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Date: 8/9/2020 3:48 PM
Subject: Maui Planning Commission review of draft West Maui CPAC Testimony

Honorable Members of the County of Maui Planning Commission

My name is Greg Owens and I am a lot owner at 25 Haniu Street in Launiupoko. I have written well over a dozen letters to the CPAC, Planning Department and others voicing my concerns regarding the CPAC deliberations being held here in West Maui. I have noted numerous concerns in my emails that I believe need to be addressed and I am including them below for your evaluation. A recent article in the Maui News titled "Commission, CPAC chairs face conflict allegations" written by Melissa Tanji, Staff Writer brings up some serious issues regarding the impartiality of the CPAC commissioners themselves. I would like for you to review the following in the hopes you address my concerns. In evaluating the current CPAC proposals governing the West Maui Community, I have several objections to be raised during your evaluations.

1. The current lack of water: Directly across the street from me there is a large sign erected by the Launiupoko Irrigation Co. (LIC) that clearly shows us to be in the "Red" or "LEVEL 4" zone severely restricting water usage. We are now being asked to cut back on water usage even further due to the extreme lack of water in the area. Since this sign was erected back in March 2018, it has been in the "Red" or "LEVEL 4" zone daily except for the rare occasion that CPAC or Maui County Planning Commission meetings are held when it magically turns to "Green" or "LEVEL 1." Dozens of my emails to Planning, CPAC and others attest to this fact. With West Maui currently in severe drought, combined with the removal of waters from streams in the area due to the CWRM ruling over 2 years ago, there is insufficient water resources in the area to accommodate additional growth, hence my pointing the water issue out to you now.
2. When I met with then Mayor Alan Arakawa and his Planning Director William Spence years ago to discuss the relocation of the Lahaina Bypass, I was assured that "Green Belts" and flood mitigation along the Lahaina Bypass would be required to mitigate the potential for fire or flood. After attending numerous CPAC meetings, I couldn't help but notice that said "Green Belts" and flood mitigation was conspicuously absent from any plans. It was disconcerting to say the least. Mayor Arakawa indicated the Bypass would include measures to mitigate the potential for flooding. When flooding occurred at the intersection of the Lahaina Bypass and Kai Hele Ku Street within a month's opening of the Lahaina Bypass, it was obvious that this didn't occur.
3. "Policy 2.4.2." as written into the draft West Maui CPAC is an affront to the very mission of CPAC in protecting "open space for future generations" here in West Maui. If the West Maui CPAC is truly about preserving "open space," then shouldn't efforts be focused upon increasing density in already existing subdivisions rather than approving future subdivisions upon undeveloped lands? "Policy 2.4.2." serves to benefit large developers in the area to the exclusion of and at the expense of smaller landowners like myself. As written, it makes it virtually impossible to further develop agricultural lands in already designated West Maui subdivisions. It is interesting to note that, although never passed by the CPAC during meetings or deliberations, that this "Policy" has somehow made its way into the draft legislation of CPAC. Perhaps Melissa Tanji was right in her article in stating, "Developments (like mine) not designated in the plan can face major hurdles, and land desired by the community for open space and protection will fare better if in the plan." It's also interesting how CPAC commission member Nishiki describes Lawrence Carnicelli's participation in CPAC as "inappropriate" by saying, "He is a paid executive of one of the largest landowners in West Maui and is planning commissioner chairman." Perhaps it's no wonder that "Policy 2.4.2." prohibits the "conversion of agricultural lands outside of the Maui Island Plan's growth boundaries and limit conversion of agricultural lands within the growth boundaries to urban and rural designations in West Maui." It's as though a major developer had written it themselves. Perhaps, they did! "Policy 2.4.2." should be removed from the plan to avoid any appearance of impropriety.
4. When considering the draft West Maui CPAC Plan, the Planning Commission should also consider removing the "sliding-scale" restrictions placed upon mine and other agricultural properties in the West Maui Area. Although well intentioned to stop unbridled growth, this legislation severely reduced the supply of available lands in the area for development and I believe this is the single biggest driver in creating the extreme affordable housing crisis in the area. Supply and demand suggests with little supply prices soar, which they have to the delight of large developers. Perhaps it's time to change that by allowing others such as myself to get into the mix and bring more properties to market thus making more homes available and reducing the overall cost of housing. Mahalo for your consideration,
Greg Owens