

LAND USE COMMISSION  
STATE OF HAWAII

Minutes of Public Hearing

Hale Halawai Cultural Center

Kailua-Kona, Hawaii

3:30 P. M. - December 7, 1963

Commissioners

Present:

C.E.S. Burns  
Goro Inaba  
Shelley Mark  
Shiro Nishimura  
Charles S. Ota  
Myron B. Thompson  
Robert G. Wenkam  
Leslie E. L. Wung

Absent:

James P. Ferry

Staff

Present:

Raymond Yamashita, Executive Officer  
Roy Takeyama, Legal Counsel  
Gordon Soh, Associate Planner

The public hearing was called to order by Chairman Thompson followed by a prayer. The procedures for conducting the public hearing was outlined by the Chairman.

---

PETITION OF RICHARD WARFIELD, ET. AL.(A(T)63-30), FOR CHANGE OF TEMPORARY DISTRICT BOUNDARY FROM AN AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT CLASSIFICATION TO AN URBAN DISTRICT CLASSIFICATION FOR LAND IN KEEI, SOUTH KONA, HAWAII: Described as Third Division, TMK 8-3-10, 8-3-11 and 8-3-13.

Mr. Gordon Soh, having been sworn in, gave a description and background of the area and request involved, using a map to outline the location of the area.

Commissioner Wung asked Mr. Soh for the distance from the area in question to Kailua? Mr. Soh replied that it was approximately 16 miles.

Mr. Richard Warfield, speaking in behalf of a number of property owners from the area, was sworn in. Two letters generally stating the desires of Mr. Warfield and petitioners to change the district classification were read and submitted as part of the record by Mr. Warfield.

Commissioner Wenkam (following several questions posed to Mr. Warfield in trying to formulate a picture as to what will happen in the area) stated that

he is under the impression that the agricultural uses in the area are very intensive, although the coffee prices are quite low. Mr. Wenkam felt that it would be premature to suddenly wipe out 400 acres more or less of growing crops at this time.

Mr. Warfield informed Commissioner Wenkam that in the Plan for Kona report it shows that a large part of this area is in light industry. In clarifying an earlier statement by Mr. Warfield, Chairman Thompson informed Mr. Warfield that the Land Use Law does not require a person to subdivide its lot no smaller than a minimum size of 5 acres. He stated that under the Land Use Law there is no provision for minimum size lots in an agricultural district classification. Legal Counsel explained this point to Mr. Warfield also.

Commissioner Wenkam asked Mr. Warfield what he thought of the possibility of this commission zoning urban only the area along the highway as proposed by the County? Mr. Warfield felt that it made good sense as a large part of this area was in residential.

The staff report as presented by Mr. Soh stated that the Hawaii County Planning and Traffic Commission denied the Warfield petition on the basis that the area requested for rezoning was too large for foreseeable needs. It stated that the Land Use Commission staff concurred with the County's recommendation for denial because urbanization at this time would be injurious to continuous agricultural pursuits in the area.

Mr. Warfield stated that the estimates on the future of coffee as given by the staff were open for discussion. He stated that no one can say what the prices will be in the next few years. Right now there are overproductions in coffee on a world basis. As long as coffee is overproduced prices can't go up and that is why there are many abandoned farms. He stated that most of the petitioners, who are farmers in this area, average about 5 acres or so and during harvesting a lot of labor is involved.

Commissioner Wenkam asked if there has been a comparison made between the costs for developing urban subdivision and the costs of developing a macadamia farm?

Mr. Warfield stated that macadamia nut is an expensive crop to develop. It will take about 7 years before you get a good crop and 10 years before full bearing.

Commissioner Nishimura stated that the reason why Commissioner Wenkam is presenting his thoughts about changing the boundary to urban is because of the fact that if all of the Kona coffee growers felt the same way (that they are not making money so let's urbanize the area) how will the Land Use Commission stop it? Mr. Warfield felt that because it is their (Kona people) own land, they should be allowed to do whatever they wish to do, and not be forced into something they cannot make a means of.

Commissioner Burns had some thoughts on this area/<sup>being</sup> within a Rural classification. Commissioner Burns asked Mr. Warfield if he were familiar with the Rural district standards and what he thought of the possibility of the area being put in a

rural classification? Mr. Warfield was not too ~~verse~~ on the rural standards but felt that this may be good.

Commissioner Ota asked out of the 400 acres more or less, 200 acres concern this immediate petition, how many parcels are involved? Mr. Warfield stated about 68 parcels; and there are 48 signatures of these parcels, though originally there were about 60 signatures but some of them have withdrawn.

Commissioner Burns asked, "What proportion or percentage of the petition do you represent?" Mr. Warfield replied, "Over 50%."

The following communication were presented by the Executive Officer and made part of the record:

1. Letter from nine property owners in the area, received 4/15/63, requesting the Commission to reject their past request on the basis that they were not familiar with the change in the classification of their lands.
2. Letter from Bernice P. Bishop Estate, received 3/21/63, informing the Commission that they are opposed to the reclassification proposed by R. Warfield insofar as the trustee lands are concerned.

Mr. Kealamakia was sworn in. He informed the Commission of the many agricultural products that were started in Kona, but were unsuccessful. He stated that coffee and ranching have been the most successful agricultural pursuits in the area, but at the present time the outlook is very poor. He was in favor of the proposal made by Mr. Warfield on their behalf and stated that a subdivision development in Kona would be most ideal.

The Chairman informed Mr. Warfield in behalf of the other petitioners that if he wished to review and consider the possibility of amending his petition he may do so; but in the event that he does amend the petition, the amendment must also have the signatures of all the petitioners. The Chairman advised Mr. Warfield that while he is considering <sup>an</sup> and reviewing this matter, the public hearing will be continued until further notice.

The Executive Officer, to avoid any false hopes on the part of the petitioner, informed Mr. Warfield that the thinking of the County planning staff and the Land Use Commission staff is to leave this area in question in the agricultural district in the final district boundaries. Mr. Yamashita, however, stated that it was up to him (Mr. Warfield) and the other petitioners to submit an amendment and request for a continuation of this hearing. Mr. Yamashita stated that he felt that he (Mr. Warfield) should be brought up to date on the activities concerning this area.

With the added information as presented by Mr. Yamashita, Mr. Warfield speaking on behalf of the other petitioners requested that the hearing be continued.

Public hearing continued in the matter of Richard Warfield, Et Al.

PETITION OF TAMOTSU AND SUMIYA KURAMOTO (A(T)63-36), FOR CHANGE OF TEMPORARY DISTRICT BOUNDARY FROM AN AGRICULTURAL DISTRICT CLASSIFICATION TO AN URBAN DISTRICT CLASSIFICATION FOR LAND IN KEEKEE, SOUTH KONA, HAWAII: Described as Third Division, TMK 8-1-03: 26.

Mr. Soh gave a background description of the area and request involved and pointed out the location of the area on the map.

Chairman Thompson asked whether the petitioners or anyone representing the petitioners were present? There was no response.

In absence of the petitioners the Chairman requested that the staff proceed with its analysis and recommendation. The staff recommended that the petition be granted because: (1) the property is too small to form an economical unit for raising coffee; (2) the conversion to urban use would not be injurious to agricultural pursuits nor detract in any way from agricultural land dedications; (3) the Kona Plan envisions Kealahou as a major urban center on the Kona Coast and recommends residential zoning; (4) the Kuramoto property is contiguous to an urban district, and (5) public facilities are available and close at hand.

Having no pertinent information to be added or comments to be given from the Commissioners or any other interested agency or party, the Chairman announced that this Commission will be receiving additional comments and protests within the next 15 days from this hearing: and will take action on this matter 45 to 90 days from this hearing.

The public hearing was closed at 5:30 p.m.