



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



LAND USE COMMISSION

250 South King St. / Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 / P. O. Box 2359 / Honolulu, Hawaii 96804

May 5, 1975

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TATSUO FUJIMOTO
Executive Officer

Planning Commission
County of Hawaii
25 Aupuni Street
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

Attention: Mr. Raymond Suefuji
Planning Director

Gentlemen:

At its meeting on May 1, 1975, the Land Use Commission voted to approve the request by the Henry Opukahaia School (SP75-200) to establish a private school on 10 acres of land situated within the Agricultural District at Keaau, Puna, Hawaii, described as Tax Map Key 1-6-04: portion of 11; subject to the 4 conditions imposed by the Hawaii County Planning Commission.

A copy of the staff emmorandum is enclosed for your information.

Very truly yours,

TATSUO FUJIMOTO
Executive Officer

Encl.

cc: Henry Opukahaia School
Dept. of Taxation, Hawaii
Property Technical Office, Dept. of Tax.
Tax Maps Administrator, Dept. of Tax
Real Property Tax Assessor, Dept. of Tax.

STATE OF HAWAII
LAND USE COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM

May 1, 1975
7:00 p.m.

TO: Land Use Commission
FROM: Staff
SUBJECT: SP74-200 - HENRY OPUKAHAIA SCHOOL

In accordance with Section 205-6, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the Hawaii County Planning Commission has transmitted a special permit request to allow the establishment of a private school on 10 acres of land situated within the State Land Use Agricultural District at Keaau, Puna, Hawaii. The application was submitted by Mr. Dale P. Crowley, Administrative Dean for the Henry Opukahaia School.

The subject property is identified as Tax Map Key 1-6-04: portion of 11. This parcel has a total area of approximately 1,222.5 acres and is owned by W. H. Shipman, Ltd. The landowner has agreed to initially donate 10 acres of land to the school and should the school grow to a point where an additional 10 acres are needed, a donation for the 10 more acres will be made at that time.

The subject property is situated along the Keaau-Pahoa Road approximately one mile southeast of Keaau Village and near the Humane Society facility and County rubbish dump.

Presently, the Henry Opukahaia School is located on the Haili Church grounds in Hilo. The school serves students from the pre-school through high school levels and has a current enrollment of 139 students. The students are predominantly from the Hilo area. The applicant advises that the matter of transportation will be taken care of either through a school owned and operated bus system or through a contract with a bus company. An increase in enrollment at the existing school has prompted the school to seek a new site for expanding its facilities. Further, it is noted that the present location is in an area of heavy traffic and traffic congestion and hazards.

In substantiation of the special permit request, the applicant has submitted the following:

1. The subject property is not presently used for any agricultural production.
2. The low-rise architecture envisioned for the school will not adversely affect the surrounding properties.
3. The proposed use will not create any new traffic problems in the area.
4. The proposed use will not unreasonably burden public agencies to provide roads, sewers, water, drainage and police and fire protection.
5. The proposed use will provide additional school facilities at private expense.
6. The Henry Opukahaia School has experienced considerable growth during its first three years of operation and has sought other appropriate sites for expansion.
7. Although the area is designated and zoned for Agriculture, the owner of the land has not put the subject property to agricultural use.
8. The proposed school use will not alter or change the present peaceful character of the area.
9. The proposed use will make the highest and best use of the land involved for the public welfare. The use of the subject property for educational purposes would enhance the community, provide services and benefits to many Big Island families and would in no way be detrimental to the overall planning needs of the area.

The applicant has additionally submitted a comprehensive plan for the school and states that the new school will be constructed on an incremental basis. The total design includes the development of an administration building, a library, several classroom buildings, a multi-purpose building, a playfield and parking spaces. Upon approval of this permit, the applicant proposes to initially construct a multi-purpose building which will accommodate 12 classrooms, offices, toilet facilities and a recreation and meeting area.

The subject property is presently vacant and the surrounding uses include the Humane Society facility, the rubbish dump, vacant and open areas, and a watermelon field. The Land Study Bureau rates the soils of the property "E" or very poor for overall agricultural productivity. The slope is less than 10% and the rainfall in the area averages about 150 inches per year. The County zoning of the subject property is Agriculture with a 20-acre minimum lot size.

Currently, all of the essential utilities, except water, are available to the subject site. With regard to the water situation, the Department of Water Supply has made the following comment:

"Our 6-inch main ends approximately 500 feet away from this proposed school. We recommend that as a condition of approval the 6-inch main be extended and a fire hydrant be installed to serve the proposed school."

COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC AGENCIES:

1. The Department of Health recommends approval of the request provided that the rules and regulations of the Department of Health be satisfactorily complied with.
2. The Fire Department advises that there are no fire hydrants in the area, the water supply at the site is at a minimum, and the Keaau fire station is two miles away.
3. The Puna Soil and Water Conservation District supports and urges favorable consideration of this permit and states that there are no major resource problems associated with the proposed use.
4. The Department of Agriculture has no objections to the proposed use and has offered the following information:

"The adjacent parcel on the Keaau side of the subject site was formerly in papaya, but is not now in cultivation. The opposite parcel on the Pahoa side was formerly in tomatoes and is presently planted in watermelon.

Neither abutting property owner foresees any adverse impact resulting from

the project."

5. The State Department of Transportation states that they have no objections to the proposed action but informs that the Keaau-Pahoa Road is a limited access highway and only one access off the highway will be permitted.
6. The Department of Education, Department of Public Works, Hilo Electric Light Company, Department of Parks and Recreation, and Department of Taxation had no objections or comments on the subject request.

COUNTY RECOMMENDATION

At its meeting of March 6, 1975, the Hawaii County Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the special permit to the Land Use Commission. The favorable recommendation was subject to the following conditions:

- "1. That the applicant shall extend the County's water main to the proposed site and provide a fire hydrant, subject to the approval of the Department of Water Supply and Fire Department.
- "2. That only one access shall be provided to the site from the Keaau-Pahoa Highway.
- "3. That construction of the first building shall commence within two years from the date of approval of the special permit.
- "4. That all other applicable rules and regulations, including the plan approval process, be complied with."

Staff evaluation of this request finds that:

1. The subject property is poorly suited for overall agricultural productivity according to the Land Study Bureau's soil classification rating system.
2. The land is vacant and the proposed school use will not remove or adversely affect any active agricultural pursuit.
3. All of the basic utilities and public services are either readily available or nearby. Thus the proposed use will not unreasonably burden existing public facilities and services.

4. Safeguards to the water and traffic concerns are contained in the conditions imposed by the County.
5. The proposed use will provide increased educational opportunity for that region of the County as well as supplement the State's educational system.

Based on the above, staff finds that the proposed use appears to meet the guideline for determining "unusual and reasonable uses" established in the Land Use District Regulations.