

**CULTURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
COUNTY OF HAWAII**

**MINUTES
December 10, 2025**

MEETING LOCATION:

Hybrid in-person and interactive video conference through Zoom with live observation through YouTube. The in-person location was held at the Hilo Planning Department Conference Room, 101 Pauahi Street, Suite 3, Hilo, HI 96720.

The full YouTube video of this hearing can be found here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=52IfdSKdR2I>

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: Matthew Clark (Chair), Desmon Haumea (Vice Chair) (arrived at 10:09 a.m.), Darde Gamayo, Roberta “Ku‘ulei” Keakealani, Kealohanuiopuna Kinney, and Janet Six (left at 12:13 p.m.).

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED: Nicole Lui and Aaron Spielman.

ALSO PRESENT: Jean Campbell, Deputy Corporation Counsel; Bethany Morrison, Planning Program Manager; Kim Tanaka, Planner IV; and Ashley DeVera, Board Secretary.

Commissioner Keakealani provided a pule to open.

Vice Chair Haumea joined the meeting at 10:09 a.m., and quorum was confirmed with six commissioners.

Chair Clark called the Cultural Resources Commission (CRC) meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. A quorum was established with six members in attendance. It was announced that pursuant to Act 220, Session Laws of Hawai‘i 2021, which amended the Sunshine Law to allow meetings to be remotely conducted online, effective January 1, 2022, the Cultural Resources Commission meetings will be held online, with an in-person location for the public to provide testimony. The meeting can be viewed live online, and a link to YouTube can be located on the County website, as well as links to reports and surveys reviewed at this hearing. Commissioners were reminded that only one person may speak at a time and were asked to raise their hands to be recognized before speaking.

Commissioners were asked to introduce themselves and in accordance with the Sunshine Law, identify any member(s) present within the household. All members reported being alone in their location.

Staff introductions were made.

There were no addendums or supplemental agenda items.

STATEMENT(S) FROM THE PUBLIC

At 10:13 a.m., Chair Clark opened the floor to receive public testimony. Procedures for testimony were provided. There is a three-minute time limit on each agenda item; statements must relate to items on the agenda.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 5:41*] No testifiers were present on Zoom or in person.

Public testimony closed at 10:13 a.m.

NEW BUSINESS OF THE COMMISSION

1. Section 106 Review: Paheehee Stream Bridge Reconstruction (PL-CRC-2025-000039)

Location: Honomū, Kohua Ahupua‘a, Hilo Moku, Hawai‘i Island

TMK: (3) 2-8-015:002, 019, 999; and (3) 2-8-017:999

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 6:05*] This agenda item was called to order at 10:13 a.m. Mr. Dennis Silva, Jr., consultant from WSP was present to provide a presentation. There were no members of the public present, and no public testimony was provided.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 10:38*] Mr. Silva reviewed the project overview, noting that the Pahe‘ehe‘e Stream Bridge was built in 1911, reconstructed in 1950, and placed on the State Register of Historic Places (SRHP) on August 15, 2009, though it was not listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The project scope included installing a new superstructure without permanent intermediate support, comprising steel plate girders, steel cross frames, concrete decks and sidewalks, an inspection walkway, and a lifeline system. Additional work involved adding steel elastomeric bearings, a manual for assessing safety hardware-compliant bridge railings, drilled shafts, and drilled shaft caps in front of selected abutments; removing the existing steel trestle substructure while retaining concrete foundation footings and pedestals; installing a temporary two-lane bypass bridge with a 14-foot travel way; relocating overhead powerlines; and conducting a soil investigation for potential lead contamination.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 12:26*] The Area of Potential Effect (APE) was approximately 4.23 acres, located primarily within the Hawai‘i Belt Road and Honomū Road right-of-way under the Hawai‘i State Department of Transportation (HDOT). The potential construction staging area will be situated within a portion of a private parcel. Historic, archaeological, and cultural resources in the project area were assessed by reviewing sources from the State Historic Preservation Division (SHPD) library, Hawai‘i Cultural Resource Information System (HICRIS), NRHP, and SRHP.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 13:22*] The Pahe‘ehe‘e Stream Bridge was the only significant cultural resource identified within the project area. It was historically significant as a registered steel trestle bridge and for its association with the Hilo Railroad Company. HDOT anticipated a

determination of “effect, with proposed mitigation commitments,” which would include documentation in accordance with the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER).

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 14:01*] The Section 106 public outreach with Native Hawaiian Organizations (NHO) and potential consulting parties was listed in the presentation, with NHO letters sent on October 8th and 9th. A news advertisement was published in the *Hawai‘i Tribune-Herald* and *West Hawai‘i Today*. The construction schedule for the project anticipated initiating construction in Summer 2027, with completion expected in Summer 2029.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 14:43*] The project contacts were identified as HDOT Project Manager, Evan Kimoto; WSP Project Manager, Randall Urasaki; and WSP Environmental Planner, Dennis Silva, Jr. This concluded the presentation, and Chair Clark opened the floor for questions.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 15:20*] Chair Clark noted that the bridge was originally built in 1911 and reconstructed in 1950, asking whether the reconstruction was to accommodate highway travel and if it had previously been a railroad bridge. Mr. Silva confirmed that the bridge was a railroad bridge and was modified to accommodate vehicular travel. Chair Clark then asked whether the bridge was listed individually in the bridge inventory or as part of the larger Māmalahoa Highway. Mr. Silva confirmed that it was listed individually on the SHPD list. Chair Clark inquired whether consultation with SHPD had begun, whether a ground survey had been requested, and whether a new archaeological survey had been conducted within the APE. Mr. Silva responded that currently no survey had been conducted, but the project was proceeding through the Section 106 process. He added that the effect determination letter had not yet been completed and Chapter 343 Environmental Assessment (EA) had been initiated.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 16:57*] Commissioner Six asked whether the project team had consulted with Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) Kipuka database to review Land Commission Awards and suggested examining Hawaiian language sources for chants or mele, or place names that could provide additional context about the area. Mr. Silva responded that they would conduct additional research and include the findings in the draft EA.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 17:48*] Commissioner Keakealani asked whether any of the organizations that had been contacted had responded. Mr. Silva stated that, as to date, no responses had been received and that more than a month had passed since outreach was conducted. Vice Chair Haumea requested a list of the individuals and organizations that were contacted, noting that he was involved with several of those organizations.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 20:08*] Commissioner Haumea motioned to continue participation in the Section 106 process as the project moved forward and proposed that the CRC draft a letter to be submitted as formal comments. Commissioner Six recommended that the letter include consideration of place names and Hawaiian language sources, including consultation of the OHA Kipuka database. Chair Clark added that the letter should emphasize staying in contact with SHPD regarding the APE and any potential archaeological survey. It was agreed that staff would draft the letter summarizing the comments made during the meeting,

after which the Chair would sign and transmit it to the project team.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 22:24*] Commissioner Six motioned to direct staff to prepare a letter summarizing the comments made during the meeting and, upon approval by the Chair, transmit it to the appropriate recipients. Vice Chair Haumea seconded the motion. No further discussion occurred. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with six ayes (Kealoha, Keakealani, Gamayo, Clark, Six, Haumea).

This matter concluded at 10:31 a.m.

2. Section 106 Review: Kolekole Stream Bridge Rehabilitation (PL-CRC-2025-000040)

Location: Wailea and Honomū, Kahua Ahupua‘a, Hilo Moku, Hawai‘i Island

TMK: (3) 2-9-003:999; (3) 2-8-015:999; and portions of (3) 2-8-015:015

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 23:38*] This agenda item was called to order at 10:31 a.m. Mr. Scott King, consultant from WSP was present to provide a presentation. There were no members of the public present, and no public testimony was provided.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 26:35*] Mr. King reviewed the project overview, noting that the Kolekole Stream Bridge was constructed in 1950 and was a classic steel trestle bridge associated with the sugar plantation industry, the Hilo Railroad Company, and the post-war Hawai‘i Belt Road District. He stated that the bridge was listed on the SRHP. The project scope included bridge rehabilitation, with improvements consisting of replacing heavily corroded bridge members and other structural components such as truss members, bearings, gusset plates, and rivets; repairing steel girders, floor beams, and steel bracing; and cleaning and repainting the entire bridge. The scope also included the potential for scour work, defined as erosion of soil beneath the bridge or around the foundations, and if detected, repairs could require in-water work, in which case applicable regulatory requirements and permits would be followed. Additional work included repairing spalling, delamination, and cracking in the abutments and piers; repairing deck joints and joint seals; widening the sidewalk and installing a new railing; assessing soils beneath the bridge for potential lead or other contamination requiring cleanup or remediation; and removing a temporary support structure, also referred to as an Acrow bridge.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 38:58*] The APE was located primarily within the Hawai‘i Belt Road right-of-way and encompassed approximately seven acres, including a portion of Kolekole Gulch Park. Construction staging and material stockpiling were planned within the previously disturbed right-of-way. Historic, archaeological, and cultural resources within the project area were evaluated through a review of documentation from the SHPD library, HICRIS, NRHP, and SRHP. Based on these sources, a cultural impact assessment and multiple archaeological assessments were identified, and no archaeological sites were found beneath the bridge or within Kolekole Gulch Park.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 41:52*] Commissioner Six stated that while no sites were identified, there were likely sites present in the past, noting that HICRIS represents a partial data set. Regarding the Section 106 process, the project team had reached out to NHO’s as listed in

the presentation, with letters distributed on October 2nd and 15th. Public notice was published on October 24th in the *Hawai'i Tribune-Herald* and *West Hawai'i Today*. The comment period ended on November 24th, and no comments had been received to date, except from the CRC, which had invited the project team to provide a presentation. The project contacts were identified as Evan Kimoto, HDOT Project Manager, and Scott King, WSP Environmental Project Manager.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 43:57*] Chair Clark asked whether lead testing had already been conducted for potential contamination beneath the bridge and whether lead paint was anticipated to fall from the bridge during rehabilitation. Mr. King responded that he was unable to locate documentation of prior testing; however, a portion of Kulekole Gulch Park was already fenced off with signage indicating the presence of lead contamination, suggesting that sampling had occurred at some point to identify contaminants. He clarified that the project would include additional sampling to further evaluate contamination and determine appropriate next steps. Chair Clark noted that the proposed repairs would not involve structural or major changes but would focus on improving safety for vehicular travel. Mr. King confirmed this and added that removal of the temporary bridge structure would enhance the appearance of the bridge and help restore some of its historic qualities.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 46:32*] Vice Chair Haumea asked whether, once the project was completed, there would be a process to assess potential environmental impacts, specifically expressing concern that debris or scaling from the bridge could contaminate the stream. Mr. King responded that sampling and analysis would be conducted prior to construction and during construction, and that measures would be implemented to capture any materials that could potentially fall from the bridge. He noted that he would need to defer on whether post-construction sampling or analysis would be required. Mr. Randall Urasaki, consultant from WSP added that the specific requirements were not yet known, but that findings from sampling, such as paint chips, would be coordinated with the Department of Health to confirm that lead had been adequately removed. He stated that mitigation measures would be implemented if contaminants were identified and that the existing fenced area containing lead contamination would be removed upon completion of the project. Vice Chair Haumea reiterated his concern about the potential for lead to leach into the stream where children play.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 52:12*] Commissioner Gamayo asked about traffic conditions during construction. Mr. Urasaki responded that several traffic scenarios were being considered, including partial closures, contraflow operations, the possible use of a traffic signal, and maintaining a single open lane for 24-hour traffic. He noted that the project was still in the early stages of design and that these concepts were preliminary.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 54:46*] Commissioner Keakealani requested clarification on how an archaeological site was defined, asking whether it referred only to features constructed by Kānaka, such as stone walls or enclosures. She expressed concern that the assessment should not be limited to identifying discrete archaeological sites, but should also consider the stream itself, the surrounding forest, the coastline, and the broader cultural landscape where Kūpuna lived, traveled, and sustained their livelihoods. She further voiced concern about potential

contaminants entering the water and affecting fish resources that are consumed by the community.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:01:46*] Commissioner Six added that while the APE was being considered, indirect effects should also be accounted for, such as lead contamination entering the stream or ocean and affecting areas where people hunt or gather resources. Chair Clark noted that with archaeological sites, the focus is on tangible evidence of the past that can be documented and submitted to SHPD but acknowledged that the area has a long history and could be considered a potential historic property. Regarding the park, a Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) had been prepared, which examined the river and its historical connections and provided recommendations based on that analysis. Chair Clark further noted because the EA will be a part of the project, studies addressing the stream, as well as biological and botanical resources, would be conducted.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:04:38*] Commissioner Kinney commented on lead contamination, noting that certain plants can absorb lead into their leaves and stems. He referenced plants such as Ho‘io and Warabi, which are traditionally gathered for food. He emphasized that while this is primarily an environmental assessment, it also intersects with cultural considerations, including the traditional uses of plants, animals, and fish from the area. He noted that although the landscape and archaeological structures have changed over time, cultural traditions continue.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:06:39*] Vice Chair Haumea added that the work would benefit future generations and help protect people who are not yet present. Commissioner Kinney recommended reaching out to individuals who gather resources in these areas, including fishermen, to engage in “talk story” conversations to understand what they do, why they do it, how often they visit the area, and how they might be impacted by the project.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:08:31*] Commissioner Gamayo motioned to direct staff to prepare a letter summarizing the comments made during the meeting and, upon approval by the Chair, transmit it to the appropriate recipients. Vice Chair Haumea seconded the motion. A brief discussion occurred. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed with six ayes (Keakealani, Kinney, Haumea, Six, Clark, Gamayo).

This matter concluded at 11:18 a.m.

3. ‘Āinakō Subdivision Housing Project Consultation Request (PL-CRC-2025-000022)

Location: Ahupua‘a of Punahoa 2 and Pi‘ihonua, South Hilo District, Island of Hawai‘i
TMK: (3) 2-3-030:001 (por.), 004, and 2-3-031:001 (por.)

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:10:39*] This agenda item was called to order at 11:18 a.m. There were no members of the public present, and no public testimony was provided. Chair Clark disclosed that he had participated in archaeological fieldwork for the project and therefore needed to recuse himself. Vice Chair Haumea assumed the role of chair for the remainder of the discussion.

Chair Clark left the meeting at 11:20 a.m., and quorum was confirmed with five commissioners.

[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:12:57] Mr. Benjamin Barna, a consultant from Stantec, was present to provide a presentation, along with Mr. Neil Erickson from the Office of Housing and Community Development. Mr. Barna stated that the project had been brought to him in 2022, at which time he began investigating the property. The project involved the development of workforce housing on a parcel owned by the County in the ‘Āinakō neighborhood. The parcel encompassed approximately 60.5 acres, with the proposed development planned to utilize about 38–40 acres, designed to fit well into the existing landscape and surrounding features. The project area is located across from the hospital. Mr. Barna noted that the proposed housing was in very early conceptual stages, and that no topographic survey or geotechnical studies had yet been conducted. An EA was being prepared to evaluate potential impacts, including effects on historic properties. The draft EA had been completed and public comments were received. Stantec reported that they are working on the final EA but sought consultation with the CRC prior to finalization.

[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:18:04] Mr. Barna referenced a map showing the parcel boundary on the north side and topographic features, including a pu‘u on the makai end of the parcel and a stream along the Puna side. A road was planned to provide access to Waiānuenue Avenue. He reviewed previous reports and the HICRIS database, noting that a previously recorded archaeological site existed on the parcel, with other sites identified elsewhere. On the south side, labeled AF-2, features had been documented during a reconnaissance survey conducted in the 1990s–2000s, which included rock mounds and general agricultural features, although no formal inventory survey had been completed. He also referenced a 1978 archaeological reconnaissance survey, which filled a gap in the 1976 EA. At that time, the County had considered establishing a wilderness park. The 1978 survey identified six clusters of archaeological features, including rock walls and rock mounds, but no additional archaeological features were documented.

[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:22:32] Mr. Barna stated that, as part of their background research, they reviewed models and historical studies estimating population distribution prior to the 1800s, which indicated that few people lived in the project area. He also consulted with university researchers and biogeographers, who suggested that the soil in the area may not be highly suitable for settlement. The team reviewed place names and spoke with a representative from SHPD, discussing street names and noting that some traditional knowledge had been lost over time. Mr. Barna also noted that, in the late 1890s, Hilo transitioned its water system from open ditches fed by springs and streams to closed pipes supplied by surface streams.

[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:30:44] Mr. Barna displayed a 1901 map showing 15 numbered parcels within the project area, noting that native tenants had lived on some of the parcels and that sugar cane had been cultivated on others. During the archaeological survey, the team mapped and recorded features across the property, identifying 212 individual features, though most were overgrown. Features included rock mounds, rock walls, the Hilo Boarding School ditch constructed in the 1970s, Site T1—a spring with a concrete foundation for the old

springhouse and noting that in the 1970s the water supply transitioned to wells still in use today. Site T2, located atop the pu‘u, was identified as a survey trig station.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:37:38*] Mr. Barna presented a graph illustrating the different types of archaeological features and their quantities. He also showed photographs of rock mounds and walls, noting that most of the rock features were being overtaken and damaged by vegetation. He identified several clusters of rock mounds as significant examples and stated that the project team was considering preserving these areas as part of the project design, potentially as a mini-park or educational habitation sites.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:40:29*] Mr. Barna discussed the habitation sites, noting that the largest site was located near the pu‘u in the center of the parcel. He explained that the site included three-tiered rock wall foundations and several rounded platforms. One notable artifact, a historic-period bottle, was found at the site, and it was identified as another candidate for preservation.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:44:15*] Commissioner Six recommended using Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) to see beneath the tree canopy due to the density of the area. She noted that one would normally expect to see more modern detritus and questioned what had been present that was later dismantled and rebuilt. Mr. Barna mentioned that a 1901 survey identified a stone marked with a “+” on top of the old kupapau, also known as the Kupapau Hill Trig Station, and noted that there was a possibility of a grave at the top of the site, since the church had owned all of the property.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:48:14*] Vice Chair Haumea mentioned that the area had been a thriving neighborhood and that there were possibly iwi kūpuna present, which may have been removed at some point, potentially to take away the stewardship of the ‘āina. He noted that several neighborhoods surrounded the project area and observed that there appeared to be only one road connecting to Waiānuenue Avenue and asked whether there was another road available for emergency access. Mr. Barna responded that the main entrance would be through Waiānuenue Avenue, and that Kilikina Street would also provide a connection.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:50:49*] Vice Chair Haumea asked how the identified sites would be maintained, protected, and restored. Mr. Barna responded that no burial sites had been confirmed. He stated that no ground-disturbing work had been conducted and that any investigation of potential archaeological burial sites would require coordination with SHPD. He noted that the project was still in the early stages of the process. He explained that the intent was to balance preservation with archaeological and historical data recovery, to learn as much as possible about the history of the place, and to integrate that information into the design of the shared public space and the overall project.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:53:39*] Vice Chair Haumea asked whether the area was originally designed as a historical park. Mr. Barna explained that the County was planning a wilderness park. A consulting firm was hired to design the park, an EA was completed, and the first archaeological study was conducted during that process.

[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:55:12] Commissioner Six emphasized that it was very important to test some of the mounds before proceeding further with the planning process, given the number of mounds present on the parcel. She stated that development would be very challenging until it could be confirmed that the mounds were agricultural in nature, noting that they were spread throughout the parcel and that some areas were better preserved than others.

[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 1:57:22] Commissioner Kinney asked about the swamp area, inquiring whether it had been surveyed and how stable it was. He questioned how the area had been previously used and asked about the disturbance history of the site. He also asked about the retaining walls and whether any dating could be conducted. In addition, he inquired whether preserved materials might indicate what had been grown in those areas and referenced the pig enclosure on the property.

Mr. Barna responded that the swamp area was not within the project area. He stated that only a surface survey had been completed and that the surface evidence dated to the 19th century, although the site was known to be older. He explained that further investigation would occur during the identification or data recovery phase to determine what had been grown there. Mr. Barna added that the pig enclosure was the only major feature on the property and that it was clear and flat on the interior.

[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 2:02:10] Commissioner Six raised concerns about the sacred nature of springs and their association with the mo‘o, noting that sacred and agricultural uses are often inseparable. Commissioner Keakealani spoke about place names and the stories embedded in them, stating that they are indicative of the wai and the mo‘o wahine. She also referenced the Commission on Water Resource Management (CWRM) and its role in protecting wai, emphasizing the importance of safeguarding water resources and preventing the pollution of any punawai.

[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 2:05:27] Commissioner Gamayo motioned to continue this agenda item to the next meeting. Commissioner Kinney seconded the motion. No discussion occurred and the motion passed with a unanimous aye vote.

This matter concluded at 12:13 p.m.

Commissioner Six left the meeting at 12:13 p.m., and Chair Clark returned. Quorum was confirmed with five commissioners. The commissioners took a recess, and the meeting was called back to order at 12:19 p.m.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Approval of minutes for the meeting held on November 12, 2025.

[SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 2:14:48] Vice Chair Haumea motioned to approve the minutes as circulated; seconded by Commissioner Keakealani. No discussion occurred. The minutes were approved without opposition with a unanimous aye voice vote.

2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Cultural Resources Commission for the year 2026.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 2:16:49*] Commissioner Darde motioned to keep Matt Clark as Chair and Desmon Haumea as Vice Chair for the January 2026 meeting. Vice Chair Haumea seconded the motion. No discussion occurred and the motion passed with a unanimous aye vote.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 2:18:23*] Ms. Morrison thanked Commissioner Keakealani for her service on the Commission and noted that she would remain as a holdover until a replacement was appointed. Ms. Morrison also stated that Commissioner Lui’s term would end at the end of the year.

3. Next meeting tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, January 14, 2026.

[*SEE YOUTUBE TIMESTAMP – 2:19:56*] Chair Clark asked the Commissioners whether they wished to hold an in-person meeting in January, and the Commissioners agreed.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Keakealani provided a pule to close.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Vice Chair Haumea and seconded by Commissioner Keakealani. The meeting was adjourned at 12:31 p.m. with a unanimous aye vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ashley DeVera, Board Secretary

A T T E S T :

Matthew Clark, Chairman
Cultural Resources Commission