

HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING
Minutes of October 12, 2021, via Interactive Conferencing Technology (ICT)

Pursuant to proper call, the meeting of the Hawaiian Homes Commission was held via interactive conferencing technology - Zoom, and in-person at Kailapa Community Center, 61-4016 Kai 'Ōpae Place Kamuela, HI 96743, moderated by Chairman William Ailā Jr., beginning at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT William J. Ailā Jr., Chairman
Randy K. Awo, Maui-Commissioner
Zachary Z. Helm, Moloka'i Commissioner (via ICT)
David B. Ka'apu, West Hawai'i Commissioner
Michael L. Kaleikini, East Hawai'i Commissioner (via ICT)
Russell K. Ka'upu, O'ahu Commissioner (via ICT)
Pauline N. Namu'o, O'ahu Commissioner (via ICT)
Dennis L. Neves, Kauai Commissioner (via ICT)
Patricia A. Teruya, O'ahu Commissioner (via ICT)

COUNSEL Ryan Kanakaole, Deputy AG (via ICT)

STAFF Leah Burrows-Nuuanu, Secretary to the Commission
Andrew Choy, Acting Planning Manager (via ICT)
Kahana Albinio, Acting Land Management Division Administrator (via ICT)
Julie-Ann Cachola, Planner
Cedric Duarte, Information & Community Relations Officer
Michael Lowe, Information Specialist

ORDER OF BUSINESS

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ailā called the public hearing to order at 6:03 p.m. eight (8) members were present, two (2) in person, and six (6) via Zoom at roll call.

Pursuant to the Governor's emergency proclamation, related to COVID-19 Delta Response, Hawai'i Revised Statutes ("HRS") Chapter 92 regarding public agency meetings and records are currently suspended through November 30, 2021, to the extent necessary to minimize the potential spread of COVID and its Variants.

The hearing is for the Department and the Commission to provide information and receive comments on a proposed community-based renewable energy project on DHHL land in Kawaihae, Hawai'i Island. Nexamp Solar, LLC, a Delaware limited liability company, is requesting a Right-of-Entry Permit (for up to three years) for due diligence purposes and a long-term General Lease (25-years with options to extend) of 21 acres of land to develop a solar energy facility plus battery storage project that would generate up to 4 megawatts of energy.

The purpose of this hearing is to afford all interested persons opportunity to submit data, views, or arguments, orally or in writing, on matters relevant to the issues identified in the Notice of Public Hearing, which was just read.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION/ACTION

Moved by Commissioner Neves, seconded by Commissioner Ka'apu, to approve the amended agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

PT-1 Jojo Tanimoto – J. Tanimoto provided testimony not opposed to the solar project but opposed to the location of the solar project.

The Kawaihae Master Plan and the Island Plan both include the Kawaihae bypass road as an evacuation option out of Kawaihae. The County-Community Development Plan included this feature following Hawaiian Homes direction. The “tsunami zone” begins at the Queen Ka’ahumanu Highway intersection to Akoni Pule Highway at Hawaiian Homelands.

The State Department of Transportation (SDOT) had this Bypass on the STIP list, but never found funds to implement. SDOT did the alignment surveys, but other projects were shovel ready. Finally, Kawaihae was sidelined. Today, the population using the harbor access has since doubled. The military has more population and equipment going to and from Pohakuloa. Gas prices make prudent decision to pass the harbor route rather than using the Mauka-makai alignment of approximately 20 extra miles one-way (today \$4.52 per gallon). “The betterment of conditions for the beneficiaries” in terms of health and safety of our community, is first and foremost. How this impact affects our neighbors to the north, and at the two small boat harbors in Kawaihae, and the commercial harbors depends on how the Hawaiian Homes Commission ACT benefits the beneficiaries here in Kawaihae.

DHHL could make available other lands for this Project. It seems, to me, there is a “running thread” for informing this community after-the-fact and that needs to be addressed. Still lack of continuity, this location was offered-and need not be. She asked the Commissioners to not approve the ROE or consider realigning the location on the 91-acre parcel.

PT-2 Cindy Freitas – C. Freitas is a Native Hawaiian descended of the native inhabitants of Hawai’i prior to 1778 and born and raised in Hawai’i. She is also a practitioner who still practice the cultural traditional customary practices. She is concerned that the benefits of the project would only go to those with higher incomes. She also felt that the 10-12% discount is not enough for the amount of time the company will be using the land.

C. Freitas opposed the project for the following reasons:

1. Nexamp, LLC’s will give an opportunity to low-income beneficiaries who meets the income and the beneficiaries who makes more will not have the same opportunity for this renewable energy, it will be sold also to non-Hawaiian who is not the beneficiary.
2. Nexamp, LLC’s will only give 10 to 15% annually savings to the low-income beneficiary’s on the electric which is unacceptable.
3. Accordingly to June 2018 Hawaii State Energy Office “Hawaii Energy Facts & Figures” states, Commercial Code Savings: Commercial buildings would achieve a 35-40 percent energy saving by adopting the base 2015 IECC with references to ASHRAE 90.1-2013 (compared to 2006 HEC with references to ASHRAE 90.1-2004). Amendments under consideration by HSEO will further increase potential energy savings. http://energy.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/HSEO_2018_EnergyFactsFigures.pdf

4. Using solar energy instead of traditional energy sources can result in financial savings. Over a 20 year period, you could save over a million dollars, depending on your state. Also there is a return on investment Solar energy can also be sold back to the grid, so the company potential can earn. None of this are going to the BENEFICIARY'S!

5. Federal and state tax benefits are available when a company like Nexamp LLC'S install solar panels on BENEFICIARY'S land. Potentially claim a percent of installation costs, with benefits varying by state. None of this benefits are going to the BENEFICIARY'S

6. The 100 acre land in Kalaoa and as well as Kawaihae is going to ONE ENTITY for many of years is a concern to the BENEFICIARY in my family (The same with all the commercial lands on DHHL)BENEFICIARY WILL NOT HAVE AN OPTION IN THE FUTURE.

5. Using solar energy instead of traditional energy sources can result in financial savings. Over a 20 year period, you could save over a thousands dollars, depending on your state. Also there is a return on investment Solar energy can also be sold back to the grid, so the resident potential can earn. ALL BENEFICIARY'S BENEFIT

6. Federal and state tax benefits are available when a resident install solar panels on roof top. Potentially claim a percent of installation costs, with benefits varying by state.

7. The Ala Kahakai National Historic Trail Corridor established in 2000 to preserve, protect and interpret traditional Native Hawaiian culture and natural resources, Ala Kahakai National Historic trail is a 175 mile corridor encompassing a network of culturally and historically significant trails. This "trail by the sea" traverses wahi pana (storied landscapes), ancient Hawaiian sites and over 200 ahupua'a (traditional land divisions). <https://www.nps.gov/alka/planyourvisit/maps.htm>

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT

NEXT MEETING

The second public hearing for the Kawaihae solar project is scheduled for Wednesday, October 13th starting at 11:30 a.m., at Hale Kūhiō, 64-756 Māmalahoa Highway, Kamuela, HI 96743 and Zoom.

MOTION/ACTION

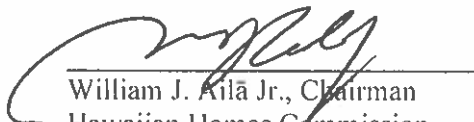
Moved by Commissioner Helm, seconded by Commissioner Neves, to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

6:36 PM

Respectfully submitted:


William J. Kilā Jr., Chairman
Hawaiian Homes Commission

Prepared by

Leah Burrows-Nuuanu, Commission Secretary
Hawaiian Homes Commission