

## AH Committee

---

**From:** County Clerk  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 22, 2020 12:51 PM  
**To:** AH Committee  
**Subject:** FW: I oppose Lihau'ula workforce housing project in Olowalu.  
**Attachments:** DB\_Please oppose fast tracking Lihau'ula workforce housing project in Olowalu (AH-1(7)).docx

---

**From:** Donna Brown <donnabro@hawaii.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 22, 2020 11:46 AM  
**To:** AH Committee <AH.Committee@mauicounty.us>; County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>  
**Cc:** Tamara A. Paltin <Tamara.Paltin@mauicounty.us>  
**Subject:** I oppose Lihau'ula workforce housing project in Olowalu.

Dear Maui County Council Members,  
Attached is is my testimony for the hearing on the Lihau'ula workforce housing project) (AH-1(7))  
Aloha, Donna

Donna Brown, Coordinator  
Marine Option Program  
Unit diving coordinator  
University of Hawai'i Maui College  
310 Ka'ahumanu Ave. Kahului, HI 96732  
(808) 984-3203 [donnabro@hawaii.edu](mailto:donnabro@hawaii.edu)

Donna Brown  
82 S. Lauhoe Place  
Lahaina HI 96761  
[donnabro@hawaii.edu](mailto:donnabro@hawaii.edu)

Testimony for Lihau'ula workforce housing project) (AH-1(7))

I **oppose** this projects for many reasons:

This development is in the wrong place. The developers have brought project after project to the table and each one was turned down for many reasons due to environmental and cultural impacts.

First, it goes **against the West Maui Community Plan**. An over-arching theme of the West Maui Plan is - No urban sprawl. Keep future development within walking-biking distance to schools, shopping and places of work. Develop walking and biking paths to connect neighborhoods. There is nothing close to this area, so people would have to drive for everything.

**There is no sewage system to this area**, so more septic tanks which will leach into the ground water. If I were to pick only one issue as the most important, it would be the sewage issue with its drastic effect on our reefs and ocean resources. The reef at Olowalu has been shown by the DLNR and numerous researchers to be some of the healthiest reefs on Maui. This is not by chance. It is because of a lack of mauka development.

Our **reefs are dying** and cannot take more sediment and sewage nutrients. I have been studying Maui's reefs for almost 30 years and they are in trouble and very close to the tipping point where they will not survive more stress. (Please feel free to contact me if you want more information on this.) Olowalu reef is right below this proposed development. It is also a regular resting place for endangered Hawaiian monk seals. We can't afford to lose this place to polluted water. If this development goes through, the added effluent load into the water lens and ocean could be extremely detrimental to the reef and near shore ocean environment.

The developers are asking for many exemptions to county rules and codes. Rules, regulations and codes are made for good reasons. What is the point of having regulations and a community plan when they not followed? In addition, they are purposely proposing to develop just under the amount of acreage that would trigger an EIS. You can be confident that if they get this development through, they will propose more and eventually it will be the size of the town that has been turned down previously. This is known as segmentation and is illegal.

This development will impact **traffic** to and from the west side. There is no walking access to anything and no public transportation to this area.

We need to **preserve ag lands** and open space on West Maui. The mayor has recently stated that we should look at developing more ag to help diversify our economy. Also, the open views are a big part of what attracts visitors.

All Lahaina public schools are already beyond capacity.

**Extreme fire hazard area-** There have been numerous fires in this area.

These workforce housing units could be sold at market value in 10 years. We all agree that we need more workforce housing but it needs to be done right and remain affordable in the long term. In fact, the majority of these homes will not be affordable for families where each member is working only one job. I work full time as a scientist and teacher and I would not be able to afford any of these homes. Also, there is no guarantee that the workforce housing will be sold to long time Maui residents. We all want our keiki to be able to afford to stay on Maui. What we really need are affordable rentals for people working in the visitor and service industries.

**Water shortage-** The Hawaii Commission on Water Resources Management has recently directed returning water to streams.

The developers knew they were buying ag land with no guarantee they could turn it into development. If they really wanted to help people of Maui as they claim, they could sell the land for ag at a price that people could afford to farm. This land should remain in ag. Today more than ever, we see that we need to diversify our economy and farming will be an important step in being a self sufficient community.

The impact of this project will change West Maui forever. Therefore it should be thought out carefully and **not** fast-tracked.

Mahalo, Donna Brown