STATE OF HAWAII
LAND USE COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM

April 6, 1973
7:30 p.m.

TO: Land Use Commission

FROM: Staff

SUBJECT: A72-348 - HAROLD BLICK & RONALD HARRIS

A public hearing was held on this petition to rezone 10 acres of land situated mauka of the Laupahoehoe School at Kihalani Homesteads, North Hilo, Hawaii, from an Agricultural to an Urban District for residential houselot development.

It was noted that the Hawaii County Planning Comm. voted to recommend approval of the boundary amendment since it conformed to the County General Plan; would provide needed housing; is in close proximity to community services; contains no adverse terrain or drainage problems; and is contiguous to an existing Urban District. Approval was subject to the conditions that the petitioners apply for County zoning within one year and that incremental zoning with housing performance requirements will be applied at that time.

At the public hearing, the staff expressed concern that the proposal would only add to the already considerable inventory or residential sized lots on the island of Hawaii without residential construction, thus encouraging speculation and the proliferation of sparsely developed communities.

By letter dated January 31, 1973, Mr. Jeffrey Choi, petitioners' attorney, submitted additional evidence as follows:

1. A new subdivision plan reflecting the petitioners' concern over possible traffic hazards posed by the old plan which showed exits near the curves of the existing street. The new plan shows a 50 foot wide access to the Kihalani Homestead Road in the middle of a straight stretch which spans 275 feet in length. The new access road forms a "Y", which services a total of 34 single family lots averaging about 9,750 feet in area.

2. Site development on the 1st increment will begin immediately upon County approval of subdivision plans. It is estimated that sales will be initiated within one year from the approval date, and that "construction of houses by the builder on those lots which have not been sold to persons interested in building

their own homes shall begin within 9 months of the time of completion of the lots." Those lots sold without homes built by the petitioners "will contain a covenant requiring construction within two (2) years of the date of purchase."

3. Upon approval of the 2nd increment by the County, the same time table will apply to the 2nd increment. The petitioners are willing to accept redistricting conditional upon construction of 75% of the lots in each increment within 3 years of subdivision approval.

4. Under present cost estimates, a 3-bedroom house with 1,200 square feet of living area on a 10,000 square foot lot can be sold for approximately $38,000. Unimproved lots will sell for not more than $1.25 per square foot.

5. A letter from the Laupahoehoe Sugar Company to Mr. Choi was submitted indicating that the sugar company's proposed subdivision at Pualaea is aimed at the company's employees and pensioners and not at the general public. It will involve an 8.6 acre parcel on which 26 lots are proposed to date, 50 responses from its employees have been received.

Staff evaluation of the petition finds that the Laupahoehoe Urban District contains approximately 310 acres of which nearly 1/3 comprise gully areas on the steep Hamakua cliffs. Most of the remaining areas are already developed with the exception of some large lots ranging from 60,000 to 80,000 square feet in size in the mauka areas at Manowaiopae. It is not anticipated that these large lots will be further subdivided in the foreseeable future, partly because of the small ownership pattern involved. Further, as indicated by the petitioners, the 1970 Census showed that North Hilo and South Kona had the lowest housing vacancy rates in the County of Hawaii.

It is noted that the proposed designation is in conformance with the County General Plan and has the support of the Hawaii County Planning Commission and the North Hilo Community Council. The Department of Agriculture "foresees no adverse effects on agriculture", and the Department of Education has advised that their facilities will be able to accommodate the increase in enrollment. The property abuts an existing Urban District and the Laupahoehoe School.

The petitioner has represented that a house and lot package within moderate income range will be provided and offered first to local residents to alleviate housing demands in the North Hilo District. He has agreed to include restrictive covenants on lot sales to assure the actual construction of homes.

Based on the above reasons, the staff concurs with the Hawaii County Planning Commission in recommending approval of this petition.