

GET Committee

From: Lela Iselin <lelaaiselin@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 30, 2019 9:24 AM
To: GET Committee
Subject: Testimony for water department

Dear Committee,

I would like to submit this written testimony about my experience with the water department. I hope it will highlight how difficult it has been for us to grasp decisions that have been made by the water department in the past. We trust that the new people who will be directing and taking care this department will take care of matters like mine in a fair and just way.

Let me describe the nature of our project. It is a seven lot subdivision project which I am doing mainly for my family, my two sons, both born on Maui, and myself.

We received our preliminary subdivision approval almost 20 years ago. About two years after our preliminary subdivision approval, we received a letter from David Craddick informing us that the issue of our five water metres was eminent. It didn't happen and 18 more years passed. However three years ago we finally were issued our water metres. Much had changed in the county in the 20 years. Our approved preliminary subdivision plans had to be resubmitted as some things had to be changed to meet new regulations. And once again we had to wait weeks and weeks for responses from the very busy, understaffed water department.

Our property borders along lower Kula road for 3500 feet. The portion of this county road, was neglected and felt dilapidated for many years. In fact it had become a bad problem area. The road itself was in bad shape as it had not been resurfaced for almost 60 years. People dropped old washing machines and appliances on the side of the road and into our gulch on almost a weekly bases and had done so for countless years. Young people would come to the street to do drugs. Over the years we found countless needles on the side of the street. Nonetheless we decided to build an Ohana on our property seven years ago. My son started to live there. It was a bit eery at first, but slowly the area cleaned up some. Thanks to us, the police, whom we called upon often to patrol the street and the county removing newly dropped appliances and garbage on a regular bases.

Last year, the department of public works finally decided to resurface the road. We were told that once the road was resurfaced, we could not put in a trench for a waterline for one year. We immediately started coordinating our project with the director of public works, David Goode. He was most helpful and supportive. The department of public works was kind enough to postpone the resurfacing of the road for a few months, so the resurfacing of the road was going to start after the 6" waterline and the seven fire hydrants were installed.

We knew that the water department had given countless extensions to people who were not meeting their two year and two six month's extension deadline. In order to not hold up the resurfacing of the road for too long, we made an informed decision to invest the close to 700'000 dollars to put in our water line, before having certainty that we would get a short extension. We were aware that our chance of completing the line by our deadline November 30 could possibly be

certain that under our circumstances the water department was certainly going to grant us a few weeks of extension, as such and much longer extensions had been given countless times before, even to projects that had not even started construction.

The moment we had the construction plans approved by the water department and the county we started digging. Unfortunately, we did hit a lot of rock in some areas, but we were extremely close to being done on time. On our deadline date November 30th, about 95 to 98% of the waterline was complete.

As you may remember, 2018 was also a year of a number of hurricane scares. These hurricane warnings alone delayed us by a few weeks.

You may understand why it is completely baffling to us, how under the circumstances mentioned above, the water department could decline us a few week's extension. After all we had waited for almost twenty years for the issue of our meters.

I am proud of the contribution our project is making to our neighbourhood. We now have a much improved waterline and seven fire hydrants along this portion of Lower Kula road, and soon will have a beautifully resurfaced road. I'm certain that this will erase and change the reality of the uncared for, dangerous place this area used to be.

I'm trusting that telling you about my situation highlights how difficult and devastating it has been to work with the water department from a citizen's standpoint and trust that the right decisions will be made now to change this for Maui and it's people.

Kind regards in the aloha,

Manuela Iselin