

**Hawaii Memorial Park Cemetery Hearing.
April 23, 2019.**

Yet another hearing on the possible expansion of the Hawaii Memorial Park Cemetery near Pohai Nani! Residents are well aware since the Memorial Park's proposal to expand has been presented for more than ten years. HMP proposes to use the land to allow space they say is needed for future burial sites. Many environmental agencies such as Save Kaneohe, Sierra Club of Hawaii, former Kaneohe legislators, resident owners living near the cemetery, and previous Kaneohe Neighborhood Boards have opposed this approval. New proposals have been made. HMP has made changes, in response, offering protection of the ancient Hawaiian heiau, some protection for the endangered damselfly and submitting plans for building a high wall to protect against the heavy runoff from the Ko'olau Mountains. Seven Pohai Residents attended the hearing. Four testified against the EIS. Ki,



The hearing was well attended (78) with testimonies for and against the new proposals. Members of the Land Use Commission emphasized the need to read the newly revised EIS. Yet, so often the considerations from previous hearings still apply. One person travelled from Ewa Beach noting that all the burial sites are located on the windward side. Ewa Beach citizens need a place to bury their loved ones. Several questioned the need for more burial sites since customs are changing. One witness suggested other options, including cremation, and stacking of burial sites. He referred to Japan where these options are available. Japan, like Hawaii, has limited island space. The hearing continued including strong statements from the Department of Fishery and Wildlife and the Outdoor Circle. Both expressed concern for protecting the stream and ocean waters. The Outdoor Circle emphasized the need for trees and the vital importance of a canopy. A new and great concern is the horrendous loss of trees on Oahu currently being reported.

One concerned witness firmly questioned the statement in the new EIS statement that there was a need for new sites. He asked for precise figures, showing where people are buried and where people are not buried on the 80 acres. He stated that HMP had not proven the need for more space.

New were testimonies of construction and road building experts noting the impact on the firm land that had held back the huge runoff from the Ko'olau for centuries. Any disruption with construction of new buildings, and roads would upset the century old land. The Hawaiian Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club commended the promise of protection for the ancient Kaneohe Heiau.

All these concerns remain.

The following is a testimony of the late Dr. Al Keali'I Chock, UH Department of Botany and PH resident in *Hawaii News*, November 2017. He commented: "HMP has been very persistent in their expansion proposal...the only supporters are those groups that would expect some financial gain through business or a stewardship grant. Hawaii is very limited in size. Unlike Texas, our environment is very fragile and we hold the honor of being the endangered species capital of the world." He further commented that a corporation in Texas couldn't comprehend the tremendous power of the Hawaiian rainstorms in the Ko'olau.

Mary I. Piette, May, 2019

We Must Change.

I have watched as our marshes were cleared and sprayed to rid our town of mosquitoes. Those marshes are now being refurbished to protect and cleanse the waters of the Great Lakes.

I have canoed the rivers in Utah and seen the dairy farms pour their refuse in pristine cool mountain rivers. These rivers are now posted with signs as not safe for human consumption.

I have viewed progress as the Aswan Dam brought electricity and jobs to Egyptian laborers. Now I watch as the rich delta soil, Egypt's prime agriculture land is threatened with deepening water levels.

I have seen almond farms blossom in California deserts and water drained from western streams to allow this growth in an area, which really should not grow almonds. These western areas are running out of water.

I have seen the clear iridescent Lanikai waters become clouded as hikers on the pillbox trail have uprooted soil. The heavy windward rains have flooded the hills and washed this soil into our ocean.

I have wondered if the impact of Windward golf courses with their drainage of soil polluted with fierce fertilizers and pesticides has added to the dark waters seen after a storm at Kalama beach.

I have attended Neighborhood Board meetings where military representatives displayed with pride their attempts to be environmentally friendly with the many steps they have taken. I have listened as an elderly Kailua resident reminds all attending that there used to be flocks, huge flocks of birds on the Marine base. They have disappeared.

I attended a town council meeting where many celebrated that at last the huge Texas firm had won the right to expand and thereby endangered conservation land with still another development. Will our Kaneohe Bay survive this new onslaught?

Once again, I watch as still another environmental report argues that engineering can mitigate change and yet...it takes only one storm to change this assessment.

We Must Change. We cannot tear all the mountains down.

May 2019

Enclosed is the
report I distributed
at Pohai Kani.

The question is
do we choose the
environment of
the bottom line of
a wealthy corporation
changing exorbitant
prices and calling
this a service

Mary J Pette
Pohai Kani