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CONFERENCE REPORT

TO:	DHHL		
FROM:	Barbara Natale, G70		
DATE:	9/5/17		
PROJECT:	Moloka'i Veterans and Homestead Residents' Center	PROJECT NO:	214041-12
SUBJECT:	Beneficiary Informational Meeting		
LOCATION:	Kūlana ʻŌiwi, Kalama ʻūla, Moloka'i	NO. OF PAGES:	4
THOSE PRESENT:	DHHL: Rep. L. DeCoite, J. Masagatani, G.R. Davis, J. Richardson, N. McPherson, S. Carreira, N.L. Kimilau-Cano, R. Speer; G70: R. Char, B. Natale; Beneficiaries and Veterans		

Moloka'i Veterans and Homestead Residents' Center
Beneficiary Informational Meeting
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N. McPherson explained the planning process.

- Molokai Island Plan
- Ho'olehua Land Use Plan
- The parking area above the site was transferred to DOE ownership and management in a "land swap" as DOE was utilizing the area for parking and for agricultural projects in conjunction with Molokai High School.

R. Char introduced the concept plans.

- Current uses at Lanikeha and Kaunakakai Veterans Center
- Molokai Middle School uses the field
- Site Description – location, drainage, existing utilities, impacts to field
- Proposed Building Description – Modular building with meeting room, classroom, restrooms, outdoor space, playground, parking lot
- Potential uses - Available for meetings, classes, events, health, social and medical services, relief shelter

B. Natale gave background on the environmental documentation and public consultation process.

J. Matsunaga discussed the next steps – Phase I and II.

- Phase I is for design and construction of the facility.
- Phase II is management. DHHL will return to beneficiaries for consultation on disposition after the EA and construction have been completed.

Question and Answer

Location

Q: Were alternative sites reviewed?
A: We only looked at Ho'olehua, primarily because it has consistent land use designation. Part of it is also related to the timing issue - any other site would require a change to the land use designation, which takes time. Alternative sites will be evaluated in the Environmental Assessment, but the focus is on this site as the most feasible.

Q: I want to see this project move forward, because there are a lot of veterans that live in Ho'olehua that will not go to Kaunakakai. It is the veterans in the bush that don't want to come out.

Q: I'm not saying I'm not supporting the vets, I'm not supporting the location. When the vets come back, they have post-war syndrome. We have many schools in the area. We don't want to have to worry about our children. We talked about the old marine base. If you have vets that are in this condition, we won't have our children in harm's way.

Q: This bill is limited. It has to be built in Ho'olehua. We only have one chance to spend the money, if we don't spend it we lose it. I'm here to support the facility. As written, it has to serve the veterans. If not, it is not following the law. We can say that it will also benefit the homesteaders. But veterans are priority. Not all veterans are beneficiaries. Will this facility and will the veterans welcome non-beneficiary veterans?

SUMMARY: The Moloka'i Veterans and Homestead Residents' Center was presented to the beneficiaries for their feedback on the project.

J. Masagatani opened the meeting.

- DHHL staff introductions.
- Reviewed House Bill. The bill is very specific regarding a Veteran's center and uses that would be beneficial to the community. This is an extraordinary opportunity to bring this money to the veterans. This information is being brought to the residents to see if this is something they would be willing to support. What services can be co-located in this center? These are draft plans and not final, just meant to start the discussion.

Rep. DeCoite gave background on the house bill.

- The veterans came to DeCoite asking for funds to update current veterans center. This was brought up as a CIP project (instead of a GIA project). Funds for this and other legislation could only be used for projects on state lands. This means that the veterans would have to turn over the land to the DoD, and they said no. The monies were sitting there, use it or lose it due to lapsing funds. If don't use it, it will be difficult to receive future funding. DHHL was approached. Looked at other lands – land use as designated in the Molokai Island Plan, and maintenance. The location in Ho'olehua is on higher lands, and is a better location compared to the existing center in Kaunakakai when planning for climate change. Can also be used as a disaster center.
- The scope of the project must remain veterans focus. Need help to know what to do with the money.

Use of Facility

Q: Looking at the presentation, this is a done deal. We weren't consulted on the building. The current veteran's center is only two years old. The veterans struggled for that building. We already have facilities that are halfway done. The cemetery is full, we need another one. No one is going to use another center.

Q: The veterans would like to see this building built, would like to get together with the beneficiaries to make it the best for both. Let's get all together with the Hawaiian entities and make a plan. We can do it. Tired of fighting. We are only thinking of the future.

Q: How many veterans are on the island of Molokai?

A: 480 in their directory (with visitors to the island). 200 on island.

Q: I support this program. What about having the ROTC program there? I'm part of the Molokai Farmers Alliance, so when looking at the plan, I think about how would it affect Lanikeha? Would it cut into our business? It would be at the back of the property, so two events could be held at the same time. It will be closer to home, and people can get the services they need.

Youth Facilities

Q: Many years ago, we planned that area as a youth center, because there are many schools in the area. We were taken back with this new project. We don't want the money to go away, but we need to make sure that is the best place for the vet center. I didn't realize there was zoning (especially in Hawaiian Home Lands), but there is the Alu Like center that is falling apart and not being used. They could probably use the money. We aren't opposed to the veterans, but we wanted a youth center there.

Q: I would really like to see this area as a place to go for the students. We are concerned about what the students are doing after school – going into the cube. How can I explain to the parents if the cube falls on them? If you understand the history of Ho'olehua (warriors). We have to take care of our veterans. I love the students and the school, and want to work with the veterans to make this a facility for the students as well.

Emergency Relief

Q: I'm looking at hurricanes on the island, and flooding. If 20% of the population could help the rest of the population, it would help my family. If you don't want the facility, then let the money go.

Q: As a Vice Principal of Molokai High School, when I think of a catastrophe and low coastal areas, I think about will this hit the classrooms? Is there a place for helicopters to land? Lanikeha is one of the fields that the school uses for fire drills. I see this as an opportunity.

Q: We were looking into making Lanikeha as a certified shelter. \$320,000 just to retrofit the windows in the front. I do agree with the vice-principal that we need a place for shelter. The veterans don't want to come back and continue to fight. We need to look at this for the community. The land is there, the money is there, we need to really think about this and not just focus on the little things. I have a history of working with the veterans for over a year and a half. I honor and respect them. I totally support this project.

Q: The first thing I look at in buildings is safety. Is it in the flood zone? How many people can fit? Are there windows, which with the wind it could break and hurt the people? We should look at designing the building so that it will be safe. I would like to see the new building have the kind of windows that could close in a hurricane. To get that money to come to Molokai, we should take advantage of this moment. We know that politics is changing, and we should be concerned. I'm just looking at the whole package – our young adults and kupuna. For the future of our children.

Q: If we are really concerned about an emergency shelter for our people, we need to update Lanikeha. Get storm windows/doors that we can add.

Resources

Q: I'm just tired of when we have funding, how much of it goes to the project? We don't need the paved road, we can use dirt roads. I understand they don't have water in Ho'olehua – no more water to build homes for my children. How can you give water to this facility if you cannot give water to homesteaders by providing new meters, new homes? We need to get water up there. They have \$4 million and are not spending on homesteaders.

A: Answer is complicated – school, airport, etc. is on DHHL water. DHHL has a reservation on the water. We are pumping more than our allocation. The issue of water is not only about water, it is also about other areas we want to develop and what the plan is for the future of the homesteaders on the island. It is a more complicated question because it has to do with how the water is allocated. There is enough water available, but it has to do with CWRM regulations. We have only been given permission to pump so much, and because we are pumping more than allocated, there is a moratorium on new meters. So when it came to giving out the actual meters, we had to decide where to give ones out. There were other projects where we wanted to develop – we were able to get some money for areas that we haven't been able to for over 20 years. Two issues – getting water to the project, and then getting the meter to pump the water. There are about \$20-30 million in improvements that the water is being reserved for. There are regulatory issues we have to work out with DLNR.

Next Steps

I realize that the needs of the youth are an important part of the community. There is the upper parking lot area under DOE use that could perhaps be a partnership project to build a youth center. If anything, this meeting will begin the conversation for youth, opportunities for the parking lot above, down the road. It all doesn't have to happen here.