

BF Committee

From: Gary Elster <crazy2kite@gmail.com> on behalf of Gary Elster <gse@hawaii.rr.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 27, 2016 11:21 AM
To: BF Committee
Subject: Peahi Property Resolution 16-147

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Peahi property- resolution 16-147 and the Open Space Fund

Budget and Finance Committee

Dear Chairman Riki Hokama and Members of the, Budget and Finance Committee

Now that the pressure of the Budget session is over, I am writing to request that the committee investigate and prioritize/update the prospective properties for open space acquisition. As to the Peahi property I would request that the committee investigate whether it is in the public interest to acquire the entire property or whether there are more cost effective alternatives such as acquiring only the cultural and scenic portions along with the cliff side Peahi viewing area and not acquiring the former pineapple fields.

I, along with most folks, want to preserve access to the Jaws viewing area. That limited goal could likely be accomplished by negotiating for the acquisition of an ingress/egress easement and a parcel for public parking. As compared to the some \$10 million dollar acquisition cost of the entire parcel. perhaps that area might even be acquired at minimal cost to the public as preserving public access to a long used ingress/egress most likely would be required of a private property owner and quite probably not require the public to purchase the entire parcel to preserve that access. See for example the discussion http://kahea.org/press-room/press-clips/copy_of_papaikou-access-statement-of-facts.

Some suggested factors to be considered in any investigation:

- Are there other properties that should equally be considered for our open space dollars? Looked at another way, once the matter of preserving access to Peahi viewing is resolved is the entire parcel the best use of our open space dollars or might only portions of that parcel or are there other properties that are equally deserving of being acquired as open space and could a portion of the funds set aside for acquisition of the entire Peahi property be used to acquire another property that is equally deserving of open space acquisition?
- Has the County investigated the cost and is it prepared to spend the substantial funds necessary to improve the marginal access to the Peahi viewing area and /or maintain the property ie remove, abandoned vehicles, trash, etc ? Is it prepared to improve access? Are there any liability concerns in acquiring the property?

- Unlike the situation existing in 2015 when the proposal to acquire the 267 acres was considered there are now 36,000 acres of available ag land so that any suggestion that Peahi with its sloping former pineapple fields would be a desirable property for agriculture is certainly debatable.

I am asking you to thoroughly investigate whether spending \$10 million to acquire the entire property, without any improvement of access is the highest and best use of our tax dollars. I am asking you to inventory and rank other possible uses of our limited open space dollars and then make the decision as to which is the best use of our limited open space dollars.

Aloha,

Gary Elster