

AH Committee

From: Trisha Higashi <tlyh808@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, September 16, 2019 8:51 AM
To: AH Committee
Subject: Makila Farms Supporter- Community Member Response to Opposition

Dear Council Members.

THE TIME IN NOW for housing. I write to you again as a women who is born and raised on Maui. My father is a retired principal with almost 40 years of service and my mother a retired teacher with 35 years of service to the state of Hawaii. I also chose to work for the DOE State of Hawaii as a speech pathologist. I received my education from the University of Hawaii and have dedicated over 10 years of faithful service to the children of Hawaii. Cumulatively my parents and I have dedicated almost a century of faithful service.

We are in a housing crisis. Not just myself and as a single parent with a toddler in preschool who cannot afford a home with the median price of \$650,000 but also my aging parents. My mother who has a large mortgage on an even smaller teacher salary now that she is retired is facing paying out of pocket for medical care with a failing mind, dementia. Hale Makua is \$12,000 a month out of pocket for 24 hour supervision and care. How can I support her when I have to work and cannot even afford to rent with the median price of a one bedroom being \$1,500 and preschool \$800? Even with my masters degree and working full-time for the state this would be over half of my income.

I want to be sure you understand this is the first project I have ever seen that will offer me a one or two bedroom home. This means I can actually afford a home. Every other development I have seen sells only 3-4 bedroom homes which I cannot afford.

I want to be sure you aware that the few who are opposing are sending in multiple letters and are not those who support our local community.

Ms. P. Denise Lacosta – A member of the Maui planning commission. I first want to point out that during her testimony in early September before the Council members she informed us all in the room that day that she was a member of the Maui county planning department staff. This is clearly a conflict of interest. Ms. P. Denise went against this policy and not only did she testify but she also wrote a letter in opposition. This is very unethical as she also lives in the Makila neighborhood. In her letter she talks about the following:

1. the community plan. The community plan is vey clear that it supports AFFORDABLE housing. This project stays within the current community plan designation of AGRICULTURE and provides the much needed affordable housing the community plan calls for.
2. P. Denise goes on and on about the lack of water. The project has no lack of water and the data was clearly presented by the Makila team. This project draws water from the aquifer that has capacity of 7 MGD and is using less than 1 MGD.
3. Fire danger, departments – The fire department, and almost every other county department took the stand and said this project has the access it needs and that they had very little or no concerns and she proceeded to send more letters in just days later....
4. Wastewater – This is the first developer to use all ATU units instead of septic to protect our land on an entire subdivision. Denise sites waste water as a concern. Again an incorrect assessment.

Lastly, I question her ethics and believe her judgement to be clouded as she has a personal interest being that the development is in her back yard. The working local people of Maui need a place to live. We all need security and if

everyone has the attitude NOT in my backyard where does that put us? How are we supporting each other as a community?

The next letter in opposition I would like to address would be from Steve Strombeck – This person and his wife live directly across the street from the development. He has an **active short term rental permit**. He has hired an attorney to write a letter and oppose this project because he does not want to see his property values decline. I googled this man and he is a very self-serving person from Eureka CA, who has violations on his CA properties that go on and on from the county and state concerning water, rental violations from tenants and many other negative community minded problems. He cares about himself and not the people who need housing in Hawaii or California.

The last letter of opposition I would like to address was from Gordon Firestein. He has sent in two letters. He lives in Launiupoko in a very nice home and is on the fire wise committee. He already has a nice home and clearly an invested and active protected interest in his own living. Why would he block others from having a place to live? Even after the fire department said Makila Farms would make the area safer he sent in a letter the next day saying he disputed the project because of fire and access. If he is working with the subdivision and they have boulders in the way, why doesn't he write a letter and have them removed right away or work to have these wonderful accesses fixed (like the gravel one) instead of asking you to deny housing? This person and several of the other neighbors clearly care only about themselves.

Most of these same neighbors who are in opposition have illegal residences on their property, turning barns into rentals and charging 3-4 thousand dollars per month in rent for them.

Makila Farms will be a positive development for the community. The teachers and therapists that you NEED to keep the community running will have an affordable place to live on the West side. Alleviate traffic for the commuting people who work in Kaanapali in the tourism industry. Finally, Mr. Brown is setting up a Halau resource garden in Makila Farms to bring hundreds of Halau students to the area to garden and perpetuate the Hawaiian culture. We need to support developers like this who actually care about community and want to help our children. And lets not forget, Makila Farms is selling homes in the 50-80% range and keeping them affordable for 30 years. No one has ever offered to do this before.

Please, please I urge you do vote yes for this project.....THE TIME IS NOW!

Trisha Higashi