.