STATE OF HAWAII
LAND USE COMMISSION

Board of Supervisors' Chambers
Hilo, Hawaii

1:00 P. M.
February 1, 1964

STAFF REPORT

A(T)63-47
CHARLES M. IWAKAWA
and TOMMY ISHIMARU

Temporary District Classification: AGRICULTURAL

Background

Charles M. Ishikawa and Tommy Ishimaru have petitioned the Land Use Commission to amend its temporary district boundaries so that the property described by Hawaii tax map key 9-5-07: 17 or a portion there of would be redistricted from agricultural to urban.

The property is in Kau and abuts the Hawaii Belt Road on the makai side of the highway. It is adjacent to the Naalehu urban district boundary on the Waiohinu side. The total parcel is about 99.268 acres in size.

The staff estimates that approximately 9.7 acres of the northeast corner is used for a trailer camp. There are nineteen trailers located here used to house the families of employees of the South Point tracking station. The remainder of the parcel is believed to be used primarily for grazing.[1/] The petitioners' property is flat grassland ranging between 2% and 10% slope. Rainfall is estimated to average between 40 and 50 inches a year.

Lands immediately surrounding the petitioners' property are primarily in agricultural use. Cane fields are located on class B lands mauka of the

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1/ A staff inspection trip was made on January 5, 1964. On the occasion of the trip the land appeared to be usable for grazing but no cattle were in evidence. The conclusion that the land is used for grazing is in part supported by the fact that the petitioners represent themselves to be owners of the Double I Ranch.

highway and above Waiohinu and Naalehu. Lands makai of the highway between the two towns are chiefly of marginal and submarginal agricultural value according to the 1959 generalized soil survey of the Land Study Bureau, however, the area is generally used for grazing. Although the makai lands are overrun with lava and there is very little soil mantle much beyond the highway, vigorous conservation programs have made possible the development of grass and chaparral for grazing.

Power and telephone services are easily available to the site but a 3 inch water line from Waiohinu might have to be enlarged if a substantially large urban development were to occur. A public school is located approximately 5000 feet along the highway in Naalehu. Hospital and library facilities and a high school are located in Pahala.

Analysis

There is no county general plan for this area, however, the State general plan does show an urban growth pattern linking Waiohinu and Naalehu together on the mauka side of the present highway and extending from Naalehu toward the Mark Twain Estates.

A review of land uses, terrain and the requirements of Act 205 would suggest that the State plan needs to be modified in that the plan as presently constituted would urbanize cane lands and would have the urban area straddle the bluff above Waiohinu.[1/] Further consideration would suggest urbanization

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[1/] Comment is not offered here on the large acreage allocation to urban uses by the State General Plan except that it was based on a projection showing threefold growth of the 1960 population to 1980. Staff recollection of this matter is that the growth was predication on subjective evaluation of South Point development potential.

first occur in areas adjoining and between Waiohinu and Naalehu on the makai side of the present highway and mauka of the new highway contemplated by the State Department of Transportation.[1/] The pattern thus established, in the staff's opinion, would not diverge radically from the views of the State General Plan and would serve to meet the injunction of Act 205 that maximum protection be given productive agricultural soils.

In a letter dated August 22, 1963 the Planning and Traffic Commission of the County of Hawaii advised that at its meeting on July 16, 1963 the petition at hand was considered and viewed favorably because petitioners' land "abuts the Urban District." The letter further advised that the "applicant is proposing to develop and construct housing, neighborhood commercial, parks and recreational facilities on a 23.859 acre parcel to meet the needs of the military installation at South Point." On January 6, 1964 your staff was orally advised by the County staff that petitioners were directly approached by officials of the Bendix Corporation to provide housing facilities for employees working at South Point.

The information transmitted by the County merits discussion of several particulars. First, it appears that only 23.859 acres of petitioners' lands are covered by the petition--an area essentially outlined in a drawing submitted with the petition. As such the area would not be as wholly contiguous to the temporary urban district than it would be if the (approximately) 9.7 acre trailer camp were also included in the redistricting. Thus, an amendment of the petition or a letter of clarification appears to be in order.

1/ Profiles for the highway were prepared in 1959 Scheduling of construction is currently beyond 1970.

Secondly, although petitioners' lands may be contiguous to the temporary urban district, it is about a half a mile from actual urban development in Naalehu.[1/] Furthermore, of the approximately 182 acres comprising the Naalehu urban district approximately 31% is undeveloped for urban use, and the addition of 23.86 acres or 33.56 acres to the district would constitute a 13% to 19% increase of the district. The staff estimates that with an annual growth rate of 3% a year, added acreage of 34.4% would be sufficient to accommodate growth in a ten year span. Viewed historically, an allocation of this amount might be generous since the population of Naalehu declined in 1960 to 952 as compared to a population of 1,004 in 1950.

A third point, however, merits attention. Having been apprised of the direct contact between Bendix and petitioners on the matter of housing for Bendix workers, there is some assurance that the development contemplated is not speculative and that the lands to be redistricted will be developed. Thus if 33.56 acres of developed land is added to the Naalehu district, the percentage of vacant land will actually decline to about 27%.[2/]

1/ A few homes are located in the intervening distance, but the area is virtually open.

2/ a) 57.3 ÷ 215.56 = 0.266. b) Vacancy figures are derived from interpretation of a 1953 aerial photo. In view of the 1950-60 population change, the developed area is believed to be substantially the same as in 1953 or would at least be in favor of petitioners. Should this assumption be challenged, verification can be obtained by acquiring an up to date aerial photo. c) Consideration was given to the possibility that 31% or more of the proposed housing development would be undeveloped and has concluded that there is a district possibility. Late in 1962 or early 1963, approximately 47 persons were employed at South Point by Bendix Corporation (ct. library files, Dept. of Planning and Economic Development). The staff believes, however, that petitioners are in part allowing for growth of the space facility and for itinerant employees. Furthermore, the County of Hawaii indicates that petitioners are proposing more than residential uses. The staff's entire line of reasoning is based on the premise that petitioners' are apprised of the exact extent of the market for their subdivision and have laid out their subdivision accordingly. The frailty or strength of staff's reasoning can be tested at the hearing.

On the basis of the foregoing discussion--fragmented though it may be--the staff reasons that development of petitioners' lands would add to compact development of Naalehu. The staff also reasons that redistricting of petitioners' lands (33.56 acres) would be a logical extension of the district and feels that compaction of development outweighs the fact that petitioners' lands are one-half mile away from actual urban development.

The staff has examined a subdivision map submitted with the petition and notes that about 86 lots having unspecified uses are contemplated. In general it is felt that a subdivision of this size cannot be adequately sustained by the existing 3 inch county water main. Faced with the concern expressed by Act 187 for the expense of public facilities to support subdivision development, the staff believes assurances of adequate water service is desirable. However, the staff is mindful that the particular subdivision in question would be in support of basic employment growth so that some measure of justification for such expense exists. Moreover, the staff concludes that provision of adequate water service can be made a condition[1/] to county subdivision approval more appropriately than as a condition for zoning and districting approval.

Recommendation

The staff recommends approval for redistricting approximately 33.56 acres of petitioners' lands as urban on the bases that the need for this area is

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1/ The word "condition" is underscored to distinguish it from "consideration." The staff believes that under the findings and purposes of Act 187 provision of public facilities remains a "consideration" in determining urban districts.

real rather than speculative, that the area would contribute to logical and orderly development of Naalehu and Waiohinu, that the development indirectly supports economic development in a demonstrable way more so than its continuance in agriculture would, and that the County of Hawaii has considered the matter and advocates approval.