

PSLU Committee

From: Colin McCormick <colinmcc@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, September 08, 2020 10:23 PM
To: PSLU Committee
Subject: Testimony - Re: agenda item; (PSLU-65) W670 Compliance Review
Attachments: PSLU-65 testimony for Colin McCormick.pdf

Aloha Committee Chair Paltin and Committee members,
Please see my attached testimony regarding agenda item; (PSLU-65) W670 Compliance Review

Thanks
Colin McCormick

Aloha Committee Chair Paltin and Committee members,

I am a biologist and science teacher who grew up in Maui Meadows next door to Wailea 670. 15 years ago I helped Dr. Lee Altenberg document rare native dryland forest plants on the Wailea 670 site. I have been invited to cultural accesses on the site many times over the last 15 years and have seen the land and its flora and fauna under many conditions.

I testified many times during the rezoning hearings in 2006, 2007 and 2008 for protection of the native Wiliwili dryland forest on the Wailea 670 southern 200 acres. During those times, the consultants hired by the landowners tried to tell the Council that there wasn't really a valuable ecosystem on the land and that building a golf course and hundreds of condos and view houses wouldn't really destroy anything.

That was not true. That's why the Council voted for condition 27 to in the Wailea 670 Conditions of zoning to require a "preservation/mitigation plan," for an area of up to 130 acres. Condition 27 also requires the landowners to "establish in perpetuity a Conservation Easement (the "Easement"), entitled "Native Plant Preservation Area", for the conservation of native Hawaiian plants and significant cultural sites in Kihei-Makena Project District 9.

The Preservation area is also required to have a "Conservation Plan" for the easement for the cultural sites and native plants that's approved by DLNR, USGS and the US Fish and Wildlife service. The Conservation Plan is supposed to include the management and maintenance of the Easement.

For a number of years, Wailea 670 has told the public and the Maui Planning Commission that they have developed a Habitat Conservation Plan with supervision from US Fish & Wildlife to protect and restore endangered plants and animals on the Wailea 670 land and have committed funds to the effort. The Wailea 670 report you have says that a Habitat Conservation Plan has been draft up and has been under review by USFWS, but the community has heard that Wailea 670 has had a NEW botanical survey done that didn't find any endangered species still live on the land. This would mean that the project no longer needs to promise to take care of all the rare native plants and animals and USFWS would not provide any oversight. This would seem to go against all that Dr. Altenberg and other citizens and the Council tried to accomplish with Condition 27- to truly protect a unique piece of Maui.

Knowing the Wailea 670 lands there as I do, I would deeply question the conclusion that there are no longer any endangered species present because some new survey didn't see any. My experience is that during some seasons or years, the endangered Awikiwiki plant (like many other native species), is very visible and in others, is completely dormant, but it returns.

I would urge this committee not to accept only one source of information on the Wailea 670 compliance. Please hold another meeting where the topic is on the agenda and citizens who have spent hundreds of hours on the land in every season are given time to share their knowledge of what is or isn't there and how the Conditions of zoning are being followed.

Thanks for listening!

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