

Sample Testimony
From: An Organization
To: A Legislative Body
Regarding: Proposed Change in Legislation



To: The Honorable Ernest Y. Martin, Chair
City Council, City and County of Honolulu

From: Kiersten Faulkner
Executive Director, Historic Hawai'i Foundation

Hearing Date: Wednesday, September 12, 2012
2:00 p.m.
530 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii

Subject: **Bill 52 (2012) Hale'iwa Zone Change – 2011/Z-3**
TMK: 6-6-004: 013. 015-019, 028, 032 and a Portion of 027

On behalf of Historic Hawai'i Foundation (HHF), I am writing with comments on the proposal for a change in zoning from AG-2 General Agricultural District and R-5 Residential District to the B-1 Neighborhood Business District and Country District for property located in historic Hale'iwa Town.

HHF does not oppose the rezoning; however, we request that the City require certain conditions in order to protect historic properties, preserve character-defining features, and promote the historic sense of place present in Hale'iwa Town.

In particular, HHF is concerned that the proposed widening of Kamehameha Highway will bring vehicular traffic unreasonably close to the historic storefronts, and that the addition of standard curb, gutter, sidewalks, shoulders, turning and travel lanes will undermine the rural character of the area. HHF supports a waiver of these requirements and the use of a non-standard cross-section that protects pedestrian and bicycle travel, slows vehicular traffic, encourages sustainable practices for storm water management, and retains the rural character of the historic block.

In addition, HHF has received certain informal commitments from the property owner related to preserving historic structures, designing building modifications and new construction to be consistent with state and national historic preservation standards, and mitigation for adverse effects to historic properties. HHF would like these commitments to be formalized as conditions of the development approvals.

The proposed project is located in the Hale'iwa Special District and proposes major modifications/additions and demolition to historic structures visible from the main highway and those listed in the Revised Ordinance of Honolulu. The project is being carried out by the landholder for the stated purpose of revitalizing existing business in Hale'iwa Town in order to increase long-term lease rent revenue and to target the local resident market that is currently not using the North Shore trade area. The landholder proposes to consolidate and subdivide TMK parcels, and to rezone the land from Residential District (R-5) to Neighborhood Business District (B-1), and from General Agricultural District (AG-2) to Country District.

The project's stated goal is to improve pedestrian connectivity and preserve the rural main street character of historic Hale'iwa Town. The proposal calls for preserving three selected historic structures; demolishing two additional historic structures; relocating a house; demolishing a building that is over 50 years but which has been found ineligible

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for the state register of historic places; and constructing new commercial buildings, parking area, and related infrastructure. It would expand the existing retail frontage and total Gross Leasable Area from 14,000 to 30,000 square feet, and add a 112-stall parking area and on-site bus loading area in the rear of the property.

HHF recognizes that the applicant has conducted an Architectural Inventory Survey (AIS) to determine the historic significance, integrity and eligibility for designation on the Hawai'i Register of Historic Places of any and all properties proposed to be affected by the project, with emphasis on those over 50 years old, or that will attain the age of 50 years within the planning horizon. The study was performed by the Heritage Center at University of Hawai'i at Mānoa School of Architecture. HHF was given an overview of the findings and concurred with the conclusion that of the seven properties that would be affected by the project, six are eligible for the State Register of Historic Places. Of these, three are proposed to be preserved in place, one is proposed for relocation on site, and two are proposed for demolition.

Of the two being proposed for demolition, HHF also recommended that the landholder assess feasibility for repair of structural damage at the deteriorated historic properties and their suitability for retention and reuse. HHF was given an overview of the findings, which stated that the structural integrity is failing and retention and reuse is infeasible. Although HHF is disappointed by this fact, we concur with the landholder's proposed mitigation to document the design, construction and architectural history using methods and documentation as determined by the State Historic Preservation Division.

HHF supports the use of compatible infill within the historic district, and recommended that the landholder use a qualified preservation architect with experience rehabilitating historic buildings to provide an expert analysis of ways in which the historic properties could be retained and integrated into the overall development plan. The landholder has presented conceptual designs that reflect compatible massing, scale, materials, orientation and architectural detailing that is in keeping with the historic district's character-defining features.

Therefore, HHF requests that following be made conditions of the rezoning and/or subsequent development approvals:

1. Improvements to the public right of way (e.g. pedestrian and traffic facilities, storm water management, landscaping) be designed and implemented to avoid impacts to historic properties, retain rural character, promote pedestrian safety, and implement sustainable practices, even if such a design requires a waiver of standard street cross-sections.
2. Preservation in place of historic properties (i.e. Matsumoto Store, two Yoshida Buildings) be required.
3. Infill development be designed for compatibility in scale, mass, form, location, materials and design with the adjacent and surrounding historic properties.
4. Additional mitigation be implemented for demolition of historic structures as determined with the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD). Mitigation discussed with SHPD includes: careful deconstruction of buildings to allow for documentation of construction methods; Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) level documentation of the deconstruction; and displays of the historic information and photographs within the new commercial redevelopment. We feel that these are appropriate mitigation commitments.

Since 1974, Historic Hawai'i Foundation has been a statewide leader for historic preservation. HHF's 850 members and numerous additional supporters work to preserve Hawaii's unique architectural and cultural heritage and believe that historic preservation is an important element in the present and future quality of life, economic viability and environmental sustainability of the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.