

PLANNING COMMISSION
GENERAL PLAN SPECIAL MEETING
COUNTY OF HAWAI‘I

MINUTES
JANUARY 16, 2025

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The Leeward Planning Commission met in regular session on Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 9:30 a.m., in the West Hawai‘i Civic Center, Council Chambers, Building A, 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Highway, Kailua-Kona, Hawai‘i, with Chairperson Dean Au presiding. This meeting was streamed live on YouTube.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Vice Chair Donna “Kinuko” Noborikawa, Commissioner Barbara DeFranco, Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III, Commissioner Mahina Paishon-Duarte, and Dean Au (Chair).

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT AND EXCUSED: Commissioner Michael Dela Cruz and Commissioner Armando Rodriguez.

ALSO PRESENT: Suzanna Tiapula, Esq. (Deputy Corporation Counsel to the Commission) Jean Campbell, Esq. (Deputy Corporation Counsel to the Planning Department), Jeffrey Darrow (Acting Planning Director), Michelle Ahn (Acting Deputy Director) and Planning Department staff.

Approximately twenty-one members of the public were present in the audience.

A quorum was present. Chair Dean Au called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m. and introduced the Commissioners. Staff introductions were made. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 05:02]

Chair Dean Au began by asking each Commissioner to confirm they had reviewed all materials related to the agenda items for today's meeting. The Commissioners confirmed they had. He then made some housekeeping announcements, requesting attendees turn off their cell phones and put them on silent. He pointed out the location of the public restrooms and drinking fountain, both accessible through the door on the right. For anyone wishing to testify in person, Chairperson Dean Au asked them to fill out the yellow signup forms at the staff table and submit any written testimony not previously sent. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 07:20]

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Chair Dean Au explained that the purpose of today's meeting is to allow public comment on the County of Hawai'i's General Plan 2045 final draft and for the Commission to review and provide recommendations to the County Council. The Commission will hold meetings to review the plan until February 2025, with a final recommendation due by March 24, 2025. Each meeting will include a staff presentation, public testimony, and Commission discussion. Commissioners can make changes to the draft until the last meeting, when they will vote on the final recommendation. The draft plan can be accessed on the Planning Commission website. Chair Dean Au introduced the staff presentation and asked the Commissioners to note any questions they want to ask the Director, as questions would be reserved until after hearing public testimony. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 08:18]*

STAFF PRESENTATION

At 9:44 a.m., Planning Staff April Surprenant and Janice Hata gave the presentation. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 10:32]*

Chair Dean Au asked the commissioners if they had any questions for staff. No questions at this time. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 33:13]*

STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA ITEMS

At 10:09 a.m. the Commission took up this item with approximately twenty-seven members of the audience in the Council Chambers. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 33:46]*

Chair Dean Au explained that if Commissioners are seen looking down at their laptops or phones during the meeting, it's to review important information related to the agenda or public testimony. He reassured the public that they are still listening, even if they aren't making eye contact. The process would continue until all public testimony is heard. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 34:28]*

Staff member Maija Jackson announced the in-person testifiers. She instructs the testifiers to turn on the microphone, raise their right hand, and swear to tell the truth. She also clarifies that each testifier will have three minutes, with a 30-second warning, and requests that they state their name and town before beginning their testimony. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 35:02]*

Twenty-Five individuals provided testimony in-person at 10:09 a.m.:

- 1) Sidney Fuke – *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 35:52]*
- 2) Greg Oqin – *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 36:10] *both spoke together*

Chair Dean Au mentioned that Commissioner Barbara DeFranco had a question for the testifiers. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 42:30]* Commissioner Barbara DeFranco clarified a point regarding the golf course, asking if the land was originally designated as “open” and now being suggested for “low density” or “medium density.” Sidney Fuke confirmed that the former golf course on the Mauka side of Ali'i Drive is currently marked as “open” on the map, but they are proposing it be changed to low or medium density to align with the surrounding area.

Commissioner DeFranco thanked them for the clarification. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 42:36]*

Acting Planning Director Jeffrey Darrow addressed Mr. Oqin's request, asking for clarification on whether the current land designation was acceptable. Darrow referenced the General Plan's land use map, noting the area was designated as low-density urban, medium-density urban, and a portion as natural. He asked if Oqin was requesting a change to this or if it was acceptable. Oqin confirmed they were requesting a change back to urban. Darrow clarified that this would be an urban expansion. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 43:25]*

Commissioner Barbara DeFranco sought clarification on Mr. Oqin's request, confirming that the land was originally designated as urban, mistakenly redesignated as conservation, and now requested to revert back to urban. She asked Acting Planning Director Jeffrey Darrow if the change had been corrected, to which Acting Planning Director Jeffrey Darrow replied that the maps still showed low- and medium-density urban, but not urban expansion. Sidney Fuke explained that the land had been mistakenly redesignated to conservation, and while it was unclear if it had been officially corrected, the request was being renewed. Chair Dean Au invited Planning Staff's response, and Planning Staff April Surprenant confirmed that both Mr. Oqin and Mr. Fuke were correct. The land had originally been proposed as low-density urban, with a conservation strip based on an old, unadopted map. April Surprenant clarified that the maps had now been corrected, and Mr. Oqin's parcel is officially designated as urban. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 45:45]*

Chair Dean Au emphasized the importance of efficiency during the meeting. He suggested that Commissioners and staff focus on listening to the testifiers, asking them questions, and allowing staff to answer when needed. He encouraged everyone to collect their thoughts and ask questions all at once to avoid interruptions. Chair Dean Au reminded everyone that both the public and viewers on YouTube were volunteering their time, so it was important to be mindful of that and keep the meeting moving smoothly. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 47:13]*

- 3) Paul Andrade – *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 48:37]*
- 4) Burke Matsuyama – *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 52:09]*

Commissioner Barbara DeFranco asked Mr. Matsuyama about the current zoning, specifically questioning whether CV zoning allows for many stores. Burke Matsuyama confirmed that it does not, but other developments, like gas stations and stores, are allowed. Commissioner Barbara DeFranco found this confusing and raised it as a concern. Acting Planning Director Jeffrey Darrow explained that the zoning codes are driven by the general plan, and revisions to the codes are being prepared in anticipation of the general plan's approval. He clarified that one of the proposed revisions would include self-storage in commercial districts, as it doesn't require the infrastructure that gas stations or stores do. Acting Planning Director Jeffrey Darrow emphasized that while these changes are planned, they are still in progress. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 55:14]*

- 5) Jesse Waltjen – *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 57:48]*

Chair Dean Au requested that the public refrain from clapping during the hearing, emphasizing that it is a formal meeting, not a performance. He encouraged people to congratulate testifiers outside the meeting if they wished. Chair Dean Au stressed the importance of maintaining efficiency, courtesy, and professionalism throughout the proceedings. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 59:41]*

- 6) Cindy Andrade – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:00:06]
- 7) Elizabeth Cook – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:03:14]
- 8) Alohalani Hope – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:06:10]

Chair Dean Au reminded Ms. Alohalani Hope to stay on topic and focus on the general plan during her testimony. When Hope responded, Chair Dean Au clarified that she was not addressing the general plan and warned that she would be cut short if she continued off-topic. Alohalani Hope attempted to clarify but was interrupted. Commissioner Barbara DeFranco called for respect for the chair, and Chair Dean Au asked Alohalani Hope to finish her testimony, ensuring she remained focused on the general plan. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:08:07]*

Chair Dean Au asked if any commissioners had questions for the testifiers, and when no one responded, he reminded the public to focus on the review of the general plan. He emphasized the importance of respecting everyone's time and maintaining efficiency, acknowledging that everyone was volunteering their time. Chair Dean Au urged respect for both the public and the commissioners, thanking them. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:09:00]*

- 9) Josephine Keliipio – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:10:14]
- 10) Maka Gallinger – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:13:46]
- 11) Michael Sofranko – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:16:25]
- 12) Randy Rugar – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:20:05]

Chair Dean Au asked if any commissioners had questions for the testifiers. Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III raised a concern, noting that several community members had expressed a lack of awareness about the General Plan 2045 (GP 2045) and suggested putting up signs at County buildings or along highways to increase public education on the issue. Chair Dean Au responded, asking staff if any progress had been made on this since the last meeting. Acting Planning Director Jeffrey Darrow explained that while the County couldn’t put up signs on roads, they had taken steps to increase awareness. The mayor's social media team had been sending out media blasts about the meetings, and the County had been actively updating the website with meeting schedules and notifications. Additionally, there is a service called Granicus that allows people to sign up on the website to receive email notifications about updates. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:21:49]*

**Chair Dean Au noted that Commissioner Mahina Paishon-Duarte is present and requested that the minutes reflect her attendance. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:24:42]*

- 13) Martha Stephens – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:25:21]
- 14) John Pelletier – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:28:29]
- 15) Nancy Pisicchio – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:30:08]
- 16) Dickran Boranian – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:32:01]

Commissioner Barbara DeFranco thanked Nancy Pisicchio for her work on the CDP and sought clarification on the impact of a proposed change to the Hokulea development. Commissioner Barbara DeFranco highlighted that Hokulea was originally designated for agricultural development but questioned whether it was being reclassified to urban or rural. Nancy clarified that the new map would reclassify the area as rural, which could significantly increase the density of home sites, from 665 to potentially up to 2 or 4 sites per acre. This change would also allow for the construction of a lodge, which isn't permitted under the current designation. Commissioner Barbara DeFranco asked if the proposed rural designation applied to both sides of the road and suggested involving Acting Planning Director Jeffrey Darrow for further clarification. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:34:11]* Acting Planning Director Jeffrey Darrow thanked Nancy Pisicchio for her work and explained the complex history of the General Plan process, which has changed directions multiple times due to shifts in administration. He stated that the current administration is reviewing the General Plan, including the land use pattern allocation guide map, and that they are focusing on areas like Hokulea. Acting Planning Director Darrow noted that the rural designation for Hokulea is not appropriate and should remain as agricultural land. The department is reviewing public testimony and will make recommendations to the commission and council. If the developer later wants to change the designation to rural, it would require an environmental assessment. Nancy expressed relief, as the rural designation seemed contrary to the overall goals of the plan. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:36:34]*

Chair Dean Au interrupted to thank Acting Planning Director Jeffrey Darrow and the testifiers, then emphasized the need to move on. He expressed a desire to avoid further discussion and reminded everyone that the purpose of the meeting was to hear from all the testifiers, including those on Zoom. He asked if any fellow commissioners had further questions for the two testifiers. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:39:54]* Commissioner Mahina Paishon-Duarte asked testifier Dickran Boranian about his suggestion to measure quality of life by minimizing time spent in traffic. Dickran Boranian confirmed this and explained that such a measurement could help assess the impact of development on residents. Commissioner Mahina Paishon-Duarte then asked where this recommendation would fit in the General Plan, specifically if it should be under Chapter 4.2 on transportation, access, and mobility. Dickran responded that the recommendation should be placed where it makes sense within the plan, as there is currently no existing measurement of quality of life impacts from traffic. He emphasized the importance of measuring traffic impact to foresee when density would negatively affect residents' lives. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:40:15]*

17) Sharilyn Shields – *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:42:44]*

18) Michelle Melendez – *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:46:13]*

Chair Dean Au interrupted Michelle Melendez to ask her not to accuse anyone during her testimony. Michelle Melendez continued her testimony. Commissioner Barbara DeFranco raised a point of order, and Chair Dean Au reminded Melendez to keep her comments focused on the content of the General Plan and avoid directing accusations at staff members or commissioners. Michelle Melendez insisted she was not making an accusation, and Chair Dean Au allowed her to continue, urging her to focus on the general plan content. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:46:59]*

****RECESS 11:24 A.M. to 11:39 A.M.**** [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 01:50:13]

Chair Dean Au called the meeting back to order at 11:39 a.m. with approximately twenty-two members of the audience in Council Chambers. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 02:05:08]

Chair Dean Au thanked everyone for attending and sharing their thoughts. He emphasized that the meeting was focused on discussing the general plan, asking participants to stay on topic. While it's okay to go off on a slight tangent, he noted that they'd redirect speakers if they strayed too far. He acknowledged hearing concerns about wildfires and assured that all commissioners were listening. He also encouraged respect and professionalism during the meeting, asking attendees to avoid clapping or speaking out to maintain an efficient and respectful atmosphere. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 02:05:44]

- 19) Rebecca Melendez – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 02:07:07]
- 20) Shellie Davis – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 02:10:35]
- 21) Thaddea Pitts – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 02:14:32]
- 22) Robert Gay – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 02:18:02]
- 23) Cathryn Turley – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 02:22:22]
- 24) Marion Gervschat – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 02:25:38]

Chair Dean Au asked if any of the commissioners had questions for the testifiers. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 02:28:00] Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III clarified that the commission's role is to gather community input and present it to the council, not to make the final decisions on the plan. He emphasized that the commission listens to all testimonies and takes them seriously, but the County Council will ultimately decide whether the plan proceeds or not. Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III also noted that while the commission can propose amendments, the final decision rests with the council. Testifier Marion Gervschat asked for clarification, specifically about whether the commission could recommend not passing the plan, to which Kanuha confirmed that the commission could indeed make such a recommendation. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 02:28:20]

- 25) David Paul – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 02:30:58]

There were no more in-person testifiers. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 02:32:56]

****LUNCH BREAK 12:07 P.M. to 12:47 P.M.**** [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 02:33:30]

Chair Dean Au called the meeting back to order at 12:47 p.m. with approximately one member of the audience in the Council Chambers. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:12:48]

Chair Dean Au mentioned that Commissioner Mahina Paishon-Duarte had stepped out temporarily but would return, and that there was still a quorum to continue the meeting. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:12:55]

Thirteen individuals provided testimony on zoom at 12:49 p.m.:

- 1) Bret Dixon – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:15:30]
- 2) Ken Honma – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:19:45]

- 3) Millicent Cummings – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:23:38]
- 4) Donna Grabow – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:27:21]
- 5) Janice Palma-Glennie – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:31:29]
- 6) Eugene Elmer – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:35:36]

Chair Dean Au asked the commissioners if they had any questions for Mr. Eugene Elmer. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:38:57] Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III addressed the frequent mention of the term “stakeholder” in the discussion. He referred to its definition on page 19 of the GP2045, explaining that a stakeholder is any individual, group, or organization with an interest in or that can be affected by a project, decision, or activity. Stakeholders can include various entities such as employees, customers, government agencies, and community members. Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III emphasized the importance of stakeholder engagement for the success and sustainability of initiatives and wanted to ensure that the meaning of “stakeholder” in the context of the GP2045 was clear and on the record. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:39:13]

Chair Dean Au announced that Commissioner Mahina Paishon-Duarte had returned. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:40:40]

- 7) Kalei Kailikini – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:41:26]

Chair Dean Au asked the commissioners if they had any questions for the testifier. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:44:37] Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III asked for clarification on a list that included homeowners, ranchers, and Native Hawaiians, as he was taking notes. Kalei Kailikini responded, listing homeowners, farmers, ranchers, Native Hawaiians, small businesses, local landowners, and Hawaii Island residents as the groups referenced. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:44:43]

- 1) Kevin Hill – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:46:03]
- 2) Kate Kennedy – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:50:00]
- 3) Fran Copp – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:54:39]
- 4) Megan Isaac – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 03:58:52]
- 5) April Lee – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 04:03:40]
- 6) Chuck Flaherty – [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 04:07:54]

Chair Dean Au asked the commissioners if they had any questions for the testifier. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 04:11:07] Commissioner Barbara DeFranco asked Chuck Flaherty for clarification on the removal of detailed information about public trails and access in the GP2045, noting that it was well-detailed in the GP2040. Chuck Flaherty explained that while the 2040 plan had a specific section on promoting active living through recreation trails and public access, the 2045 plan scattered relevant policies and actions throughout the document, making it harder to discern a cohesive plan. He acknowledged that he had sent written testimony after the meeting started, and Commissioner Barbara DeFranco confirmed that they would review it once received. [SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 04:11:15] Acting Director Jeffrey Darrow responded to Chuck Flaherty, mentioning that Section 4.2.3 of the transportation element in the GP2045 addresses active living corridors and public access, although it is brief. He acknowledged that there are

other references to public access throughout the plan and assured that they would review the submitted testimony. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 04:13:34]*

No more zoom testifiers. Chair Dean Au asked if there were any more testifiers in person. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 04:14:33]*

One individual provided testimony in-person at 1:49 p.m.:

- 1) Nicole Namordi – *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 04:15:22]*

Chair Dean Au asked the commissioners if they had any questions for the testifier. No questions. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 04:18:57]*

Statements from the public concluded at 1:53 p.m. and public testimony was closed. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 04:19:04]*

QUESTIONS FOR STAFF/DIRECTOR

Chair Dean Au opened the floor for the commissioners to ask the director or staff questions. There were approximately three public members of the audience in Council Chambers. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 04:19:28]*

Commissioner Barbara DeFranco brought up the CDP's submitted written testimony regarding final recommendations for the draft, specifically about adding language related to TODs and TNDs into Table Six. She wanted to ensure that planning staff received and incorporated this input, especially regarding a proposed amendment to Table Six and the land use maps. Planning staff member April Surprenant clarified that what the CDP referred to as Table Six is now Table 19 in the draft, which includes land use designations and their corresponding colors on maps. While the CDP requested TOD and TND be shown on the maps, planning staff instead addressed them in the Urban Character Guidelines section on page 91 and Table 21 on page 92, describing their features and applications. They chose not to add visual markers like circles to the land use map, believing that level of detail belongs at the CDP level. Planning Staff April Surprenant explained that TODs and TNDs already exist in areas like downtown Hilo but aren't always labeled the same way as in Kona's CDP. They aimed for consistency across the island in the general plan. Commissioner Barbara DeFranco emphasized the importance of including input from the Kona community, particularly concerning the Makaeo Village Regional Center near the airport. Planning Staff April Surprenant reassured her that the area is designated appropriately as high to medium density in the plan and aligns with the intent of TODs as defined in the CDP. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 04:19:56]*

Chair Dean Au asked if there were any further questions, and since none were raised, the meeting moved on to the discussion and deliberation phase, where the commission could make motions, discuss items, or consult with staff. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 04:25:41]*

DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION

Action: Commissioner Barbara DeFranco moved to amend the main motion to amend the definition of "Stakeholder" on page 19. Commissioner Mahina Paishon-Duarte seconded the

motion. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:26:16]* During the discussion, Commissioner Barbara DeFranco raised concerns about the inclusiveness of the definition, noting that she’s heard similar concerns from others. She emphasized the difficulty of listing every type of person—like homeowners, renters, or leasers—without unintentionally leaving someone out, but suggested they explore adding a few words creatively to be more inclusive. Commissioner Mahina Paishon-Duarte agreed and warned about the risks of trying to enumerate every group, as it could lead to omissions. She asked to pose a question to staff but first, Chair Dean Au shared his perspective, stating that the term “individual” already includes everyone in the County of Hawai‘i and that adding specific groups might be redundant. However, he said he would support the addition if the group chose to move forward with it. Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III echoed the importance of clearly defining “stakeholder” and suggested adding terms like ranchers, homeowners, farmers, Native Hawaiians, or Hawai‘i residents to help clarify who’s included, even if that risks some convolution. Commissioner Barbara DeFranco reiterated the complexity of naming specific groups, and Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III noted again that the term “stakeholder”, as currently defined, already encompasses many of these people. Chair Dean Au then asked commissioners to take turns speaking and to be recognized before speaking to help with accurate minute-taking and public transparency. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:26:59]* Acting Planning Director Jeffrey Darrow clarified that any changes being discussed are motions made by the commission, not staff. While staff can help draft the wording, the amendments and requests come from the commission members themselves, and it’s their responsibility to formally make and vote on them. He emphasized this to avoid confusion about roles in the process. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:31:10]* Commissioner Mahina Paishon-Duarte asked how the body might consider adding more inclusive descriptors to the term “stakeholders” without having to list every possible group. Planning Staff April Surprenant responded that based on feedback from multiple hearings, the term “resident” could be a useful addition. She explained that “resident” broadly includes anyone who lives in the area, whether they rent or own, regardless of cultural background or how long they’ve lived there. She emphasized that the intent behind the use of “stakeholders” was never to refer only to investors, but to include those who live on and care for the land. The definition had been informed by both professional planning terminology and considerations specific to Hawai‘i. Planning Staff April Surprenant noted that in other areas of the plan, the term is used inclusively and often in combination with examples, but those examples are not meant to be exhaustive. She offered suggestions for clarification, including changing “entities” to “people and entities,” or removing the second sentence that provides examples, as it may not be necessary. The intention remains to keep the term inclusive and relevant to the context in which it is used. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:32:02]* Vice Chair Donna “Kinuko” Noborikawa commented that the first sentence of the definition already seems to cover everyone, as it includes any individual, group, or organization with an interest or concern in a project, decision, or activity, and those who may be affected by its outcomes. She felt the second sentence could be removed without impacting the first sentence. Additionally, she raised a concern about adding the word “resident”, questioning whether it might unintentionally exclude non-residents. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:35:35]* Commissioner Barbara DeFranco expressed her support for the first sentence of the definition, stating it is broad and inclusive, but noted that the second sentence, which introduces specific entities, could be problematic for some. She agreed with the idea of removing the second sentence but suggested further discussion on the word “resident”. Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III felt the definition was already clear and that the second sentence didn’t add much value. He suggested that adding terms like “resident”, “homeowner”,

or “native Hawaiian” could provide further clarification, though he didn’t see it as necessary. Chair Dean Au proposed removing the second sentence entirely and adding “Hawai‘i County resident” to the first sentence for clarity. Commissioner Barbara DeFranco expressed concern that specifying “Hawai‘i County resident” might be too limiting, as people might own homes or have investments in the area but live elsewhere. Commissioner Mahina Paishon-Duarte supported Chair Au's suggestion, stating it would prioritize County residents but still be inclusive. Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III also supported this revision, feeling it maintained clarity. Commissioner Barbara DeFranco agreed with the proposed change but wanted to ensure all other sentences in the definition were also considered. Chair Au invited further discussion, and Commissioner Barbara DeFranco confirmed she was comfortable with amending the motion. [YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:37:05] The motion carried with five ayes (DeFranco, Paishon-Duarte, Kanuha, Noborikawa, and Au) and two excused (Dela Cruz, Rodriguez). [YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:46:19]

Action: Chair Dean Au moved to amend Commissioner Barbara DeFranco’s motion by adding “Hawai‘i County residents” before the word “individual” and to take out the second sentence from “stakeholders to organizations” so that the definition of “Stakeholder” reads: “Stakeholder is any Hawai‘i County resident, individual, group, or organization that has an interest or concern in a particular project, decision, or activity and can be affected by its outcomes. They can influence or be influenced by the objectives, policies, and performance of an organization or project. Effective stakeholder engagement and management are crucial for the success and sustainability of any initiative, as it helps ensure that diverse perspectives and interests are considered”. Commissioner Barbara DeFranco seconded the motion. [YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:44:12] No Discussion. The amended motion carried with five ayes (Au, DeFranco, Kanuha, Noborikawa, and Paishon-Duarte) and two excused (Dela Cruz, Rodriguez). [YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:45:14]

Chair Dean Au explained that before making his motions, he wanted to outline the merits of it. He then clarified that he would be making three motions, but they would be addressed one at a time, as each was relevant to the issue at hand. He mentioned he had carefully considered the wording and would read the motion verbatim. [YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:47:11]

Action: Chair Dean Au moved to amend the main motion to amend Action 32.v on page 159 to include the words “fire and wildfire” after the words “floods” to read as follows: “Adopt incentives, such as tax deductions, to encourage retrofitting of existing structures for resilience against earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis, floods, and fire and wildfire.” Commissioner Mahina Paishon-Duarte seconded the motion. [YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:47:52] During the discussion, Chair Dean Au shared his concerns about the wildfire risks in his community, particularly in Waikoloa Village, emphasizing the urgency following tragic events in Lahaina and Los Angeles. He proposed adding “fire” and “wildfire” to section 32v of the general plan to ensure the county addresses wildfire preparedness. Acting Planning Director Jeffrey Darrow pointed out that wildfire protection is already covered in other sections, but Chair Dean Au stressed the importance of explicitly referencing it. Commissioner Barbara DeFranco raised a question about the different sections, with Acting Planning Director Jeffrey Darrow explaining that section V deals with incentives like tax deductions for retrofitting structures for fire resilience. Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III supported the idea of including wildfires in the broader context of natural disasters. Vice Chair Donna “Kinuko” Noborikawa highlighted the

wildfire risk in North Kohala as well, where dry conditions and wind can spread fires quickly. Chair Dean Au expressed gratitude for the support and proposed moving forward with the vote. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:48:54]* The motioned carried with five ayes (Au, Paishon-Duarte, DeFranco, Kanuha, and Noborikawa), and two excused (Dela Cruz, Rodriguez). *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:55:25]*

Action: Chair Au moved to amend the main motion to to amend Action 32.q on page 159 to include the words “fire and wildfire” in the list of hazards to read as follows: “Seek funding and support continued scientific research relating to hazards (e.g., research on erosion rates, slumping rates, slope stability studies, sea level rise rates, tsunami inundation mapping, coastal stream flood mapping, fire and wildfire, etc.).”, and that the Planning Department review the General Plan and include “fire and wildfire” in any list of natural disasters or hazards. Vice Chair Donna “Kinuko” Noboriakwa seconded the motion. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:56:11]* Chair Dean Au clarified that the intention of his motion was to address wildfire risks in rural communities with limited access, not just in Waikoloa Village but more broadly. Commissioner Mahina Paishon-Duarte expressed support for the motion but cautioned that wildfire mitigation should take a comprehensive approach, including integrated ecosystem management, protecting watersheds, and restoring biocultural environments, rather than focusing solely on funding and incentives. Chair Dean Au agreed with the comment, emphasizing that the motion aimed to address wildfire risks in general areas that need attention, ensuring all county agencies could follow the guidance in the general plan. He thanked the Vice Chair for seconding the motion, and no further discussion followed. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:57:09]* The motioned carried with five ayes (Au, DeFranco, Kanuha, Noborikawa, and Paishon-Duarte), and two excused (Dela Cruz, Rodriguez). *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 04:59:31]*

Chair Dean Au made a third motion, similar to his first and second motions, proposing that emergency evacuation routes be prioritized over other planning activities. He suggested this priority be reflected in the general plan, specifically in policies 32H and 32K. He explained that his motion aimed to ensure communities with limited access, like Waikoloa and other rural areas, have prioritized evacuation routes or secondary access roads in case of emergencies, particularly wildfires. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 05:00:11]*

Chair Dean Au requested an executive session to discuss with Corporation Counsel. Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III seconded the motion. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 05:09:40]* A voice vote was taken. The motioned carries with five ayes and two excused (Dela Cruz, Rodriguez). *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 05:10:04]*

****EXECUTIVE SESSION 2:44 P.M. to 3:06 P.M.**** *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 05:10:04]*

Chair Dean Au called the meeting back to order at 3:06 p.m. with approximately two public members of the audience in Council Chambers and explained that the Commission had legal questions for their attorney which were answered during the executive session. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 05:32:26]*

After more discussion, Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III recommended deferring the motion until the following meeting for further clarification and for the planning department staff to provide more information. As a result, Chair Dean Au made another motion. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 05:46:25]*

Action: Chair Dean Au moved to defer to the next meeting a motion to recommend that mapping creating and maintaining emergency evacuation routes be prioritized over all other planning activities and that this priority be reflected in the general plan, as an example in Policy 32.h and 32.k. Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III seconded the motion. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 05:46:51]* No Discussion. The motioned carried with five ayes (Au, Kanuha, DeFranco, Noborikawa, and Paishon-Duarte), and two excused (Dela Cruz, Rodriguez). *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 05:47:26]*

Commissioner Barbara DeFranco proposed amending the definition of “Hazard” on page 14 of the general plan to delete the term “High Hazard areas” and expand “High-Risk Hazard areas” to include tsunamis, flooding, and wildfires. Chair Dean Au suggested asking staff for potential language or wording additions. Planning staff, April Surprenant, agreed that additional language could be proposed at the next meeting based on the discussion. Commissioner Barbara DeFranco also raised concerns about the scope of “Coastal High Hazard areas”, and Planning Staff April Surprenant confirmed that a separate definition for coastal areas was already covered. After further discussion, Commissioner Barbara DeFranco decided to withdraw her motion. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 05:48:04]*

Chair Dean Au proposed a motion to discuss and define “natural disasters” in the general plan. Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III seconded the motion. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 05:51:08]* Commissioner Barbara DeFranco emphasized the importance of including both natural and man-made disasters such as tsunamis, earthquakes, and wildfires. Acting Planning Director Jeffrey Darrow provided a definition of natural disasters, and Planning Staff April Surprenant clarified that the term is mentioned in various parts of the plan but lacks a formal definition. Chair Dean Au sought guidance from the planning department on creating an official definition, including both natural and human-made disasters. After further discussion, Commissioner Mahina Paishon-Duarte raised concerns about listing specific hazards in a legal definition, which could limit future additions. Chair Dean Au decided to withdraw the motion for further consideration and defer the discussion to the next meeting, where a more comprehensive definition could be proposed. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 05:51:18]* A voice vote was taken. The motioned carried with five ayes and two excused (Dela Cruz, Rodriguez). *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 06:00:50]*

Action: Vice Chair Donna “Kinuko” Noborikawa moved to request staff to provide the Commission with a definition of “Cumulative Impacts” at the next meeting. Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III seconded the motion. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 06:01:26]* No Discussion. Chair Dean Au called for a voice vote. The motioned carried with five ayes and two excused (Dela Cruz, Rodriguez). *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 06:02:04]*

Planning Staff April Surprenant clarified that the term “cumulative impact” does not currently appear in the general plan, though it is relevant to SMA (Special Management Area) applications. Vice Chair Donna “Kinuko” Noborikawa pointed out that “cumulative impact” is

mentioned on page 13 in the context of the definition of equity. Planning Staff April Surprenant questioned whether the discussion was about defining cumulative impacts specifically in relation to equity. Vice Chair Donna “Kinuko” Noborikawa emphasized that to understand equity, they would need to define cumulative impacts. Chair Dean Au asked for input from Deputy Corporation Counsel, Suzanna Tiapula, who noted that there are different definitions of “cumulative impacts” for various contexts, including coastal zone management. Tiapula clarified that the current discussion was focused on equity, not coastal zone management. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 06:02:14]*

Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III made a motion to continue the meeting to February 20, 2025. Commissioner Barbara DeFranco seconded the motion. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 06:04:34]* Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III raised a point to ensure the community knows how to access the General Plan 2045 (GP 2045), advising people to visit the Planning Department's website to read the plan. He emphasized the importance of spreading this information. Vice Chair Donna Noborikawa mentioned that in North Kohala, the information about the General Plan and related hearings is regularly published in the Kohala Mountain News and distributed for free in post office boxes in Kapaau and at three local grocery stores, though it is not widely available outside of the area. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 06:05:18]*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Planning Staff Maija Jackson announced that the next section of the General Plan to be discussed will be the “Thriving, Diverse, and Regenerative Economy” and the “Implementation and Monitoring” sections, scheduled for the February 20th meeting. Chair Dean Au inquired about the regular Leeward Planning Commission meeting in February, to which Maija responded that it would be canceled as there are no items on the agenda. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 06:07:38]*

Chair Dean Au restated the motion made prior to the announcements about continuing this meeting. *[YOUTUBE TIMESTAMPED 06:08:20]* Motion on the floor by Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III was to continue the meeting to February 20, 2025. Commissioner Barbara DeFranco seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. The motioned carried with five ayes and two excused (Dela Cruz, Rodriguez). *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 06:08:32]*

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Clement “CJ” Kanuha III made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Vice Chair Donna “Kinuko” Noborikawa seconded the motion. *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 06:08:39]* A voice vote was taken. The motioned carried with five ayes and two excused (Dela Cruz, Rodriguez). *[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP 06:08:54]*

Chair Dean Au adjourned the meeting at 3:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelsie Chang

Kelsie Chang (Apr 24, 2025 09:57 HST)

Kelsie Chang
Secretary

ATTEST:


Dean Au (Apr 24, 2025 15:12 HST)

Dean Au, Chairperson
Leeward Planning Commission