

Meeting Summary - Lāna`i CPAC Mtg. 5

February 13, 2013 / 6:00 – 9:00 PM

Lanai Senior Center, 309 Seventh St. Lāna`i City, Lāna`i, HI 96763

Attending: Community Plan Advisory Committee

Chris Costales

Deborah de la Cruz

Joe Felipe

Butch Gima

Caron Green

Matt Mano

Ron McOmber

Stan Ruidas

Alberta DeJetley

Ernest Magaoay

County of Maui – Planning Department

Planning

Kathleen Kern, Long-Range Planning

Mary Jorgensen, Long-Range

Doug Miller, Long-Range Planning

Absent:

Jeffrey Baltero

Jarrod Barfield

Charles Kaukeano

Public:

Pat Riley, Clay Richardson, John Delature, John Stubbart, Bryan Plunkett, David Green, Eleanor Beranha, Albert Morita, Debbie and Kawehi Ryder, Sue Murray, Denise Fernandez, and Jay Penniman

A. CALL TO ORDER

Butch called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Butch noted that the CPAC had quorum and provided an overview of the meeting agenda.

B. PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Pat Riley stated that the Draft Lāna`i Community Plan will not be adopted until 2015/2016 and that applications submitted prior to adoption will still be considered under the 1998 Plan. *Pat* stated that the Community Plan map is the key standard, whereas, the Plan language is secondary. Any proposed project not permitted by a specific land use designation needs a Community Plan amendment. He also stated that he understood that the current Plan's land use designations are not zoning designations. He recommended that zoning be adopted simultaneously with adoption of the new Community Plan's land use map. He said that the new map must conform to the community vision.

Butch asked the Planning Department to respond to *Pat's* comments. *Kathleen* said that the 1998 Plan map represents the previous vision for the future. She said that *Pat* is correct about the current map designations being land use and not zoning. She said that the County's current planners use the current Plan map to help make a determination when reviewing applications. *Pat* responded that this needs to be reconciled.

Pat requested adding an issue regarding Special Management Areas (SMA). He suggested language that could be used in the Plan to amend SMA boundaries to be 500 feet and to recommend all areas be appropriately zoned. *Pat* pointed out sections of the current plan language that he liked and felt should be retained. He recommended keeping all language from the current plan in the new plan unless removing it accomplishes something. Finally, *Pat* recommended including language in the new Plan to continue the Lāna`i Water Advisory Committee (LWAC).

Kawehi Ryder provided testimony regarding the grant funded environmental restoration work his non-profit organization is conducting to clear obstructions from Maunalei Gulch to minimize runoff erosion due to blockages from kiawe and holly berry debris. They cut the wood debris and place it on the banks to prevent in-stream damming and reduce the rise of stream flood waters. To date, they have finished five miles of cutting out all the blockages from the mountain top to the combination gate in Maunalei. He said that he would also like to install catchment basins up at the top, where it is hard rock, as it would reduce at least 20% of the stormwater runoff. He noted that this should be done on every gully if possible.

Ron stated that the clearing of kiawe trees near the resort should be done in a more conscious manner by retaining some and replanting to replace lost vegetation.

Caron asked if, as the CPAC looks through the Plan, would Kawehi consider himself a partner and educator? Kawehi responded yes and explained that he teaches dozens of kids from the juvenile youth center. He had a program for troubled boys that took them into the forest to learn the traditional Hawaiian practices.

Deborah thanked Kawehi and his wife for what they are doing. Mathew commended Kawehi, stating that the ocean should be sustainable and that overland flooding is causing silt buildup that disrupts foot travel and kills the reefs. Christine thanked Kawehi and said that she has been out to his work sites. She said she just came from a planning seminar that taught restoration begins at the top. She said that it will take generations to do the clean up.

Kawehi said that working hand in hand with the school would be good. He said that Lānaʻi Hale should be a model because access is so easy. He noted that there is a 1400 foot long dry stack wall by Maunalei, a complete land division that they left behind. He recommended that the school look at integrating cultural practices into environmental education.

C. PRESENTATIONS

1. Environment and Natural Resources Overview - Mary Jorgensen

Mary showed a map of the extent of vegetation cover on Lānaʻi before human occupation to illustrate the change that has occurred. She explained the different types of services that the ecosystem (plants, animals, insects and habitats) provide for us that are often taken for granted, such as water recharge, water and air filtration, climate and erosion regulation and many other services. These ecosystem services support, provide (food, fiber, medicines), and regulate but also enrich our lives through cultural services of aesthetic values, recreation and spiritual experience in nature.

She explained how ecosystems overlap each other and are dependent on each other – that the condition of forest health determines the health of coral. When ecosystems become out-of-balance, such as large populations of deer and other feral ungulates, the ecosystem can be stressed to the point of species decline and extinction. Lowland native plants have been replaced by invasive and non-native species, 70 plant species have disappeared, many others are endangered. Erosion increases and declines in water quality and quantity rise. Currently, two Main Hawaiian Island coral species are proposed for listing as threatened. She showed the relationship between coral spawning in West Maui and how it travels via the currents to Molokai

and the north and east coast of Lānaʻi . Ecosystems are very complex and the factors limiting species health and recovery are numerous.

Mary explained how the sustainability of the environment is important to the sustainability of the economy and society and that in recognition of this there are numerous federal, state and local laws in place for environmental protection. Recent efforts have focused on watershed protection and restoration tools that include planning, conservation, buffers, stormwater management and erosion control, pollution control and community stewardship. Community stewardship is active in Lānaʻi hale restoration and includes adult and youth education and involvement programs. There are also many new methods of designing the built environment to improve the health of the natural environment and contribute to human well-being.

Mary concluded with noting the difficult choices that the CPAC and the community will need to answer. Do they choose forest recovery or ungulates, farming or deer? Is it possible to fence the hunting areas or will farms need to be fenced?

Debbie asked if sediment discharge is prohibited and Mary responded yes. Ron reiterated that the cutting of the trees by the hotel near the ocean should include replanting. Alberta said that there was beautiful pasture lands before that are now covered with invasive kiawe trees that prevent anything from growing under them and draw up too much water – if there are remaining kiawe trees at Manele they need to replant with something else. Mary said that she saw a presentation showing that native Koa trees transpire very little water from their outside layer versus the invasive strawberry guava that transpires huge quantities of water from its central stalk – like a giant straw pulling water up into the atmosphere.

Albert Morita, who is a professional game manager, provided his perspective on the draft plan. He said that he is sad to see the island now covered with invasive species of plants and animals, but he is glad to see that one of the environmental chapter's objectives directly addresses the problem. He said that we must protect the tiny dryland forest and try to restore it to its pre-contact state.

Albert said that the history of game management has been inconsistent and sometimes contrary. He said that Munro regretted the introduction of deer and worked to eradicate them, but he also introduced the axis deer from Japan. Recently they hunted only 100 animals a year but in the past they harvested 1,000 animals a year. Goats were eradicated by 1984, but now deer occupy nearly every corner of the island. Last year, the State allowed 1,200 animals harvested in one season. Albert noted that the game was healthy when he was growing up but now he is afraid that we are going backwards. If you don't control the game, plans will not work. He said he believes in the philosophy of looking back seven generations and forward seven generations and said that he liked the draft plan – a good outline.

Albert said that he believes the island needs hunters, the people need to eat the meat, and new methods of handling game meat need to be found. He feels that fencing is expensive, but worthwhile.

Alberta asked what about the turkeys? He said that they eat plants and spread the seeds. He said that a comprehensive game control study needs to be done. He said that he doesn't know what the base game population is, but he can extrapolate that if 1,000 deer are harvested annually, the base population is likely around 4,000 animals.

Ron said that there should be a policy at DLNR to have a youth program. They also need to make the hunters take the ewes first and don't let them throw away the meat. Caron asked what a healthy number of game would be. Albert replied that it would be based upon the condition of the land. If there is no damage to the land, no car accidents, no game in urban and agricultural areas then the number of game would be healthy.

2. Presentation on Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project - Jay Penniman, UHMC and Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project

Jay Penniman gave his presentation on the Maui Nui Seabird Recovery Project, a non-profit working with the Department of Land and Natural Resources (DLNR). Their mission is to restore the Hale the way it used to be – a lowland mesic forest. He discussed Ecosystem Services including supporting, provisioning, regulating, and cultural services. He spoke of forest values including water recharge, water quality, climate control, biodiversity, cultural, aesthetic, recreation, and commercial.

Jay said that the aquifer system needs to be replenished, but a solid canopy, such as the Cook pines, prevents fog drip because it pushes the fog up and over. Fog drip needs spaces in the forest canopy to allow the fog to move between the trees to capture more water. The understory ground cover is like a giant sponge - need to clear invasive plants to the bare root, in order to restore the native fern understory. Jay recommended beginning restoration in the good areas first. Process is to inject small amounts of pesticide into the kiawe trees.

Caron asked Jay how it is possible to get enough plants to do reforestation. He said that they are rebuilding the plant nursery. They are trying to use native plants. Ron asked why they don't maintain the road. Jay replied that they need to do more of that.

Alberta said that she heard that Jay's group will eradicate barn owls and egrets. Jay said that he has not been told that, but that egrets are known to be a nuisance. He said that they are trying to control the barn owls in the area, but it is unlikely that they will be eradicated. Christine said that it scares her when someone fixes a road without taking care of the edges. She said that we need to consider permaculture – need to look at the water flow before grading the road.

D. MAP EXERCISE – NATURAL RESOURCES AND TRAILS

The CPAC was invited to break into groups around three map stations: two natural resource stations and one trail map station to gather information on natural resources, places the community values, and types and uses of trails or dirt roads. Participants identified areas and provided comments guided by the following questions:

- What are the most valued natural places on the island – those that must be protected?
- What areas and most important direction(s) to expand restoration? Any new areas – why and where?
- Sediment: Which gulches produce the most sediment?
 - What floodways produce the most sediment?
 - What coastal areas are most effected by sediment?
- Water Quality – Non-point pollution sources?
 - Drainage from commercial areas, housing areas, industrial areas, golf courses?

- Areas of native plant communities below 2000 feet? Dryland vegetation or mesic (moderate moisture)?
- Any springs, wet areas, wetlands or ponding?
- Best coastal fishing areas?
- Particularly sensitive lands – why?
- Type of trail use: recreation, subsistence, recreation, cultural, agricultural road?
- Trail used for access for hunting or fishing?
- What is the frequency of trail use: high – daily; moderate - weekly; low – once per month; rarely – twice per year; none – abandoned.

E. CHAPTER 3 DISCUSSION

Issues and Strategies: Mary asked if there is anything to add to this section. Caron asked to add work with company, state, county, non-profits to restore the forest ecosystem. Alberta said that one of the biggest problems is the transport of plants between islands. She said that if the state is not willing to fund inspections, we are dead in the water. Mary suggested a campaign to send this message to the state. Alberta responded that the Agricultural Industry has been asking the state to fund inspections for years. Caron said that she would like to see the strategies that are grouped broken into individual strategies.

Mary said that Strategy 3 uses best management practices. Alberta felt that section was excessively wordy and needed simple language on game management. Butch said he would like to see more direct connections to watershed and water quality, and water degradation. The 40% decrease in the water forecast is predicated on fog drip – language needs to show the direct relationship. He said that you can develop good issues, strategies, policies and actions, but it does no good if there is no funding of implementation. He said there is a need for the county to hire someone to do the implementation.

Policies: Caron asked what does “green infrastructure systems” mean and Mary explained that it is using natural systems to do what pipes and concrete infrastructure has done in the past. Alberta asked if there is a need to partner with new owner to implement these policies? Ron asked if the intent is to go all over the island to implement green systems. Mary said that it should target new development. Ron mentioned that the Manele golf course is built right on the ocean and that watering drains right into the ocean. He recommended regulation restricting building on cliffs.

Caron said that Policy #5 prohibiting the importation of alien species may not be possible. She felt it should say control rather than prohibit. Debbie said that before the state was very strict about bringing in plants, and now landscape companies bring them in all the time. Can we educate Expeditions to help enforce the law? Ron said that truckloads of plants come in on barges - need Young Brothers to inspect and enforce. Alberta said that there are thousands of good plants that have been introduced and we need to stop recommending only native plants, rather, we should recommend plants that have been successfully introduced.

Caron asked for the definition of “floating preserves”. Mary said that they are coastal preserve areas that are not fixed in one place and are adjusted with the health of the species. Ron added that regarding Policy #6, the Marine Life Conservation District has certain regulations from the state and the Park Council will meet on February 21st. The company wants to have long boards and paddle canoes on the beach. He said there is a need for community input.

Actions: Butch asked if there is a way to tie the actions to the Policies? Caron said that Action 3.02 should just say “Restoration of both wet and dryland forests” and add the State as a partner. Caron also said that Action 3.03 should say “Reduce sediment and other pollution sources in surface water run-off and coastal waters.” Christine asked for her group and the Watershed partnership be added to partners for 3.06. Mary said that we would appreciate help in understanding who all the different non-profit partners are. It was noted that the watershed partnership is inactive at this point and that reestablishing it needs to be an action. Butch recommended mentioning that there are no regulatory agency offices on the island in the executive summary.

F. PUBLIC TESTIMONY

John Ornellas said that the Department of Water Supply (DWS) should be removed from the County Agency column in the Action item list as they want nothing to do with our water.

G. FINAL COMMENTS

Christine asked if the sentence in Action 3.05 “Use system of former roads or trails as firebreaks” was the reason for the trail map. Mary replied in part, because some dirt roads can be enhanced to serve as fire breaks.

H. NEXT MEETING DATE: February 14, 2013 at 6:00 PM at the Lānaʻi Senior Center

Butch asked if anyone would not be attending tomorrow’s meeting. He noted that they would have quorum.

Action: Adjourn meeting.
Motion: Ron
Second: Caron
Vote: All ayes. Motion carries.

Meeting adjourned at 9 P.M.