



DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING  
AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LAND USE COMMISSION

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March 9, 1978

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HAWAII PLANNING COMMISSION  
25 Aupuni Street  
Hilo, Hawaii 96720

GORDAN FURUTANI  
Executive Officer

Attention: Mr. Sidney Fuke, Planning Director

Gentlemen:

At its meeting on March 7, 1978, the Land Use Commission voted to approve a Special Permit request by Kilauea Agronomics, Inc., Hawaii (SP78-288) to allow the establishment of an agricultural processing plant for diversified crops on approximately three acres of land situated within the State Land Use Agricultural District at Mokuhonua, South Hilo, Hawaii, Tax Map Key 2-6-13: portion of 7.

Approval of this Special Permit is subject to the conditions imposed by the Hawaii Planning Commission.

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

Sincerely,

GORDAN Y. FURUTANI  
Executive Officer

GYF:jy  
Encl.

cc: Kilauea Agronomics, Inc.  
Department of Taxation, Hawaii  
Tax Maps Recorder, Dept. of Taxation  
Real Property Tax Assessor, Dept. of Taxation  
Property Technical Office, Dept. of Taxation  
Dept. of Planning & Economic Development  
Office of Environmental Quality Control  
Division of Land Management, DLNR

STATE OF HAWAII  
LAND USE COMMISSION

MEMORANDUM

TO: Land Use Commission                      DATE: March 7, 1978

FROM: Staff

SUBJECT: SP78-288 - Kilauea Agronomics, Inc.

The petitioner, Kilauea Agronomics, Inc., is requesting a Special Permit to allow the establishment of an agricultural processing plant for diversified crops on approximately three (3) acres of land situated within the State Land Use Agricultural District at Mokuhonua, South Hilo, Hawaii, Tax Map Key 2-6-13: portion of 7. The subject property is the former Wainaku Garage Building, and is located off of Kaiwiki Road, approximately one (1) mile mauka of the intersection with Mamalahoa Highway.

The petitioner intends to convert the existing maintenance garage facility into an agricultural processing plant for crops such as taro and ginger. The proposed three-acre facility is part of a larger 116.5 acre parcel.

At present there are several structures existing on the subject parcel. These include the former garage structure (159' X 81'), quonset building (42' X 99'6"), two sheds, a water tank, and a seed treating plant. The garage structure will be utilized for taro and ginger packing and also include restrooms, an office area, and an unloading area (see attached preliminary plant layout plan).

Access to the subject site is off of Kaiwiki Road, which has a 20-foot pavement width. Running along the Hamakua side of the subject parcel from Kaiwiki Road to Haaheo School is an unpaved cane haul road identified as Haaheo Road. This roadway provides access from Kaiwiki Road to the proposed processing facility.

In support of the request, the petitioner has in part stated the following:

"C. Brewer is adding Taro and Ginger into their Diversified Agribusiness ventures which include Macadamia Nut, Cardamon, Potato, Guava, and Malaysian Prawn.

"Entry into Diversified Crops business on the Hilo Coast has been implemented by the formation of a subsidiary company called Kilauea Agronomics, Inc. -

Mauna Kea Division. Currently Kilauea Agronomics, Inc. - Mauna Kea Division has 12 acres of Taro and 14 acres of Ginger on the Hilo Coast in Amaulu, Wainaku, Kalaoa, Pepeekeo and Hakalau. Expansion to 75 acres of Taro and 100 acres of Ginger will be made by the end of next year on the premises where the processing plant is to be located.

"Establishment of a centralized processing plant for diversified crops, at the former Wainaku Garage, to process products grown on the premises and some from other parcels implements the purpose of the County's General Plan to 'Protect and maintain agricultural lands on the Island of Hawaii'. This Special Permit is required immediately to allow sufficient time to complete construction of the processing plant in time to meet the February 1978 peak harvesting season.

"The former Wainaku Garage Building, situated on TMK 2-6-13-7, zoned 'A' agricultural district, compliments other agricultural activities in the area and will not adversely affect surrounding properties.

"Present facility has adequate water, road access, cesspool, drainage and fire protection from the concrete and steel structure including required fire protection equipment, whereby such use shall not unreasonably burden public agencies for these services. Variance from the requirements of AC paving of parking stalls at the processing plant for one year is requested to enable this fledgling enterprise to minimize capital expenditures at this time. The area will be oil surfaced to prevent dust problems.

"This proposed use will not substantially alter or change the essential character of the land and present agricultural use since the former garage site and facility will be utilized. Future expansion may require the building of additional facilities on the premises to accommodate volume and change in product from fresh to dried Ginger and Taro starch.

"The proposed use will make the highest and best use of the land involved for the public welfare. The economy of the Hilo Coast and the County of Hawaii will benefit greatly from the development and establishment of a diversified agricultural business which anticipates employing up to 37 employees during the peak periods. Capital investments for the plant and equipment is estimated at \$350,000.00.

"In view of the above, whereby this proposed use will foster and promote the purposes of the County's General Plan to protect and maintain Agricultural lands and make the highest and best use of the land, we request your expeditious and favorable consideration of our application for a Special Permit to allow the establishment of a processing plant for diversified crops."

The County of Hawaii's General Plan Land Use Pattern Allocation Guide Map designates the subject property for intensive agricultural uses. The property is presently zoned Agricultural 20-acres (A-20a).

The Land Study Bureau's overall master productivity soil rating for agricultural use is Class "C" or Fair for the subject site. These soils are of the Hilo series which are used mostly for sugar cane, truck crops, orchards, and pasture. Average annual rainfall is approximately 150 inches.

Surrounding lands are in sugar cane production or single-family residential use. Wainaku Camp 2 is situated on the Hilo side of the subject property. A stream gulch separates these two areas.

Pertinent comments from governmental agencies:

1. Department of Water Supply

The Department of Water Supply stated the following:

"Please be informed that water for the processing plant will be limited to an existing 2-inch meter. The applicant shall be advised that the Department of Water Supply reserves the right to restrict the use of water should the processing plant's consumption prove detrimental to other consumers."

2. State Department of Health

The Department of Health provided the following comments:

"The comments are made in a supportive manner. The environmental health concerns are twofold:

"1. Sewage generation and types of treatment and disposal system proposed.

"2. Solid waste and means of disposal."

### 3. State Department of Agriculture

The Department of Agriculture stated that they support the Special Permit request.

Other cooperating agencies, including the Hawaii Electric Light Company, Inc., Department of Public Works, Department of Research and Development, Police Department, and Fire Department had no objections to the permit request.

At the public hearing held by the Hawaii County Planning Commission on December 6, 1977, a representative of the petitioner spoke in support of the permit request. A letter opposing the subject request for lack of an environment impact study was received from a surrounding property owner and read into the record. The County Planning Staff noted to the Planning Commission that an environmental impact study was not required for the proposed use. Mr. Mabry Mendes, a surrounding resident, spoke in opposition to the Special Permit for reasons of dust, noise, and possible water shortage problems. For the Commission's information, the December 6, 1977, hearing transcript has been attached (County Exhibit U).

On January 12, 1978, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of the Special Permit to the Land Use Commission based on the following findings:

"That the proposed use will not be contrary to the objectives sought to be accomplished by the State Land Use Law and Regulations. The intent of these statutory provisions is to preserve, protect and encourage the development of lands in the State for those uses to which they are best suited in the interest of the public health and welfare of the people of Hawaii. In the case of the Agricultural District, the intent is to preserve lands of high agricultural potential for agricultural uses. The purpose of the subject request is to allow the establishment of a centralized processing plant for crops such as taro and ginger. The proposed use would be an integral part of the petitioner's research and development program for diversified crops. Agricultural development entails not only the raising of crops, but it also includes support facilities for the processing and marketing of agricultural products. The proposed use is an essential support facility for agricultural activities. As such, it will benefit the overall agricultural productivity of other lands and will further the objectives of the Land Use Law and Regulations. In addition, the remainder of the parcel eventually will be used to grow diversified crops. Under the County Zoning Code, the proposed use is allowed in the Agricultural zone provided that the processed products are cultivated on the premises.

"That the proposed use will further the State and the County's policy of encouraging and supporting agricultural activities, inasmuch as it is an essential agricultural support facility. Approval of the subject request will also directly implement the County General Plan. The General Plan Economic Element explicitly states that the County shall assist the expansion of the agricultural industry, especially diversified agriculture. The Economic Element also calls for the diversification of the County's economy. The establishment of a centralized processing plant in connection with a research and development program for diversified crops is in concert with these General Plan policies.

"That the establishment of the proposed use will not substantially alter the essential character of the land or its present use. The subject site has, for many years, been used for agricultural support facilities, specifically as a garage in connection with sugar cane operations. The petitioner intends to renovate existing structures for the proposed use. As a result, there will be no major changes made to the area under consideration in terms of both the nature of the use and physical improvements.

"That the proposed use will not adversely affect surrounding properties. The subject site is a 3-acre portion of a parcel consisting of 116+ acres. The closest residences are located in Wainaku Camp 2. This area and the subject site, however, are separated by a gulch which provides an effective barrier which will alleviate any expected adverse impacts. Further, adverse impacts can be mitigated by existing County and State regulations and standards. In addition, the majority of the lands surrounding the proposed 3-acre site is and will continue to be in agricultural production.

"That the proposed use will not unreasonably burden public agencies to provide facilities and services. All essential services and facilities are available to the subject site. The petitioner will be installing a private water system for the processing plant. Potable water from the County system will only be used on a minimal basis and it is not expected that unreasonable demands will be made on the County's system. In addition, the petitioner will be utilizing waste water for the cultivation of taro so the disposal of waste water is not expected to present any major need for drainage improvements."

For the Commission's information, the minutes of January 12, 1978 have been attached (County Exhibit AA).

The favorable recommendation was subject to the following conditions:

- "1. That the petitioner or its authorized representative shall submit plans for preliminary plan approval within one (1) year from the effective date of approval of the Special Permit.
- "2. That construction of the parking and the office areas shall commence within one (1) year from the receipt of final plan approval and be completed within two (2) years thereafter.
- "3. That the petitioner shall comply with the Rules and Regulations of the Departments of Water Supply and Health.
- "4. That all other applicable rules and regulations, including the provision of parking stalls as determined by the plan approval process, shall be complied with."

It was further stated by the Planning Commission that: "Should any of the foregoing conditions not be met, the Special Permit may be deemed null and void".