

GET Committee

From: John Rapacz <John.Rapacz@co.maui.hi.us>
Sent: Monday, February 4, 2019 12:23 PM
To: GET Committee
Subject: GET 1(8) Confirmation of Planning Director

I am writing in response to James Aarona's January 17, 2019 email regarding the confirmation of Planning Director Michele McLean.

I agree with James' identification of one the long-standing issues in the Planning Department: maintaining consistent administration of outdated planning regulations. I disagree with his conclusion that Ms. McLean is responsible for that issue, or that it will not change under her leadership. It already has changed under Michele's leadership as deputy and director, more than it has under any prior Director.

We have a "Continuous Update Process" by which staff report on portions of the zoning code and other regulations that are difficult to understand and administer, or that produce an undesirable result. Michele has taken the lead on prioritizing this list, proposing code and rule amendments, drafting language and coordinating staff meetings and input on the needed improvements. Michele has pursued the proposed amendments, through the Planning Commissions and Council. Most recently, the Council has adopted the final results of this work: the new parking code; new accessory dwelling provisions; new lot-width definition; new sign code provisions; etc.

She has also led the process for: amendments to administrative rules for agricultural zoning; pending overhauls of the Maui Planning Commission's SMA rules and Shoreline rules; and the audit of our zoning code (Title 19), which will be followed soon by a contract with consultants to update/replace the zoning code.

So, while I agree that it is a major challenge to administer consistently our often outdated codes and rules, James has not been with the Department long enough to see how much worse it used to be, and how much progress Michele has made. Rather than continuing to create more "band-aid" policy memos, Michele has taken on the laborious process of changing the law and rules, and has persisted until the process has been completed. In my opinion, Michele is uniquely qualified to direct these improvements to the planning regulations, and to direct the Planning Department. I hope you allow her to continue.

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