

PSLU Committee

From: County Clerk
Sent: Wednesday, February 13, 2019 7:59 AM
To: PSLU Committee
Subject: FW: Testimony on the West Maui Community Plan Process

From: deakos@hawaii.edu <deakos@hawaii.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, February 13, 2019 1:42 AM
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Cc: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>; Jennifer Maydan <Jennifer.Maydan@co.maui.hi.us>
Subject: Testimony on the West Maui Community Plan Process

Dear Honorable Maui County Councilmembers,

My name is Mark Deakos and I've been a resident of West Maui for 22 years. I was hoping to testify in person but unfortunately a work deadline has come up preventing my commute from Napili so I will share my thoughts here.

I have been participating in the "We Are West Maui" Community Plan outreach process and want to commend the Maui County Planning staff in their efforts to reach all community members and provide them with an opportunity to share their manao in the community plan process. County planners have been courteous, patient, professional and very approachable throughout every step of the process and I commend them on their long hours put into this process. That being said, I have two major concerns I wish to share about this process:

1. 201H - Despite this entire community outreach and GPAC process, under the 201H program, a developer can circumvent all that effort with a simple County Council exemption to the community plan. 201H projects should not be allowed to circumvent this entire process, especially when the project proposes 50% gentlemen estates and affordable housing that is no longer affordable after 10 years. We know that West Maui land owners are already preparing to push several 201H projects from Olowalu to Lahaina. If these are allowed to move forward, it seems pointless to put in all the effort of a community plan.
2. Living Buildings – During my 22 years on Maui, I have seen the depletion of Maui County's fish populations, the degradation of its coral reefs, loss natural shorelines and beaches, loss of native forests, an increase in brown water events, fires and traffic, and a decrease in stream flow and aquifer recharge. Maui also wins the prize for worst water quality in the State. Given that we are borrowing these resources from our children and grandchildren, it seems shameful that we will be passing on to them severely damaged goods. Perhaps it is time to take responsibility for our mistakes and plan not for "low impact" but instead with a holistic, systems approach with regenerative homes and cities. I wish the county were educating the public during these outreach sessions about designing communities that restore native habitat, recharge aquifers, restore stream flow and biodiversity, treat wastewater, while addressing social needs (providing food and energy for neighboring communities). We need to incorporate living buildings (<https://living-future.org/lbc/basics/>) and sustainable city (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainable_city) thinking into community planning to address social, environmental and economic needs.

Growth at any cost is no longer a sustainable growth plan. Many other countries and communities have figured this out long ago and have been taking steps to ensure long-term prosperity for their communities. We can learn from their successes and build on the many successes we already have here on Maui.

Thank you for your kokua,

Mark Deakos
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