STATE OF HAWAII
LAND USE COMMISSION

Hilo Electric Light Company Auditorium
Hilo, Hawaii

10:45 A.M.
December 7, 1963

STAFF REPORT

A(T)63-33 - DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Temporary District Classification: AGRICULTURAL

Background

The Department of Land and Natural Resources has petitioned the Land Use Commission for amendment of the temporary district boundaries so that the properties described by Hawaii tax map keys 6-6-01: 2 (portion), 6-6-01: 10 (portion), 6-6-01: 12, 6-6-01: 15, 6-6-01: 29, 6-6-01: 40 and 6-6-04: 6 as shown in a sketch accompanying the petition would be redistricted from an agricultural to an urban classification.

The area in question lies on the rolling plain abutting the highway leading from Waimea to Kawaihae where the highway is joined by the road to Kohala. The Waikoloa Stream fringes the southern portion of the area, the Keanuiomano Stream the northwestern corner. The Waiania Stream flows through the properties on a course paralleling Waikoloa Stream. Stream flows are not constant, and on occasion the beds may be dry. The rock strewn landscape bears little vegetation - principally low-lying shrubs and grasses especially thick near the streambed. Dry reed-like vegetation laid low in a common direction attest to possible flood problems, but the occurrence of this sign is not notably pronounced.

The property is generally surrounded by farm and grazing areas except to the east where urban development beyond the Hilo Electric Company substation is

relatively marked. To the north fronting the Kawaihae Road are low density residential developments.

The petitioner represents that a boundary change is requested for "Development of additional increments of the Lalamilo Houselots through legislative appropriation under Act 30, SLH 1961."[1/] Preliminary plans indicate that a subdivision containing 455 residential lots, 28 commercial and industrial lots, 5 open space reserves and 3 drainage easements are contemplated. A variety of small lot sizes are shown. A new alignment of the road to Kawaihae is anticipated.

Analysis

The proposed change would serve to link two urban districts at Waimea which are basically one. Recognition of this relationship is implicit in the proposed final district boundaries advanced by Harland Bartholomew and Associates and in a recently completed plan of the Kohala area.[2/]

The area can be attractively developed; it enjoys a climate basically different from that at Kawaihae and Puako; it lies within easy reach of urban public services; and it can be developed without particular injury even to low intensity agricultural uses.[3/]

The staff notes that "as of June, 1962" 548 acres of residential subdivisions were authorized but not developed in the Waimea area,[4/] indicating an excessive

1/ The appropriation was for $125,000.
2/ The Kohala-Hamakua Region General Plan, Robert I. Bush and Andrew Gerakas, September 1963.
3/ The property is advantaged by good and intermediate quality soils. However, water development costs for irrigation is prohibitively high to exploit good soil areas fully.
4/ The Kohala-Hamakua Region General Plan, Robert I. Bush and Andrew Gerakas, September 1963, p. 38.

supply of house lots chiefly located east of Waimea on the road to Honokaa. A memorandum in the files of the Planning Office of the Department of Land and Natural Resources dated October 8, 1962 analyzes the need for houselots in South Kohala and concludes, "It is thus evident that the market for house lots in South Kohala is likely to remain modest for the next decade or so. Although the district has maintained a reasonable rate of growth for many decades, absolute increases have been small. By continuing to attract its postwar share of new construction, the district can expect to average about 20 or so new housing units a year between 1960 and 1980. The resident population is not particularly wealthy; in-migration is low, and vacancy rates are exceptionally high. Construction workers on the Rockefeller project will move on to other projects after two years, and hence will probably lack interest in purchasing house lots in the area. Hotel employees with incomes sufficient to buy their own homes will be too few to constitute a significant market."

Recommendation

After weighing various factors, including the possibility of intraregional migration within the Hamakua-Kohala area, the staff recommends that a portion of the redistricting request be granted so that the first increment of the house lot subdivision alone would be redistricted at this time. The remainder can be granted at a later date should there prove to be a specific demand for small lots and higher standard subdivisions and added impetus in the general demand for house lots in Waimea.