



CONFERENCE REPORT

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TO:	Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL)		
FROM:	G70		
DATE:	February 15, 2024	LOCATION:	Kilohana Rec Center
PROJECT:	'Ualapu'e Kuleana Homestead Settlement Project	PROJECT NO:	221047-01
SUBJECT:	Small Group Meetings Conference Report	NO. OF PAGES:	8
THOSE PRESENT:	G70: Barbara Natale, Ryan Char, Kahealani Winchester, Pi'ilani Smith DHHL: Andrew Choy	Participants: See Page 6	

SUMMARY:

Two (2) small group meetings were held on February 15, 2024 for the 'Ualapu'e Kuleana Homestead Settlement Project. Meeting invitations were sent to immediate neighbors or those who have previously provided oral or written feedback throughout the process. The purpose of these meetings was to share the process and results of the Alternative Locations Analysis.

Presentation

During the Planning process for the Project (i.e. community meeting feedback and Settlement Plan comments), it was suggested by community members to examine other comparable parcels in Eastern Moloka'i as an alternative location for the Kuleana Homesteads. Seven locations were identified and analyzed: 'Ualapu'e Lower Lots, Ka'amola, Pua'ahala, Kapuaoko'olau, Mākoelau 1, Mākoelau 2, and a small group of parcels named "Kamehameha V Hwy Lots".

Fifteen (15) weighted criteria were created and assessed in relation to each alternative location. They are as follows:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Location on East End | 9. Rainfall |
| 2. Size of Parcel | 10. Proximity to Utility Infrastructure |
| 3. Number of Potential Lots | 11. Flood Hazard & Drainage |
| 4. Slope | 12. Erosion Hazard |
| 5. Landowner | 13. Wildfire Risk |
| 6. Known Historic & Cultural Resources | 14. Tsunami Evacuation Zone |
| 7. Water Availability | 15. Sea Level Rise Risk |
| 8. LSB Rating (Soils) | |

The influence and assignment of analysis criteria is shown in Figure 1.

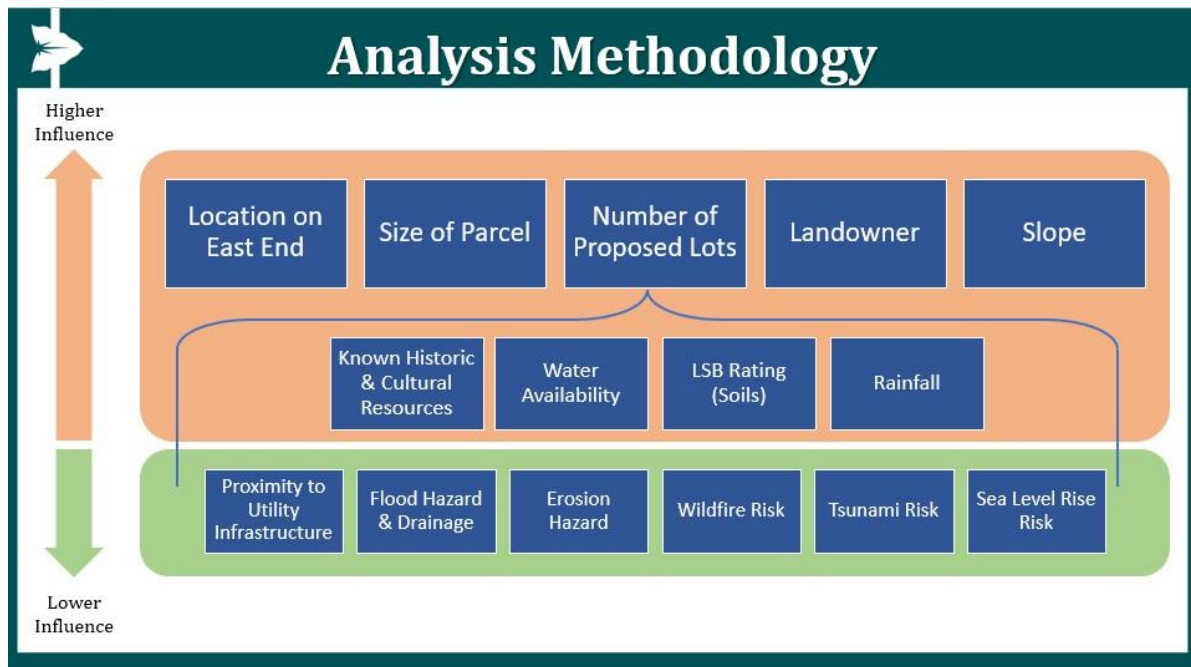


Figure 1. Analysis Methodology

9:30am Talk Story Session

The first session began at approximately 9:30am. A pule was offered by the community, and Ryan Char began the presentation. Ryan introduced the purpose of the alternatives site analysis and what was hoped to be accomplished at the meeting. The presentation started with an overview of the analysis criteria, a brief introduction to each alternative location, and high-level comparisons of the sites with the characteristics of ‘Ualapu’e. Before each alternative location was able to be shared in detail, the meeting attendees provided some input into some of the locations, and also asked questions about much of the existing project area as well as the lower ‘Ualapu’e lot areas. Some more detailed information was shared about particularly challenging alternatives.

The following discussion highlights key takeaways from the community.

Community members provided that community environmental work is being done in Ka’amola. Some said this location as an alternative was a flat-out “No”. Likewise, for Pua’ahala, there is conservation work being done there. One participant said ‘Ualapu’e is one of the few state-owned ahupua’a, and the only place where locals can get food, calling ‘Ualapu’e the “ice box” of the east end. The two adjacent ahupua’a are private, and hunting/gathering is not allowed.

The community raised concerns about various environmental hazards affecting the ‘Ualapu’e region and surrounding areas. A participant said one significant issue is the buildup of silt runoff into the reef, posing a threat to marine ecosystems. Additionally, the potential risk of mudslides and boulder hazards (such as the recent mudslide extending from Kamalō to the Meyers’ property) was highlighted, indicating the need for ongoing cleanup and mitigation efforts.

Community members attested that the mauka lots in ‘Ualapu’e were noted to have more exposure to strong winds and hard soils, which could contribute to erosion and soil degradation over time. Overall, participants expressed a keen awareness of the environmental hazards facing the area and emphasized the importance of proactive measures to address and mitigate these risks. One

participant suggested the restoration of the mid-forest before the high forest in ‘Ualapu’e, to address erosion and flooding. Another participant suggested planting more vegetation to reduce fire risks and stabilize soil, particularly in areas prone to erosion. The community also raised the need to reintroduce water into gulches to support local ecosystems and prevent further degradation.

Continuing the discussion on the alternative locations, it was noted that there is a gap in the Department of Water Supply (DWS) water main, where one water system stops at a bridge and doesn’t start again until the ‘Ualapu’e system. There would need to be a well at these locations where the water system doesn’t exist. Furthermore, a community member raised a concern about preserving dark corridors - areas with minimal light pollution crucial for native bird navigation and conservation, such as threatened and endangered bird species like ‘Ua‘u kani (Hawaiian petrel). All of the western-most alternative locations, including Kapuaoko‘olau, Mākolelau 1, Mākolelau 2, and Kamehameha V Hwy Lots, are all located within this dark corridor. Participants emphasized the significance of maintaining these dark corridors (therefore no development) to support the natural habitat and migration patterns of indigenous bird species.

As a remaining alternative, a community member turned the discussion back to the lower area of ‘Ualapu’e. He felt that these lower lots are the best, as they provide protection from the elements and have good soil. The higher lots have more wind and hard soils. If the historic sites on the lower lots are not as sacred but more like an ag terrace or imu pit, then we should look at the lower lots for the project.

Another participant stated they could live in the higher area in ‘Ualapu’e and said they can work with growing plants on hard soils because of their experience with the area. There are agricultural and house sites up mauka too, just need to look at what is already there and manage it how it was taken care of in the past. You need people on the land to help manage it. A beneficiary noted that although beneficiaries deserve all the utilities, some beneficiaries want the land now and can live off-grid. They felt that the community should allow those that want land now to settle on the land as is. This is Kuleana Homestead – it is meant for subsistence agriculture, but one can add a home if they want.

A community member asked for assurance that there would be only 30 lots in ‘Ualapu’e and no more. DHHL replied that it does not foresee a number of lots much more than 30 based on the studies that have been completed to date.

The community wants to ensure that those who live in ‘Ualapu’e understand how to live on Moloka‘i. Some participants feel that the DHHL waitlist would filter out those that wouldn’t work here. DHHL pointed out that the waitlist is a creation of the State, not Prince Kūhiō. The rules relating to the DHHL waitlist have been amended several times in the past. The waitlist administrative rules are not set in stone. For example, the current rules require that prospective lessees are financially qualified to take on a lease to better ensure that the lessee can successfully fulfill the requirements of the lease. The qualifications for Moloka‘i and other rural areas are different. For this area, Success = Knowledge of the area. Having knowledge of how to live in these conditions is critical. That knowledge is usually possessed by those that have a long connection to place. There is a valid concern that the people moving in will not take care.

A community member asked if there was a mechanism to be sure that those that understand Moloka'i will be located here? DHHL responded that at the current moment there is not. There needs to be a change in the current DHHL administrative rules related to the waitlist. DHHL has heard similar concerns from other rural communities about providing opportunities to beneficiaries that live in those areas with first preference because they have a familiarity with the area and are more likely to be successful.

The community asked how long the rule-making process takes. DHHL responded that the rule making process usually takes between 1.5 to 2 years to allow for sufficient public input. The administrative rules for the Lanai waitlist could be used as a template for a future rule change. Participants expressed a desire for DHHL to prioritize Moloka'i families in lot allocations and emphasized the importance of transparent and inclusive administrative processes to foster community trust and engagement. Meeting participants voiced concerns regarding the need for community input and involvement in the rule-making process to ensure alignment with local needs and priorities. DHHL stated that this is not a unique situation, as communities across the State with DHHL land (e.g. King's Landing, Ke'anae, Wailuanui, etc.) are having the same discussion.

A community member added that the alternative sites were brought up from the community because they realize that native Hawaiian families will be affected and wanted a way to help find a solution to provide homesteading. If the awards are going to beneficiary families in the room right now, then we are all for it. Whether it will happen or not is up to Ke Akua. 'Ohana on Moloka'i still need to live together.

A participant reiterated again that the community is not against DHHL homesteading but it needs to have the right people to take on that kuleana and know how to live here. The community doesn't want lots that would affect archaeological sites. What if the people don't take care of the sites? Kuleana is responsibility – a responsibility to mālama, Kuleana is not a right. 'Āina tells you how to live with it. Need to do the work to mālama the land in order to introduce yourself to the land. It is hard work.

A participant gave an example of how they joined the Moloka'i Hunting Club to work with the community to take care of a neighboring ahupua'a. Traditionally, you take care of your own ahupua'a and let others take care of theirs. Initially, those living in the ahupua'a did not like the others coming in to do environmental work, however they were unable to take care of it themselves, and came to an agreement with the other volunteers who were from outside of the ahupua'a.

Ahonui Homestead Association (AHA) has applied for a Right of Entry (ROE) to DHHL's 'Ualapu'e parcels so that they can also steward the land and create community collaboration. Similar to what the Moloka'i Hunting Club has done elsewhere, to include creating medicinal gardens. They could work with Kilohana School to teach them about their backyard. AHA wants to work with the community for its benefit.

With this experience, AHA can also be a support system for those moving into the lots. Homesteaders need support from the State DHHL to fill in the holes and be successful. It takes a lot of resources to turn the hard dirt into soil, but from it can feed hundreds. DHHL does want to set beneficiaries up for success, and provides training to communities.

It was asked by the community if the County and the State are working together for safety? DHHL replied yes – in other locations, while the homesteads may not be connected to the County utilities, DHHL has coordinated EMS services. There is also concern about a fire truck going up to ‘Ualapu’e lots. While paving the roads is not required under the Kuleana Homestead rules, DHHL did learn how difficult this was at Kahikinui and is now paving there.

A community member mentioned how they have seen this project go from 300 to 30 to just 9 families in the lower lots. That is a lot of money for just a small number of lots. It was asked if DHHL will have enough financially to move project through? DHHL stated that cost is a factor, but it is not the only factor DHHL considers. Cost is a factor that can be more easily overcome. Recently, DHHL has found success in advocating for the resources it needs to carry out its mission. For this project, getting support from families with generational ties to East Moloka‘i is a factor more important than cost.

A closing pule was offered and the first session ended at approximately 11:35am. A break for lunch was held and the second session began at approximately 1:30pm.

1:30pm Talk Story Session

The same presentation was provided and the floor was opened up for mana‘o.

A community member asked why the alternative sites were researched. DHHL clarified that participants in past community meetings had asked for this, and there was also mention of this in the settlement plan feedback. They were curious as to why the team only heard of dark corridors at this point in their research. The concept of "dark corridors" was just introduced in the morning meeting and was something that the team was previously unaware of.

After hearing about all of the alternative locations and reasons that homesteading would not work there, it was questioned as to why DHHL was focusing on the Eastern side of Molokai, and not on the Western side where DHHL already has footing and there is infrastructure. It was provided that DHHL’s mission is to serve beneficiaries, and it was a specific request by the beneficiaries of this island to examine homesteading possibilities on the East End. AHA advocated that this is legacy land for East Enders. ‘Ualapu’e, due to its resources, is the best choice for beneficiaries. The people who want this land are willing to work for it and know what it takes. The people have made a choice for off-grid, sustainable living.

In addition, it was explained that AHA is requesting an ROE from DHHL to begin work in natural resource management at ‘Ualapu’e, and to develop a hunting plan and a gathering plan. There are also plans to do a community garden with medicinal herbs. Ultimately, AHA plans to start restoration activities.

One of the participants has read the settlement plan and followed the process closely. There are issues with the roads, archaeological sites, and the fact that ‘Ualapu’e sits on top of a well. The deer are out of control and causing erosion. Fencing is very expensive. There was also a historic fire that cleared everything from ‘Ualapu’e to town, so wildfire is a concern. There are lots of problems and no solutions, and he feels that DHHL is just replacing problems with problems. As a resident of ‘Ualapu’e, he can attest that the land is hard and difficult to work on, even with his access to utilities. He wants this to be successful, not a problem for the beneficiaries, and would like DHHL to come up with solutions first. The community member suggested to start small to see how it goes - look at the southeastern most lots and start there.

The second session ended at approximately 3:00pm.

List of Participants:

Session #1 (9:30am)

Dartagnon Bicoy

Judy Caparida

Cora Schnackenberg

Iwalani Kadowaki

Phil Stephens

Julie Kane

Palmer Naki

Dickie Stone

Koko Kawauchi Johnson

La'a Poepoe

Lori Buchanan

Joe Yamamoto

Tori Yamamoto

Zhantell Dudoit Lindo

Keomailani Hanapi Hirata

Keani Rawlins Fernandez

Pat Tamashiro

Gavin Pelekane Tamashiro

Daniel Pelekane Tamashiro

Charles Pelekane Jr.

Session #2 (1:30pm)

Dulcie Pitcher

John Pitcher

Eric Korpi

Cora Schnackenberg

‘Ualapu‘e Kuleana Homestead Settlement Project
Alternatives Analysis – Alternative Lots in Comparison to ‘Ualapu‘e

Metrics	Favorable / Better than ‘Ualapu‘e
	Unfavorable / Worse than ‘Ualapu‘e
	Baseline

		Site Name	Original ‘Ualapu‘e Scope	‘Ualapu‘e Lower Lots	Ka‘amola	Pua‘ahala	Kapuaoko‘olau	Mākolēlau 1	Mākolēlau 2	Kamehameha V Hwy Lots
Analysis Criteria (Ranked)	Higher Importance	1. Location on East End	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
		2. Size of Parcel	412 acres	24.847 acres	437.619 acres	672.341 acres	606.432 acres	506.561 acres	229.676 acres	26.946 acres
		3. Number of Potential Lots	30 lots	9 lots	120 lots*	82 lots*	113 lots*	52 lots*	72 lots*	13 lots*
		4. Slope	25% - 30%+	0% - 17%	12.5% - 30%+	25% - 30%+	13% - 30%	12% - 30%+	0% - 22%	3% -9%
		5. Landowner	DHHL	DHHL	Bishop Estate	State of Hawai‘i	Private Landowner	State of Hawai‘i	Private Landowner	Private Landowner (Multiple)
		6. Known Historic & Cultural Resources	Yes	Yes	No Known Resources at this time	Yes	No Known Resources at this time	No Known Resources at this time	Yes (Adjacent)	Yes
		7. Water Availability	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	None	None	None	None
		8. LSB Rating (Soils)	LSB D & E	Unclassified	LSB D & E	LSB C, D & E	LSB D & E	LSB E	LSB E	LSB E
		9. Rainfall	15” – 65”	15” – 35”	15” - 65”	15” – 140”	10” – 35”	10” – 50”	15” – 25”	10” – 15”
	Lower Importance	10. Proximity to Utility Infrastructure	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Partial	Partial	Partial	Partial
		11. Flood Hazard/Drainage	Flooding (Portion)	Flooding (Portion)	Flooding (Portion, less than ‘Ualapu‘e)	Flooding (Portion)	Kapua-o-Koolau Gulch, Flooding (Portion)	Panahaha Gulch, Flooding (Portion)	Puama Gulch, Flooding, Wave Action	Flooding (Portion)
		12. Erosion Hazard	High	Moderate	High	High	Moderate to High	Moderate to High	Moderate to High	Moderate
		13. Wildfire Risk	High to Extreme	High	High to Extreme	High to Extreme	High to Extreme	Moderate to High	High to Extreme	Moderate to High
		14. Tsunami Risk	Yes (Portion)	Yes (Portion)	None	None	None	None	Yes (Portion)	Yes (Portion)
		15. Sea Level Rise	None	None	None	None	None	None	Yes (Portion)	Yes (Portion)

