

LU Committee

From: Robert Albert <rmalbert@me.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 15, 2017 1:41 PM
To: LU Committee; Mike White; Robert Carroll; Stacy S. Crivello; Alike A. Atay; Elle Cochran; Donald S. Guzman; Kelly King; Riki Hokama; Yukilei Sugimura
Subject: 355 Haiku Road Conditional Use Permit
Attachments: 355 Conditional Use Request.pdf

Aloha County Council Member and Land Use Commissioners.

Please see attached testimony on 355 Haiku Road Conditional Use Permit.

Sincerely,

Robert Albert

TO: The Honorable Mike White, Robert Carroll, Stacy Crivello, Alike Atay, Elle Cochran, Don Guzman, Kelly T. King, Riki Hokama, Yuki Lei Sugimura, Land Use Committee members

FROM: Robert Albert, citizen

SUBJECT: CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT FOR 355 HAIKU ROAD LLC (HAIKU) (LU-18)

I submitting this testimony in opposition to the Conditional Use Permit for 355 Haiku Road LLC (355). I am a property owner in the Haiku Hill subdivision. Having purchased the land in 1992, I have been a resident since 1993, the second resident on Umi Place. My wife and I purchased the property after saving for our 'dream home' - to raise a family and live out our days. As a native Hawaiian, it pained me to purchase land 'owned' by A&B Properties. But my wife and I had a dream and I figured - you know what... the property is now in the hands of a family who will who love and cherish it. Our home is simple, small, but loving and comfortable.

We have lived on the property for over 23 years. We have raised two children there. We have nurtured the aina and I have grown to deeply love *Pu'u o Umi* as if it were my birthplace. I understand in my heart and soul - my na 'au - that my kupuna, my ancestors and those who lived on this aina long before me have accepted our ohana.

The majority of my neighbors (we are on the Haleakala side of "Haiku Hill") have also been here for 20+ years. They too purchased their property as a loving home, with plans to stay 'forever'. Like our ancestors.

We have all seen too much change on Maui and in also Haiku. Around 2000, some folks began seeing Haiku as a *financial* investment. For many folks, there is nothing wrong with this practice. Speculation is one avenue to success in our society. For others however, it is not pono. Because of these speculative practices, many of our local families can no longer afford to buy a home. So they rent and fall behind...

During the past ten year throughout Haiku, many property owners have added 'ohana' cottages to their homes - not for family but to rent. Later still, some of these ohana units were transitioned into high priced, cash only, under the table Bed & Breakfasts. And, in its infinite wisdom, county lawmakers actually *rewarded* this illegal practice by granting many of those same B&B's legal status. And thus a rural neighborhood has become a mini-resort district.

When one rewards greed, it continues to grow. And it is again creeping into our beloved Haiku. 355 owners have asked our lawmakers to consider giving way to more progress and more tourism - in a place that is known for its beauty and serenity. I humbly ask each one of you to decline this request. In its entirety. If families living in Haiku wanted to live in a resort town, they would have moved to Kihei, Makena, Lahaina or Honolulu. I support tourism. It creates good paying jobs

that provide for the local people. But hotels and resorts need to stay where they are. Encroaching into the Haiku district will only bring more commercialism, more traffic and more crime. And it will cost our government and our country residents much more than we will ever receive in return. 355 is the Pandora's box we dare not open. Not for a year, not for a second. 355 owners will suck the land dry and sell it off to the highest bidder. 355 does not care about Maui. It is a financial investment. But not all investments are profitable. It is a risk, a gamble. Feeling as if they are losing this fight, some of my neighbors are saying "compromise". I say no way. Pau. Enough already.

If this request is granted, I predict it will be a paradigm shift for Haiku. Then you folks will be like too many leaders of our generation - "too flexible, too tolerant of too many wrongs and without judgment at all". These prophetic words are from our Beloved Queen, Liliuokalani. If you cannot respect the wishes of the people of Haiku, who say *deny*, then please consider respecting the words of our Queen. Pau. Enough already.

In closing, I fear that if this Conditional Use Permit is granted, 355 will certainly return to request a *re-zoning* of the property from agriculture to resort. Then we might as well close the coffin on Haiku. Please deny.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on this request.