William P. Kenoi
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Director

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County of Hawaiʻi
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
PUNA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN ACTION COMMITTEE

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Tuesday, January 10, 2012
Meeting Minutes

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Dan Taylor called the Puna Community Development Plan (PCDP) Action Committee (AC) meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. in the Pāhoa Neighborhood Center, with the following persons present:

Action Committee: Barbara Bell, Frank Commendador (arrived at 3:19 p.m.) Madie Greene, Keikialoha Kekipi (excused at 5:00 pm), René Siracusa (arrived at 3:18 p.m.), Patti Pinto, Dan Taylor and Oshi Simsarian. Excused: Kelly Nafie.

Staff: Larry Brown (Planning Department, Project Manager), Elizabeth "Liz" Hultman-Salfen (Planning Department, Community Planning Assistant).

Members of the public: 6

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Barbara Bell made a motion to add the Final Report from the Kapoho Wastewater Project Subcommittee to the Agenda. Second by Madie. All voted in favor

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Dan Taylor thanked the Pāhoa Neighborhood Center for the use of the facility and welcomed the members of the public.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

1. James Weatherford testified regarding the following agenda items:
    a. Internet Service: He is glad that that this item made it to the priority list and should include all of Puna.
    b. Land Use Plan: The plan introduced by BJ is well received by the public and himself.
    c. Capital Improvement Project (CIP) for 911 services to Kehena is expensive and maybe expanded cellular coverage is a better option.
    d. Prioritize List:
        i. He likes the separation of the connector roads and PMAR

    ii. He is disappointed that village centers are not on the list especially in Hawaiian Paradise Park where 25% of the Puna population lives.

2. Stephanie Bath testified on the following items:
    a. It makes sense to have better wireless service than one land line at Kehena.
    b. The Hub and Spoke program is supposed to be in place by February 2012 and asked the AC to follow-up to ensure that it happens.
    c. Encouraged the AC to move quickly to prioritize and establish criteria for identifying appropriate points for connectivity points in Puna.
        i. Need to identify adjacent vacant parcels in neighboring subdivisions that could serve as connectivity points.
        ii. Suggested that PONC funds might be a funding source to purchase buffers around identified connectivity zones.
    d. Asked the AC to not lose sight of opportunities for the implementation of other actions in the PCDP not included on the priority list.
    e. Asked AC to please read her written testimony for details on her suggestions for criteria.
3. Jon Olson
    a. CIP: Where does the money come from? County collects about $9 million annually in taxes on roughly 40,000 vacant lots in Puna where no service is being demanded. HPP generates $2 million in revenue annually from its vacant lots alone.
    b. What is the level of service? Puna should have the same level of service as South Hilo based on the districts similar population totals.
    c. Encouraged the AC to ask the County what the current level of service is for Puna and what is planned to establish parity with Hilo.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Barbara Bell made a motion to approve the minutes with the following corrections:

- **Correct the following misspelled names: Kehena and René.**

Second by René. All voted in favor

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Free Wireless Internet Service to Puna Subdivisions:** Presentation by Richard Bidleman. He believes that the community should pressure the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to require cell phone service providers for high-speed wireless and more towers to provide more complete coverage. The County of Hawaii should demand that cell phone carriers share towers. The Planning Commission could pressure companies to share towers. The PUC should be pressured to require the land-line high speed internet service providers to expand their infrastructure in Puna.

    René asked how to get the PUC to open a docket? Mr. Bidleman said public pressure and complaints might help and that he will be researching how to effectively influence the PUC.

Patti will be the AC contact with Mr. Bidleman.

2. **Volcano Village Long Range Plan:** Mary Brewer and Paul Freeman from the Volcano Community Association (VCA) updated the AC on their progress on their master plan.

    a. The VCA is seeking formal adoption by the County of Hawaii of the Volcano Long Range Plan (VLRP). The VA will be submitting the VLRP to the Planning Department for review and feedback. Following revisions based on the feedback they receive, they will then submit for adoption by the County Council. One the revisions being made to the 2007 VLRP is adjust it format to be consistent with the Puna CDP. VCA timeline is to complete these tasks as soon as possible.

    b. The plan started in 1985 with an update in 2007. The plan continues to be community driven with small group meetings in 2007 which are documented. VCA has had public hearings, community input, small group meetings, and general membership meetings where the plan has been discussed and there is consensus on the priorities.

    c. Like the PCDP the Volcano Long Range Plan stresses the importance of protecting the natural environment. In order to be more proactive the VCA maintains an information table at the local farmer's market and workshops in the community on invasive species, native plants and how to clear your land of invasive species where they hand out a brochure they produced called "Building in the Forest."

    d. VCA is seeking to establish a Special Design District designation for Volcano which will include a community-based design review committee to ensure commercial development is appropriate in design and scale for the community.

    e. Community-based plan review in Waimea has served as an example.

    f. The VCA believes they have achieved consensus in support of the 2007 VLRP and has documented their public outreach and participation processes in support of that claim.

3. **General Plan Amendments for Pāhoa:** Tabled until the end of the meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. **Capital Improvement Project Budget:**

    a. Madie introduced a CIP project for Isaac Hale Park Improvements-ADA walkway improvements.

    Barbara moved to accept the CIP for Isaac Hale Park Improvements. Seconded by Frank. René introduced a friendly amendment to authorize Dan Taylor to sign the cover letter submitting the CIP project to the Planning Director. Second by Madie. All voted in favor.

    b. Barbara reported that a CIP project request for wastewater disposal at Waiʽōpae Marine Sanctuary needs work and details before it can move forward. A possible candidate for next year.

2. **Action Priorities:**

    a. Public Testimony:

        i. Hannah Hedrick reminded that the AC Fact Sheet needs to be updated and distributed to the communities. The AC needs to go back to the communities and keep them updated to keep the process circular. Hannah likes that forest conservation remains a priority. Expressed her support for parity in Puna and stressed that needs to include upper Puna.

b. The AC discussed the amendments to the List of Priority Actions:

   i. Oshi briefly explained that the railroad right-of-way was probably not a viable option for developing a combination low-speed vehicular and pedestrian/bicycle alignment since no government right-of-way remains except on the government owned lands.

      She suggested that the Old Puna Trail/Beach Road/Government Road alignment provided a more viable opportunity for such development since a 10'-wide government right-of-way exists.

      Oshi summarized her discussions with Laura Dierenfield with PATH and Ron Reilly on how to establish connecting pedestrian, bicycle, and slow-speed road routes connecting makai Puna subdivisions. She would like to continue to work with Laura and others in the community to seek funding via the existing federal Highways Enhancement Program to develop the Hawaiian Beaches to HPP segment of the Puna Trail, and for the project to be added to the AC priority list.

   ii. René briefed the AC on the proposed relocation and expansion plans of the Puna Community Medical Center. They have identified a 5-acre state parcel mauka of Hwy. 130 about a mile north of Pāhoa that they are attempting to secure a long term lease from the DLNR in order to develop a new clinic with 24/7 ER and with potential for expansion to include a dental clinic. Development funds will be sought through grants. A Special Permit from the County would be needed to develop the property.

      Barbara moved to include the Puna Community Medical Center in the Action Underway in the Puna Action Committee High Priority Projects. Second by Madie. All voted in favor.

   iii. Dan asked if there were any other suggestions for addition to the priority list. Following some discussion about several of the actions/projects on the priority list and their relative importance Dan and Oshi agreed continue to work on the AC High Priority Projects.

RETURN TO NEW BUSINESS:

3. General Plan Amendments for Pāhoa:

Planning Director, BJ Leithead Todd presented her revised proposal to the General Plan's Land Use Pattern Allocation Guide (LUPAG) Map. The proposal will direct commercial and industrial growth to the Pāhoa Village Road corridor and mauka of Hwy. 130 as called for in the PCDP. It will also prohibit urban type use development along the Pāhoa Bypass. The proposed amendments will help to facilitate the development of Pāhoa as a regional town center.

This final LUPAG map amendment proposal is changed only slightly from what was initially presented by the Director last August by retaining some of the urban expansion area north of

Malama Market and including parcels along the south side of Kahakai Blvd. across from the Woodland Center in the medium density urban designation.

René moved that she will draft a letter to the planning commission in support of the General Plan Amendments. Second by Frank. All voted in favor.

AGENDA FOR NEXT MEETING:

1. Review René draft letter to the Planning Commission in support of the LUPAG.
2. Review the Action Priorities
3. Revisit the Election of the Chair
4. Oshi will update progress of the PATH project
5. René will update status of the Puna Community Medical Center
6. Discussion of the Kapoho Wastewater subcommittee report will on the April 2012 AC Agenda.

ANJOURNMENT:

Madie moved to adjourn the meeting. Second by Barbara. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 6:14 p.m.