

AH Committee

From: Maria Linz <maria.bacalso@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, June 18, 2019 11:02 AM
To: AH Committee
Subject: Oppose Polanui Gardens and Makila Rural East developments in West Maui

Aloha Council Members,
Mahalo for taking the time to read this entire testimony.

My name is Maria Linz, and I am a resident of Lahaina. I am writing in OPPOSITION to the proposed developments Polanui Gardens and Makila Rural East which are being proposed for the Launiupoko area in West Maui. The developers attempt to fast track this process and changing zoning from Agricultural to Urban is completely irresponsible.

While our community is in desperate need of affordable housing, it has to be done right and in the right areas. This proposed area is zoned agricultural, and does not have the infrastructure or resources to support 200+ new homes that these new developments would add. This area is not and cannot be connected to county sewer or water. The water here comes from Kaua'ula stream and the current residents of launiupoko are often already under water restrictions because there isn't enough water available to support the homes that already exist. Plus last year the CWRM board reinstated streamflow standards which lowers the amount of water that can be taken from the stream because they have illegally diverting the water and cutting off flow to the local families who have lived below the developers diversion for generations. Since there are no sewer connections they would have to add 200+ new septic tanks which have increasing environmental and legal concerns associated with them. All of this land the developers bought has clouded title and over the past couple years multiple lawsuits have been won by the local families who actually hold the title to the land. There is only one road in and out of the area, and this is the most fire prone area on the west side of Maui. Had the wind been blowing the opposite direction during last years fires this whole area would have been wiped out, and with out the proper roads and infrastructure the risk of being trapped and unable to escape the fire is extremely real. Last year during the fires the fire hydrants in the area did not even work because as stated above there isn't enough water to serve the area. There will be more fires in the area, in fact there was a small fire there tonight. The Polanui gardens area as it stands right now is only allowed to subdivide and build 3 properties on it. But by using a 201H affordable housing loophole they are able to build and then sell 66 properties turning what would have been perhaps a 6 million dollar profit into a 10's of millions dollar profit. Don't think they are building this development because they want to help the community and the need for affordable housing. They are doing it in this way to maximize their profit, without care for the fact that the area cannot support this amount of housing. This same developer also owns the entire wainee area above the aquatic center and below the bypass which can be connected to county services and can have the infrastructure needed to support it, but they don't want to build there because they cannot sell that area for the same high end prices they can get in Launiupoko. They could build this exact development on that land which is less than a mile away and actually could support it, but they won't make as much money if they do it there. If they actually were trying to solve the housing crisis, they would also make these homes affordable in perpetuity, instead of only 10 years at which point they will turn into market price homes. They are dangling the carrot of affordable housing hoping that by doing so those of us who are desperate to buy an affordable home will let all the other issues slide and fast track this development, while they take their millions of dollars and run leaving the people who bought those homes with the aftermath. This same area was disapproved for development just last year, Under the previous name Makila Kai, for all these above reasons. The developer came back with nearly the same development plan but doubling the amount of affordable houses on it thinking now magically all the problems will go away because everyone will be blinded by the affordable housing.

I myself inquired about Makila Kai when I first heard about it because I too am desperate to find an affordable home. However after doing more research I was able to take off my rose colored glasses of desperation and step back and realize that not every proposed affordable housing development should be built. We absolutely

need affordable housing, but it must be done right and in the right places. It would be irresponsible to allow it to happen here.

Please oppose these developments and do not allow them to fast track the process, and continue working towards affordable housing in West Maui in an area that would be more appropriate for it.

Mahalo for your time and consideration!

Warmest Aloha,
Maria Linz
Resident of Lahaina
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