

Date: February 27, 2019

Location: West Hawai'i Civic Center – Community Meeting Hale Building G

Time: 6:00-8:00pm

Attendance: 25 persons (via sign-in sheet)

Staff: Andrew Choy, Gigi Cairel, Jim DuPont, Stewart Matsunaga.

Consultants: Townscape, Inc. – Bruce Tsuchida, Lillie Makaila.

Meeting Purpose: The purpose of this meeting was to present the draft Vision Statement to the community for feedback, to discuss community concerns and issues, to identify potential projects to address these concerns and issues, and to prioritize these projects and select the top five most important for inclusion in the regional plan update.

Discussion:

Recap from Meeting #1

- Development history of the region
 - A brief development history of projects in the region since the last regional plan was completed in 2009 was shared with attendees.
- Project timelines in the homestead
 - A tentative timeline for DHHL projects within the homestead was shared with attendees.
- Sandwich Isles Communication
 - Attendees at meeting #1 asked for an update regarding the status of Sandwich Isles Communication. Unfortunately due to legal concerns, DHHL is unable to release a public statement at this time. DHHL will release a statement as soon as they are able to do so. And, the community should be aware that this is a subject that is a priority to the Commission.
 - Bo Kahui of L2020 assured the attendees that he and other community leaders have been regularly attending Hawaiian Homes Commission meetings and are monitoring this issue.

Draft Vision Statement

- main values identified
 - a Hawaiian community
 - a strong sense of aloha
 - pride in the place
 - a need for more homes for Hawaiian families
- draft Vision

Kealakehe-La'i 'Ōpua is a community with a strong sense of aloha, pride in their homestead and appreciation for the place. The community and DHHL supports its people by promoting

education, self-sufficiency, and providing additional homesteading opportunities for more native Hawaiian families in the Kealakehe-La'i 'Ōpua region.

Community Concerns & Issues

- Kona Regional Park
 - Is this land going to be used for a regional park or a golf course?
 - This land is set aside for a regional park and not a golf course.
 - There is less land than originally proposed, what happened to the land?
 - Lands have been allocated for other uses, such as preservation of native plants, etc.
 - Will there be enough space for the recreation needs of the area?
 - There is less land than originally proposed, but the space should total over 150 acres for recreational usage.
 - The area is set to expand with more homes and more families, and it is important that recreation spaces are also created along with homes.
- La'i 'Ōpua Village 4 'Ākau
 - This project is a Rent-to-own project that will include 118 houses that will be rented out to applicants who are able to meet the financial requirements for the project.
 - The project includes a 15-year rental period for tenants where the developer will act as a landlord for the tenants until the end of the rental period.
 - Beneficiaries income must not exceed 60% of median income for the area in order to be eligible for this project because Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) are being used by the developer to finance the development of the project. The rules for the use of LIHTC maintain that those that live in the housing development are low income and do not exceed 60% of the median income. Because of this added requirement, meeting participants expressed a concern for those that are high on the list but do not meet the financial requirements since they will not qualify for this project. There are concerns that those on the waitlist should be served in order, regardless of financial status.
- La'i 'Ōpua Village 4 Hema
 - This project should be used to address the “gap” in beneficiaries who are next on the wait list but were not able to qualify for the 'Ākau project due to the additional financial requirements. The community sentiment on this topic is that those on the list should be served in order, and if they are passed over due to financial status for the 'Ākau project, then the Hema project should be designed to cater to them.
 - There is concern that some on the waitlist are older and by the time they are able to apply for a loan in order to buy a house they will not be able to qualify for a mortgage loan from the bank. This should be a consideration of DHHL's in order to ensure that they are serving the needs of these beneficiaries.
- Affordability of development projects

- DHHL should take into consideration the design of the homes for future development projects and try to choose design elements that are more cost effective. For example, instead of a ceiling fan, install insulation. Look into design options that are more simple and will bring down the cost of the house. Give the beneficiaries choices. If they would like to add solar/PV panels in the future, then that is their choice. But, the house should be more simple and more affordable.
- Kūpuna assistance
 - There is a need for financial support for kūpuna in the community to make repairs to their homes. Commercial projects and developments should include scholarships or grants in order to serve this need in the community.
- DHHL permanent Kona Office
 - There should be a permanent presence in the Kona region in the form of a DHHL district office in order to serve the beneficiaries of this area. The nearest office is located in Waimea, and that is too far to conveniently serve the people of the Kona region.
 - The La'ī 'Ōpua Community Center could provide space for the DHHL Kona Office in order to serve this need. Bo Kahui of L2020 stated that the DHHL Kona Office could be located at the community center.
- Community relations with DHHL
 - It is important that the community is able to look past the previous issues that have caused tensions with DHHL and find a way to focus on building a positive working relationship for the future.
- Transferring a Lease
 - There are concerns with beneficiaries being able to transfer their lease to someone else if they are not able to live on the homestead or to afford to live in a project. They feel that the transfer requirements are not clear and understandable and that it should be an easier process to transfer their homestead award if they want to.
- Imu
 - There should be space for imu at the homestead for community use.
- Community Investment
 - Members of the community should invest in their own community with time and money in order to build capacity.
- Succession for the Association & L2020
 - The community needs to think about a succession plan for the future because the leaders of the community will not be around indefinitely, and the next generation of leaders needs to step up into leadership roles.

Project Identification

- Five priority projects from the previous plan were included for consideration and selection by the participants as a priority project for the regional plan update.
 - North Kona Water Source Development

- DHHL has identified two privately-owned properties that are suitable well sites to source water for the region. If these water sources are added to the County supply, then DHHL projects could receive additional water credits from the County in order to develop projects in the area. The sites are currently undergoing environmental assessments funded by DHHL.
 - Renewable Energy Initiative/Photovoltaic Farm
 - The community would like a photovoltaic (solar) farm to be developed in the 'O'oma area. The community would like this project to directly benefit the homesteads in the region both financially and in helping to further the energy self-sufficiency for homesteaders.
 - Kona Regional Park development
 - As the homestead expands, there is a need to create recreational spaces for the residents of the area, especially the youth. This project would provide for these necessary spaces.
 - Continued Support of L2020 initiatives
 - The community seeks DHHL support for the initiatives of the L2020 community organization.
 - Burial Treatment Plan for inadvertently discovered iwi kūpuna
 - A plan for the inadvertent discovery of iwi kūpuna on lands in the region should be created in order to ensure that iwi kūpuna are properly handled if found within the region.
- Two projects introduced by L2020 to the community for consideration and selection by the participants as a priority project for the regional plan update.
 - Honokōhau Harbor Commercial Development
 - The community would like a commercial development on DHHL lands located at Honokōhau Harbor. The community would prefer a project that would directly benefit the people of the homestead. This project should include space for boat & trailer parking which is not currently available for homesteaders within the homestead. The project could also include a restaurant and a "Fishing Museum." The developer should meet specific criteria in order to be selected for the project including, providing scholarships for youth, job opportunities for the community, boat & trailer parking, as well as financial support for kupuna.
 - DHHL Kona District Office – permanently located in Kona
 - The community would like a permanent office to serve the beneficiaries of the region to be located in Kona. The nearest office is in Waimea, and that is too far to be convenient for the community.
- Two projects were introduced by meeting participants for consideration and selection by the participants as a priority project for the regional plan update.
 - Support for Village 4 'Ākau Project Completion
 - This project has taken several years and is still not completed. It is a priority to the homestead community that this project be completed as soon as possible. The community would like DHHL to complete this project in a timely manner.

- Village 4 Hema Development to address “gap” in beneficiaries that are ineligible for the ‘Ākau development
 - The community has concerns about those that are not able to meet the financial requirements for the ‘Ākau project. Those that are not served by this project should be considered in the design of the Hema project to ensure that they are given access and opportunity to be a part of the project since they will not be served by the ‘Ākau project.
- A total of nine projects were identified for consideration and selection by the participants as priority projects for the regional plan update.

Prioritization Exercise

- All participants were given 6 dots to use to vote for projects that they consider a priority for the region. Participants could use the dots to vote in any way they preferred, all on one project or spread out over several projects.

Results:

1./2.	North Kona Water Source Development	23 votes
1./2.	Village 4 Hema Development to address “gap” in beneficiaries who are not able to qualify for the ‘Ākau project	23 votes
3.	Honokōhau Harbor Commercial Development to include boat & trailer parking for lessees	21 votes
4.	Permanent DHHL Kona District Office	18 votes
5.	Renewable Energy Initiative/PV Farm in ‘O’oma	17 votes
6.	Support for Village 4 ‘Ākau project completion	16 votes
7.	Kona Regional Park Development	12 votes
8.	Continued Support for L2020 Initiatives	10 votes
9.	Burial Treatment Plan for inadvertently discovered Iwi Kūpuna	6 votes

- A total of 25 persons participated in the prioritization exercise. A total of 146 votes were tallied for all nine projects out of the 150 dots that were given out to participants. The top five projects identified by the participants were presented for large group discussion following the prioritization exercise.
- Participants noted that there was only a one-vote difference between the 5th and 6th prioritized projects, and that there is obvious desire from the community to support the 6th prioritized project as well.
- Participants noted that all of the projects are important to the community and want to ensure that the non-priority projects are included in the regional plan update as well as the selected priority projects.

Next Steps:

- Finalize Vision Statement for the community.
- Complete Priority Project profiles to include in the Regional Plan Update.
- Prepare a draft Regional Plan Update to present to the community at the next tentatively scheduled meeting for May/June 2019.