

**2011  
HAWAI‘I COUNTY  
REDISTRICTING COMMISSION**

**DISTRICT 5 – PUNA  
PUBLIC HEARING**

Tuesday, October 11, 2011, 6:00 p.m.

Pāhoa Neighborhood Facility  
15-2710 Kauhale Road,  
Pāhoa, HI 96778

**CALL TO ORDER:**

CHR. SIRACUSA: Good evening everybody. Thank you for taking the time to attend this public hearing of the Hawai‘i County Redistricting Commission for the district of Puna, District 5. The Commission consists of nine volunteer members, one from each Council district. I will now ask them to state their name and the district they represent, so you know who you are talking to.

**ATTENDANCE:**

Present:	Mr. Joseph Carvalho, Commissioner Mr. Patrick Kahawaiola’a, Commissioner Mr. Dru Mamo Kanuha, Commissioner Mr. Jeffrey Melrose, Commissioner Mr. Mike Middlesworth, Commissioner Ms. René Siracusa, Chair Ms. Linda Ugalde, Commissioner
Absent:	Mr. Craig “Bo” Kahui, Commissioner Ms. Valerie Poindexter, Commissioner
Also Present:	Kyle Chang, Deputy Corporation Counsel Liz Bonnell, Committees Staff Stephanie Tsunezumi, Committees Staff Maile David, Legislative Research Branch Karen Eoff, Secretary

CHR. SIRACUSA: We have each shared our district's concerns with each other, so that we are all on the same page. Based on that, plus your input, we will decide the geographic boundaries for each of the nine council districts based upon census data as well as the criteria found in the Hawai'i County Charter and Legislation passed by the Hawai'i County Council. Please note that we are only concerned here with County Council districts, and not State or Federal legislative districts.

Copies of the Hawai'i County Charter and the Laws relating to the Redistricting Commission are available for your review at the sign in table. Also on the table are the close-up insets so that you can see the actual boundary lines. The commission is first and foremost governed by the principal of one person one vote. We are required by law to adopt boundaries which make each of the districts approximately similar in resident population. Both case law and the laws applicable to the Redistricting Commission allow for a deviation of a maximum of 4.99% above or below the ideal resident population of 20,462 residents per council district. This is after extraction of non-resident military, dependants, and students. Therefore the maximum number of residents in any district can be no more than 21,483 and the minimum number of residents is no less than 19,441.

The Commission has reviewed approximately 40 suggested maps showing various configurations of the district boundaries. We have received and reviewed maps submitted by members of the public, staff at the elections office, and those produced at Commission meetings. The maps that remain suggest possible district configurations. Some of the maps contain deviations in resident population which are not acceptable because they are either slightly too high or too low, but the Commission decided to keep these maps for review because it appears that it will not be difficult to remedy the population imbalances. The Commission rejected many maps due to major population imbalances but did keep others which addressed many of the issues required to be considered by the law, such as road connectivity and communities of interest. Some of these maps are more 'friendly' to certain districts than to others. None of them are cast in stone. We may very well end up creating hybrids, combining the best of several.

We welcome your comments about the redistricting process and your suggestions about the adoption of district boundaries. We have 6 maps showing possible configurations. You are free to comment on any or all of these maps or make any other comments you wish relative to redistricting. If you wish to see boundary details not shown in these maps, they are on the table. You will be asked to keep your comments to no more than 5 minutes. The green light on the timer will change to amber to alert you to the upcoming beep. The commissioners may or may not have questions to clarify your testimony at this public hearing, but please do not expect us to answer your questions or engage in dialogue, as our job today is strictly to listen to your mana'o. If you have not done so already and wish to offer testimony to the Commission please fill out one of the sheets at the sign in table. Mahalo for coming out to learn about this process and to share your thoughts. I will now call the meeting officially to order and call up the first testifier. The first testifier is Leilani Bronson, representing herself.

## **STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

CHR. SIRACUSA: Please speak close to the microphone.

LEILANI BRONSON

(At this time Leilani Bronson came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MS. BRONSON: Thank you. My name is Leilani Bronson, and I would like to say a personal aloha to my friend, Jeffrey Melrose. It has been 45 years, I'm sure. Thank you for this time, madam Chair. I only have one point, having reviewed very quickly some of the plans that have come forward. I would like to make a very strong and emphatic statement that Hawaiian Paradise Park Subdivision, which you know is one of the oldest, substandard and second largest in the nation, should remain intact under all circumstances. We are comprised of 8,835 lots; we cover about twelve square miles. We have about five miles of road frontage on the State Highway. Thank you.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Our next testifier is James Weatherford, also representing himself.

JAMES WEATHERFORD

(At this time James Weatherford came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MR. WEATHERFORD: Thank you very much. My testimony is very parallel to my written testimony. I want to share a few things that I learned in my own experience using the online software. Just three points, if you will; One, is I do believe a logical district can be created around each of the two major commercial districts on the island, downtown Hilo and Kailua-Kona Village, the most densely populated places. Two, there are logical council district boundaries to be created at the Hilo/Hāmākua boundary, the Puna/Ka'ū boundary, and the Kona/Kohala boundary, as one of the commissioners early on in the process suggested these original judicial districts offer a logical course. The third point is the entirety of Ka'ū and the entirety of South Kona combined together do make a sufficient and logical council district. Now, regarding my own community, the entirety of Hawaiian Paradise Park must be kept together in a single council district. It is well known that the population of Puna has grown. According to the 2010 census, Hawaiian Paradise Park has led that growth with approximately two-thirds of the 8,800 lots existing, only two-thirds of those 8,800 have been built on. This is 25% of the Puna population and this subdivision is poised to continue to grow more rapidly than the rest of them.

Many of the maps have left off two smaller parts of Hawaiian Paradise Park. They have left off several places on the Hilo side of Shower Drive, and on the mauka side of Highway 130. At least one map, originally, cut the community in half. Census blocks are configured such that the entirety of Hawaiian Paradise Park can be kept together in a single council district. Here is the real point; dividing any part of Hawaiian Paradise Park into separate council districts, in my opinion, violates Chapter 36 of the Hawai'i County Code, which requires keeping together a community of common interest. Hawaiian Paradise Park is an incorporated community, having exact boundaries and there are owner/members who share common interests that include road maintenance, neighborhood security, common ownership of real property and indeed, bond indebtedness. The fringes of communities with less exact boundaries allow flexibility to modify

council district boundaries in a manner that cannot be done in Hawaiian Paradise Park. The creation of Hawaiian Paradise Park, like other private subdivisions, was done with the approval of the Hawai'i County government. The subdivisions were created and we came; and we continue to come. With build-out proceeding, comes the reality of development of our island and subdivision creation. Rather than ignore reality, this Commission must get on with what is required to ensure that sound representation is part of that reality. The entirety of Hawaiian Paradise Park must be kept together. I thank all of you for your service to our community, and especially genuine openness and receptivity of public input, which is very evident all along. Thank you very much.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Thank you, James.

MR. MELROSE: James, can you come to the mic again? I just have a question for you. You are well aware of the limitations of the numbers that we are dealing with. One of the requirements that we have as a condition is that we need to find a way to anticipate growth. I think Puna grew by 44% over the last ten years. Conceptually, we would be trying to keep the number of people in the two Puna districts--which obviously there will be--at a minimum; that number variation on the low side, so you can grow into that growth. Yes, under-populate them. I understand the implications of that including larger areas in that population. Can you just give me a quick thought on that issue of under-populating regions in Puna, and the relative importance of that to keeping exact community boundaries?

MR. WEATHERFORD: The equity issue regards under-population. I think there is another issue of keeping together cohesive representation. In this particular case, on the margins, on the edges, I think keeping together communities and creating that certain cohesive representation so Puna has two full council districts is really where the priorities are. I do not think we will be depriving people of any serious representation otherwise.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Thank you. Our next testifier is Judy Sumter, representing Hawaiian Paradise Park.

JUDY SUMTER

(At this time Judy Sumpter came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MS. SUMTER: I would like to thank you for your time and for letting us speak to you. Again, I am Judy Sumpter, and I'm on the board at HPP. I did bring a letter from one of the residents gave. It is very short, and I would like to read it; it is representative of the feelings of that community. "As homeowners living in Hawaiian Paradise Park, we would like to voice our complete disapproval of splitting our subdivision into different Council Districts. We understand that the Hawai'i County Redistricting Commission is in the final stages of mapping the new County Council Districts. Several of these maps split HPP to varying degrees. One of them, Plan\_40, splits our community right down the middle. The mere thought of which would have a profound effect on the cohesiveness of the residents of HPP and on our political representation. This is our home, our community, and we do not want HPP to become a political dividing line that dilutes our community. Please do not allow the Commission to split us up simply for the

sake of the ambitions of the County politicians. Keep all of HPP, all 8,000 lots as one community and in one Council District.” This was submitted to us by Jean and Paul Stoner, who are residents in the Park.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Thank you. Our next testifier is June Conant.

JUNE CONANT

(At this time June Conant came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MS. CONANT: Thank you. Thanks to all of you. I volunteer a lot in town; I've been on the BIA for awhile and I do appreciate all of you who volunteer your time to do this. The main reason I am here tonight, I am the Vice President of HPPOA, the homeowners association of HPP. We have three major issues going on right now that if you split our Park it is going to make it very, very difficult for us to work with them. We have a \$20 million dollar bond, outstanding, that we took out to try to pave more roads in the Park and we are all committed to pay that back. Number two, we are working very furiously and hopefully with the Department of Transportation regarding the widening of Highway 130. We have a situation with some common ownership of the roads and part of the park, and we are trying to work with them to try to figure out how we are going to proceed. We also have an issue with some of our residents have raised regarding the dust on the unpaved roads, and working very closely with the Attorney General's office and the Department of Health on that issue. These are issues that are not going to go away tomorrow, and if we are split it is going to make it that much harder for us to react. So, regardless of what plan is adopted, we have to keep HPP together. I really like Plan\_27, the one that the Friends of Puna have put out. This is something that I think we can live with and deal with. But I really would appreciate your concern for keeping us together. Thank you so much.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Thank you. Next is Zendo Kern.

ZENDO KERN

(At this time Zendo Kern came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MR. KERN: Thank you. Aloha Commissioners, I am Zendo Kern, I live in Hawaiian Acres. I was born and raised on this island. I have lived most of my life here on the Puna side. I went to Pāhoā School, I went to Montessori School, I went to Mālamalama School, I went to Kea'au School and surf Poho'iki; very deep here in Puna. The task before you as Commissioners is paramount, and affects our districts for the next ten years, as you all know. Much of what I am going to say is nothing new; it's just another voice, another opinion. To me, the most important thing to consider is the community continuity; continuity before population numbers. I know the Charter mandates plus or minus 4.99% for each of the nine districts. That is a tight margin, especially when community continuity is on the line. There is also a psychological issue at hand when making our voting districts. If a person lives in a district, the person representing them should also live in that same district. To have a representative who lives outside of that district does not work for positive moral in the community and a positive stance when it comes to voting. I have talked to people about that, and that is an issue. People who are in a district---

CHR. SIRACUSA: It's illegal.

MR. KERN: We have Hilo representatives that are representing Puna. My case in point is that currently Puna is represented by three different council members, and only one of which actually lives here in Puna. That doesn't work. I have reviewed the various maps and I'm endorsing Plan\_10. I know it needs work, but this is just strictly for the Puna district. I will only be commenting on those areas because that is where I live and that is where I vote. So, growing up in Puna, there has always been Puna Mauka and Puna Makai, and I think Plan\_10 best depicts that. It was simple. We come into Kea'au, that is like ground zero. Highway 130 pretty much to the makai side, all the way down to Pāhoa, all the down to Kalapana, was Puna Makai. Everything mauka of Highway 130, all the up to Volcano, that is Puna Mauka. And somehow, we need to keep that together. That is the key; two districts, two council people, representing those in the best way possible. I urge you, Commissioners, to push that deviation. To comment on Jeff's comment earlier, I would rather see our community represented and push those numbers to the high point rather than to leave it low and split up our community for the growth. We are all going to be living in the same community, and it's about us being together, working together, and talking together; I deal with that now. We have that arm that reached into Puna district, District 3, and I have friends in Orchidland, that don't want to go. I talk to my neighbors down in HPP, and Hawaiian Acres, and I'm not even in the same district; it is disheartening. So, that is the key, to me. So I humbly ask each one of you to do your best to keep our communities together. I know it is no small task, but thank you.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Commissioner Melrose has a question.

MR. MELROSE: Thanks, Zendo, for coming to testify. There are two obvious choices in the split of the two seats. When you say mauka and makai, I've always assumed that Kalapana was in Puna Makai. As this map is done, I think maybe a portion of it is, but then things on the mauka side of the road are not; as opposed to running it along the old Kea'au ahupua'a boundary from which the lands above it are the subdivisions of Hawaiian Acres and the like, and then the ones below it, including Pāhoa, kind of what I would have thought was lower. So, I'm just interested in being educated about that distinction because it is one that kind of hits the break as one of the key ones.

MR. KERN: To me, growing up here, everything past Pāhoa is Puna Makai. It kind of drops off at Hawaiian Acres; all up through there is Puna Mauka, to me. There is no exact science to that, it is just how I feel growing up here and how I was raised to see it. I believe there might be a little bit of room to work with some of those numbers. Is that Plan\_10 you are looking at?

MR. MELROSE: Yes, and Plan\_10 splits, what I would call, east/west, as opposed to mauka/makai or north/south. That is why I was interested in your choice of Plan\_10 because there are portions of that subdivision on the mauka side of the road going down to Kalapana that have houses and seem to now be connected up across.

MR. KERN: I would make that district line jump right on the other side of those houses and keep those in the community as best as possible. That is why I say I don't agree with the map in its entirety, I think that framework of it, splitting the council districts between Puna Makai and Puna

Mauka in that way, but trying to keep those communities together. That is where I say community cohesion, community continuity, should precede everything.

MS. UGALDE: Where is your upper boundary for Puna Mauka?

MR. KERN: That is a tricky one. I don't necessarily agree with that map either. I believe that Volcano should be included in there. I absolutely do. This is where that mandate forces us to split our communities. Thank you.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Thank you. Moving right along, Joyce Folena.

JOYCE FOLENA

(At this time Joyce Folena came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MS. FOLENA: Thank you madam Chairman, for the opportunity to speak. And thank you to all of the people who volunteered, or were appointed; I'm not sure if you were appointed or volunteered, or a little mix of both, but thanks for your service. I am going to say this in strong language. The gerrymandering that went on ten years ago; do not ever let that happen again. Any funny little fingers poking into any districts are aborted before they begin. Thank you. Puna Mauka and Puna Makai; it's real interesting that I'm called to speak right after Zendo Kern because he is so articulate and he expressed my inner desires completely. I understand what you said, Mr. Melrose; what you had to said about undercounting to look forward to growth, but you know, you can do that up to a point. I am going to ask you, please, whatever map you chose, and however you juggle around the figures and the numbers, I'm not going to get into that, I'm not even up to that. Please keep Puna Makai and Puna Mauka intact, and I understand HPP's concerns. So if you can juggle HPP's concerns, and keep Puna Makai and Puna Mauka intact, in two districts, I think people would be the happiest. And I hope you do keep Volcano in Puna. If it is necessary to give it to the next district, so be it; but I hope we retain it. Thank you.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Someone asked the meaning of mauka and makai. They are Hawaiian words; and mauka means towards the mountains and makai means towards the sea. The next testifier is Greg Smith.

GREG SMITH

(At this time Greg Smith came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MR. SMITH: Thank you for being here and for your great work on this Commission. We have had a great deal of heartburn over the last ten years over what happened to Puna and our representatives. I'm sure this is not going to happen again. So far, what I have briefly studied, Map\_10 is very much what I would like to see, more or less. I think that we should, because of the rapid growth; I think we could undervalue or overvalue the two districts that should come here. I think the best thing is that we keep, basically, the moku of Puna intact as much as possible because we are going to grow easily into three districts within the next ten years. We are still outstripping every other community in the state on a regular basis. I damn sure don't want to see Hilo trying to prop up Jimmy Arakaki's district, District 3. I'm sick of that gerrymandering. That

was unprecedented and I hope it never happens again. Anyways, so far Plan\_10 looks pretty good to me and I hope you consider it. Thank you so much.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Thank you, Greg. Our next testifier is Paul Campbell, representing Friends of Puna's future

PAUL CAMPBELL

(At this time Paul Campbell came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MR. CAMPBELL: Aloha kākou, and mahalo to all of you for serving. I've been on several commissions over the years and I know how demanding it can be and selfless service; so mahalo. I am Paul Campbell, I am the acting Vice-President at this time of Friends of Puna's Future, an advocacy group formed to advocate for Puna and the needs of Puna at the local, state and federal levels. As acting Vice-President, I would like to insert into the public record, which all of you should have a copy of, public testimony from Friends of Puna's Future, henceforth known as FOPF. As you may already be aware, Friends of Puna's Future has previously endorsed the idea expressed by the Commission that due to the rapid growth during the past ten years, Puna should be divided in such a way as to create two Council districts. We applaud all the efforts aimed at helping realize this goal, and that we are now dismayed by the plans that have been advanced by this Commission thus far, for continued consideration. In recent history, the issue of representation in Puna has not been one of having too few representatives; rather it is one of having had too many.

For the last ten years, Kea'au and Orchidland have been forced to share representatives from South Hilo. Residents from Volcano to Kurtistown have been forced to petition the representative from Ka'ū and the balance of Puna enjoyed a representative of its own. Three councilpersons, with two serving the majority of the constituency based outside of Puna and having distinctly different concerns from Puna, do not make up a viable Puna delegation. Puna deserves two Council representatives who will be giving their full attention to Puna. This means no more than two Council districts encompassing all of the towns and communities of Puna. These two districts must include the town of Kea'au, the town of Volcano, the town of Pāhoa, and the communities between these towns and south of them. None of the advancing plans have managed this basic requirement. All of these plans either send Volcano back to Ka'ū or put Kea'au in the South Hilo district. It has been expressed among the members of this Commission whether Puna should be divided mauka/makai rather than east/west. This approach makes it very difficult to maintain the internal roads criteria while avoiding any division of incorporated subdivisions. In fact, all of the plans that seem to be attempting this mauka/makai approach have settled upon a division of Hawaiian Paradise Park. We feel that the basic guideline of not dividing communities is of the utmost importance here. In fact, we feel that it has a greater urgency here in Puna where so much of the district has been subdivided, and where spending for road maintenance is enjoined by the courts, falls to the collective residents of each subdivision rather than to the County.

Many of these communities are actually non-profit corporations unto themselves, with a mandate from the courts to require residents to pay a mandatory road maintenance fee. We are currently working with Council Chairperson, Dominic Yagong, State Representative Faye Hanohano, State Senator Gil Kahele, and Mayor Billy Kenoi to alleviate this burden by developing a grant-in-aid

program which would allow these non-profits to submit proposals to their councilmember and receive County fuel tax revenue (FTR) allocated to that district for certain specified projects; namely roads. Dividing Hawaiian Paradise Park or any incorporated Puna Subdivision into two County districts would create problems for any grant-in-aid effort; either the divided non-profit would have to split two grant proposals to two different councilmembers, in order to fund any single project that happens to cross district boundaries. Or worse, if they were to choose one or the other councilmember, and then spend money received in the other district, the fuel tax allocation system itself would be compromised. This kind of legal confusion could make redress of the current private roads funding issue in Puna much more difficult for all parties involved.

Hawaiian Paradise Park, as well as all of the other Puna subdivisions, deserve better. Puna deserves better. We understand that a plan submitted as public testimony by Margaret Wille was accepted at the last meeting and worked on during that meeting by the full Commission. The result being Plan\_40, advanced by this Commission. Plan\_40; however excludes much of Volcano and divides Hawaiian Paradise Park, making it unacceptable to us. Friends of Puna's Future was also invited by Ms. Wille to use her plan as a template for District 9, and the result of that effort was the timely submission of Plan\_27. In preparation for this public hearing, FOPF began working on a revision of Plan\_27 which is now morphed to Plan\_40adj10-9, which is submitted now, and closely resembles our own submission. It has the blessing of Ms. Wille, and FOPF endorses this plan completely and we urge you to consider and adopt this plan. Mahalo.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Thank you. Just as a point of information. When the Commission was working on Plan\_40, we never finished working on it. It was the end of a very long day, and we decided that we would---We never got to Puna, and I was very frustrated by that, but we decided we would go back to it later. That is why Puna looks the way it does.

MR. MELROSE: I am trying to understand a couple of things in your testimony. One is that everything in Puna should be within two districts, which was a clear statement in the testimony. I understand that two districts in Puna makes sense; you have 45,000 plus residents, and it takes 20,000 to make a district. So easily, there are two. There are then 5,000 additional residents in the district that, if you split those equally between those two seats, you would have a 10% variance, which exceeds what we can do by law. So, my question is--we struggle, I see your stab at this---

MR. CAMPBELL: I would like to defer this question to one of our board members, Scott Stoddard, he formulated much of this testimony.

MR. MELROSE: Why don't you sign up, Scott, and come up later and I'll ask you that question.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Thank you. Next we have Patti Pinto, representing Friends of Puna's Future.

PATTI PINTO

(At this time Patti Pinto came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MS. PINTO: Hi, my name is Patti Pinto, and I thank you for your service; we are very grateful. I am also speaking in support of the revised Plan\_40, alternate. I am on the board of Friends of

Puna's Future, and I also serve on the board of the Fern Acres Community Association. I am supporting the revised Plan\_40, alternate. It is the only plan that supports the needs of Puna. As a resident of upper Puna, I want to acknowledge the work of our Councilwoman Brittany Smart, who has been well informed about and responsive to the needs of our community. But seriously, something as vast and diverse as our current District 6 is not of service to the constituents. The communities from Volcano to Kurtistown are part of Puna. Puna is a district unique in our State. It is mostly made up of subdivisions with their own community associations. Because of its affordable land and homes, and rural environment, Puna is the fastest growing residential community in our state. Its needs are unique. We have a Community Development Plan that we are working to fine tune and implement. We have outgrown the capacity of our County roads. And as to the state of our publicly accessed private roads, we need to be able to work with the County Council to achieve responsible and mutually acceptable solutions. Because it is likely that over the next ten years Puna will continue to grow at the highest rate in the State of Hawai'i, the Redistricting Plan that we adopt must also take into account the growing needs of the Puna district. We are not Hilo, we are not Ka'u, we are Puna. We ask that you give this revised plan careful study and consideration; it is the only plan that addresses the requirements of Puna; one, that we are divided into no more than two Council districts, that the Puna districts include the towns of Volcano, Kea'au, and Pāhoa, and that none of our subdivisions are divided. Mahalo.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Our next testifier is Elizabeth Weatherford.

ELIZABETH WEATHERFORD

(At this time Elizabeth Weatherford came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MS. WEATHERFORD: Aloha to everyone, and thank you very much for coming and for your responsiveness to the public. Puna has a number of incorporated subdivisions. I am Elizabeth Weatherford, I live in Hawaiian Paradise Park, and I am on the board there. I am speaking for myself, but I do know that it is absolutely critical to keep the subdivisions together because of their common interest, which includes ownership of assets and indebtedness. We have to be able to have a unified and an undiluted voice of representation; and that is essential. Also, I like what Friends of Puna's Future have been doing, saying that the three major Pāhoa towns need to be included, and that none of the subdivisions should be divided for the same reason. Our incorporation and our common indebtedness means that we need to be able to speak with one voice. Mauka of Highway 130 is part of Hawaiian Paradise Park, and also there are some lots that are currently in District 3 that need to be rejoined. Maps that do this I definitely favor. I like what is coming in the continued collaboration. Thank you very, very much.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Thank you, Elizabeth. Our next testifier is Nancy Kramer.

NANCY KRAMER

(At this time Nancy Kramer came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MS. KRAMER: I don't pretend to be as knowledgeable about all the maps as everyone is, but there is a real strong sense of those of us who are in Puna that that is where we live. I can't imagine the problem that you create by dividing any subdivision, even though my subdivision

wouldn't be one that would be divided. So I am here just to support the concept of keeping Puna together and making sure that subdivisions stay together.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Thank you, Nancy. Our next testifier is Pete Altomare.

PETE ALTOMARE

(At this time Pete Altomare came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MR. ALTOMARE: I thank the Commission for the majority of you being here tonight and for taking the time. Some of the people who have spoken before me have touched on my concerns and issues. There is not much more I can say to elaborate on it. I think that Plan\_27, or the modified Plan\_40 address many of the issues that face Puna. I think that subdivisions need to be kept together. There are too many issues that just completely destroy the community in the other plans that I have seen; they are not acceptable. One of the Commissioners raised the issue of adjusting representation for future growth. The simple answer to that would be, we have another census coming up, and we base the adjustment on that. That is why we do redistricting every ten years.

Basically, I want to make it clear that I think the original Friends of Puna's Future Plan\_27, or the adjusted Plan\_40 basically deal with most of the questions that the people in Puna have, certainly with mine. I would be comfortable with either one of them, or some minor modifications. Another issue was raised by a Commissioner; what do you do with the stray number of people. Well, as long as all of the subdivisions are kept together, and the boundaries remain within Puna District in maintaining the continuity and community of interest that exists, that is what matters to me. There will inevitably be some spill over problem. My problem has always been, in looking at past maps and so forth, particularly the redistricting of ten years ago, was the way that South Hilo intruded into Puna and essentially took away our ability to represent our interests on the County Council. I do not want to see that happen again. That is unacceptable, completely unacceptable. Another thing that is unacceptable is no division of any of the major subdivisions. Another issue that has to be addressed is the issue of what is currently in District 6. That has to come back into Puna. There are people from Volcano on down who work on the Puna Community Development Plan; they belong in Puna, and should be represented by a representative of Puna. Beyond that, I don't have a whole lot more to say, a lot of people have spoken with more detail, and that is about it. Thank you for your time.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Thank you, Pete. It is impossible to discuss all of the issues in five minutes, so if you do some, and he does some, and she does some; eventually, we will hear it all. Before I call the next testifier, I would like to introduce our late coming member; and he is allowed, because he drove all the way from Kona to be here with us tonight.

MR. KAHUI: I just want to thank all of you for being here; it is wonderful to see so many people out here talking about the process of redistricting. My name is Dru Mamo Kanuha, I represent District 7 in Kona. So, again, thank you and I'm sorry for being late.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Jon Olson, please come forward and testify.

JON OLSON

(At this time Jon Olsen came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MR. OLSON: Good evening, my name is Jon Olson, I am a resident of the Leilani Subdivision. I chaired the Puna Community Development Plan Committee. I wish I was here to say something or do something that was going to make your job easier; that is not so. What I think I would like you to go away with is first thing, the things that the district of Puna shares. All of the people in this room share one thing, and that is we live in a district that is dominated by one of the largest land frauds ever to be done in the United States of America, and we suffer the consequences of that. Having said that, to further muddy the water for you, we can be divided along the lines of large lot subdivisions and small lot subdivisions; meaning subdivisions of less than one acre that are on ag land, some as small as 8,050 square feet, if you can imagine agricultural designated lot of 8,050 square feet, and of course twenty-five to fifty acre lots. So the planning process is going to have to make some accommodation for this diversity because the visions that the people who own those lots have of those areas are distinctly different.

I have been involved with the Puna planning process since the late '80's. I served as the facilitator for the process that happened in the mid '90's. It was very clear then that the subdivisions were taking on distinct characteristics; the people who lived there, and how they saw their lifestyle, and the kinds of things that they saw themselves doing. So, I think that needs to be taken into account. I have heard some concern about the growth issue. Again, going back to the creation of this district as its land use pattern is now, keep in mind that there are roughly 40,000 lots out there and this is like nowhere else that I know of in the United States or in the islands. Let me paint you a picture. I get on the internet, I buy a lot, I call a builder who gets me a house package, who submits a building permit and I move over here. The County Council has no say, the State of Hawai'i has no say, the Federal Government has no say in my coming. So, anytime you talk about out into the future, the only thing I can tell you for sure is someday, 225,000 people are going to live in this district if no one divides another lot. So, if you want to worry about what is going to happen when you are done, you are going to have to get a much bigger crystal ball than I have, because that is truly in the wind. All we can deal with is what we have facing us now. It would be very helpful; it would be an absolute necessity, to have two full Council districts to support our issues. Ten years from now you are going to be arguing over whether we get four or five Council seats. That is irrespective of whatever else happens, because people will continue to come here. I wish you well, my job is done.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Thank you. Our next testifier just signed in as Mikey.

MIKEY GLENDON

(At this time Mikey Glendon came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MR. GLENDON: My name is Mikey Glendon. I wanted to sing one song, but I lost my voice. I am going to play one CD.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Shall we take a two minute break, do you want us to take a two minute break? Okay, what I'll do is I will call the next testifier and give you a chance to get that together. The next testifier is Ken McGilvary.

KEN McGILVRAY

(At this time Ken McGilvray came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MR. McGILVRAY: Thank you very much, Commissioners, for coming down here to Puna. Welcome to Puna, we are really a friendly place, believe it or not. I am here as an owner in Hawaiian Paradise Park subdivision. I also serve on the board of the subdivision, but I am not here representing the board, I am just here representing myself. I have looked at the maps on the web site and I realize that this is not your problem, but the web site maps are horrible, at best, to read because you cannot get any detail out of them; at least I can't. That is not your problem, that is a County problem, and hopefully, when we do this again in ten years, they will have some kind of better software so that we can download those and see what you guys are talking about. Of the plans that I have seen, the Friends of Puna have come out with a plan; it is Plan\_27, but it is a revised Plan\_27, it is an alternate to Plan\_40, alternate number two for Plan\_40. It does keep the three towns altogether into two districts; Kea'au, Pāhoā, and Volcano, and of course all of the subdivisions in between. It meets all of the requirements as far as the minimum and maximum on your council districts. We have a high of 21,136 and a low of 19,750. That is with four districts; Districts 2, 3, 4, and 5. So it meets all of your criteria. I urge you to certainly look at that. We do not want our subdivision divided in the middle. We will not stand for that, so please help us, this is your responsibility to do that.

I was sitting back here and I don't understand one of the councilor's questions to another presenter tonight. That was what about this under population. As I understand it here, the job of the Commission is to take a look at the number of people off of the census. That was last year. It is not to take a look at what the population is going to be in ten years. In ten years we are going to have another census. If we took that approach, then ten years ago, whoever was on the Commission would have appropriated the right districts, and we wouldn't be going through this today. Having said that, our crystal ball is not any clearer than anybody else's. We are a very fast growing district, we need your support. Please do not divide our subdivision. Thank you.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Thank you, Mikey, have you worked that out now? Are you ready?

MIKEY GLENDON

(At this time Mikey Glendon came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MR. GLENDON: My name is Mikey Glendon. I represent my family, basically the McComber 'Ohana, the Beamer 'Ohana, the Solomon 'Ohana, Kaupiko Kauli'io 'Ohana, Kamakawiwaole 'Ohana, Osorio 'Ohana, 'Ohana Apau Akia 'āina na kanaka maoli. O wau ke kai i keiki o ka 'āina, wale no, ke kai keiki. This is from an old soul.

*(Mikey plays CD music and sings)*

MR. GLENDON: That was an old soul, before the world went upside down. Everybody agrees the world is upside down. It is every single paper, every single day. Thanks to the new Mayor we wanted a new beginning. I would love to see my child's Oe Kela Kela Award on the front page, mentally bring us happiness. We will get out of the depression. These boundary lines you guys all talk about, what boundaries? We are on one moku puni. Moku puni o Hawai'i, oh excuse me, Moku puni o Keawe. We

are one community; Kanaka Maoli o Hawai‘i. The pilikia came when the people started believing that they were welcomed here. I was born here, and I’m talking from Hāloa, Papa and Wakea. I am from here. *(Mikey turned away from the microphone and faced the audience and sound inaudible)*

CHR. SIRACUSA: Excuse me, would you wrap it up, because your beeper went off, your time is up.

MR. GLENDON: I will build a park, I will pay for it all. I will supply all the materials.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Thank you. Our next testifier is M.J. Wallace.

M.J. WALLACE

(At this time M.J. Wallace came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MS. WALLACE: I didn’t plan to come here tonight, but I thank you for the opportunity. I didn’t plan to speak, but I have been moved to. Five years ago I moved here. I left behind an extended family. I feel this is my home. I feel welcome here most of the time and the heart of Puna is what welcomes me. That is why I am here. The technological world that I left also helped me get here, to be in this cohesive community which I love. I heard from many people the first few months I was here how important that was, to make that decision to live together. I have had to redefine how I deal with a lot of things as a result of living here. I like what I have heard so far about the cohesiveness of the subdivisions, the not looking at artificial boundaries, but looking at the people. My background is in organizational development, and I don’t like to put thing into boxes artificially; members into boxes. I know you have to do that, but what I have heard from the people that I live amongst is we want to be real people. We want to look at each other’s eyes and see each other, and we can do that as neighbors in our subdivisions, but not if we get artificial boundaries between us where we are one side of the street or another. That is not why I came here, and I don’t think that our economy is going to represent us well if we try to attract people to that way of thinking. It is the reason people leave that artificial society and come here to what is real; it’s to be treated like real people. That is all I have to say.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Thank you. Our final testifier, unless someone gets inspired and runs up there and fills out a sign in sheet, is--you see, someone did--Scott Stoddard.

SCOTT STODDARD

(At this time Scott Stoddard came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MR. STODDARD: I am Scott Stoddard, I am the Junior Director of Friends of Puna’s Future. I am here to answer your question, Jeffrey. I want to also clarify one point. Every body up here who has been talking about Plan\_27, and Plan\_40, I just want to clarify that Plan\_27, the revised Plan\_27, that I submitted, I then began working with Margaret Wille on her revision of Plan\_40, and we came to an agreement. So, our plans are equivalent now. The revised Plan\_27 and what other people are calling alternate 2 are the same plan. That is why we endorse Margaret’s plan, we didn’t submit the final revision. We are behind the Plan\_40, revised, alternative 2.

MR. MELROSE: I really appreciate your persistence, staying in this conversation. I think you have been to almost every meeting that we have had. I think that is good, and you have been

vocal, and clear about your concerns. I want to treat your contribution with a high regard. Help me understand the plan that you put together. There are a couple of criteria that we have to deal with, that the Ordinance says we must. One of which says, specifically, "...all parts of each district shall be contiguous to the council district and be reachable by roads internal to that district.

MR. STODDARD: Yes, I read that criteria as well, and I worked really hard to make both of these districts abide by that. The mauka district, District 5, which includes Volcano, and also---

MR. MELROSE: What I want you to do is take a look at that criteria specifically, and keep your evolutions of plans coming. I don't see a way to get through, to connect, from Volcano to Pāhoā or Kalapana without going out of your district.

MR. STODDARD: There is a way. The Pāhoā Emergency Access Route, which follows 'Aina Loa Blvd. and then Road 9 to F and through Hawaiian Acres leads to Highway 11. That was one of the issues that James Weatherford raised and I noticed that one of my earlier revisions didn't meet that criteria, so that is why I moved 'Aina Loa into District 5 so that would work out. And I made the numbers work too, so that criteria is met.

MR. MELROSE: The people that are in Glenwood, trying to get to their district in Pahala, if they have to drive through the Volcano area with both sides of that road in the district. The people in District 6, trying to get back to their district, have to go through District 5 to get there. So, I know these sometimes seem little irrelevant, but it is part of the rules. It says "shall." When you take out of the middle of that district, an area---We know you have extra votes, we know there are extra votes in Puna that have to go to another district because they simply get too big. So you can share towards Hilo, you can share towards Ka'ū. In the past, it was Volcano and Kea'au, now it is Glenwood, and you kind of have to go up and around to get to Glenwood. It's an uncomfortable boundary for me, and I just want you to keep thinking about how to make that comfortable for us.

MR. STODDARD: Our focus was, first of all, to keep the three towns in one of the two Puna districts. Then, our other major focus was to keep from dividing these incorporated subdivisions which, in Puna, it is a much bigger deal. It is not just a community, or communities where people have shared common interests, these are communities where people pay road maintenance fees to a collect organization. Like you have heard from many of the other testifiers, it is a legal issue, more than it is just a convenience.

MR. MELROSE: Understand that on its face, today, this particular solution does run across the road boundary issue for District 6 residents in Glenwood, trying to come back to Volcano.

MR. STODDARD: I see your point. What I was attempting to do was to make the internal roads rule work for District 5, and I see what you are saying. So, there is an issue with District 6, and if you are willing to accept a revision, I will keep working on it.

CHR. SIRACUSA: We have a meeting in Kea'au, and then another one in Hilo in the Council Chambers. There is ample opportunity to come back. You don't have to submit testimony in the

district in which the meeting is being held. You don't have to submit your testimony only at a meeting. Our Secretary, Karen Eoff, over there, will take your testimony and disseminate it to the Commissioners at any point in time as we are going through this exercise. This is not a closed door. I now have Steven Stein.

STEVEN STEIN

(At this time Steven Stein came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MR. STEIN: Welcome, and thank you very much for letting the public put some input today. I also am in agreement with Ken McGilvray that stated for us here that we do not wish to have Paradise Park split. I just realized that you were actually addressing the Volcano situation. So, my point is moot, but I am in agreement with Ken's ideas. I am a constituent in Paradise Park, and I am also active in the Paradise Park Board Hui. We do have some legality problems in our area also. So, in regards to that, I appreciate you guys hearing us out and there is a positive factor coming from the constituents in Paradise Park, and they all are in agreement to probably being in a moratorium of being together. I will see you at the next meeting, and thank you for coming from Kona. Aloha.

CHR. SIRACUSA: Aloha. Now, Jon Olson had already testified, but he would like to add something to his testimony; and since he didn't use his full five minutes, I am going to let him take the rest of his time; besides, he made us laugh.

JON OLSON

(At this time Jon Olson came forward to address members of the Commission.)

MR. OLSON: On the issue of the roads, you will notice something that is unique about Puna in that it has no mauka/makai corridors, unlike all of the other districts on all of the other islands. This is because the government here in 1923 allowed the Shipman Corporation to expunge, in land court, all the mauka/makai and all the other routes that connected the traditional villages and accomplished all of the traditional routes. So, effectively cutting up, or isolating Puna to the two corridors that the Kingdom had actually had surveyed at the time, before the overthrow. And that was the Old Government Coastal Road, and the Volcano Highway. Those were the only two that the Kingdom had paid Western surveyors to come in and actually put pins in the ground. The Land Court allowed it and basically they stole it fair and square. Thank you.

CHR. SIRACUSA: I have no more testifiers signed up. Last chance, and if no one wants to dare the microphone and public scrutiny, then I will thank you all very, very much for turning out in such great numbers and sharing your concerns with us. We are going to try to do the best we can when it comes to actually taking the best from each district; the parts that each district likes the best and put them together and try and create a viable win-win hybrid. There is no way that we can make every body 100% happy. We are going to try, but there is no way. Someone out there is going to be unhappy, and I am going to apologize in advance to whoever it is, wherever they are. We will hang around for a little bit, so if you want to talk to us after the meeting is over, we will be here. In the meantime, I need a motion to adjourn.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, at 7:40 p.m.,  
Mr. Melrose moved to adjourn the meeting.  
Seconded by Mr. Middlesworth and carried by  
the following vote:

Ayes: Commissioners Carvalho, Kahawaiola‘a,  
Kanuha, Melrose, Middlesworth, Ugalde  
and Chair Siracusa.

Noes: None.

Absent: Commissioners Kahui and Poindexter

CHR. SIRACUSA: Motion carries. Thank you, we are adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Karen Eoff, Secretary

Approved on November 3, 2011:

Ms. René Siracusa, Chair  
Hawai‘i County Redistricting Commission