

From: Steph Bath [mailto:stephbath@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, August 24, 2016 7:20 PM
To: General Plan
Subject: input -Aug. 23,2016 community meeting-remote site Pahoa

Aloha Planners,
Thank you for your efforts in assisting us in the planning of our Islands future.
I have attached my input to this email.

My feedback is direct and reflects the air of our group at the Pahoa site. Please do not be offended or discouraged by the transparency of my experience.

I will continue to be engaged in this process, as three decades of commitment will not be hauled by one meeting.

Warmly,

Stephanie Bath

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August 23, 2016
County of Hawaii
Planning Department

RE: general plan public input meeting

Aloha long term planning team,

Introduction

I have been a resident of Puna since 1981. I have also been a small business owner located in Hilo Town from 1982-2015. I have since taken a leave of absence from my business, when hit by then run over by a truck in 2015. This has presented a deeper perspective of issues I thought I had a fair grasp of.

I have attempted to use the hele-on bus system for over three decades.

I served on the Puna Community development plan steering community, assisting specifically with the transportation theme.

During the PCDP implementation phase mass transit, health, safety and connectivity have been where I continue to serve.

I am an active member of Volcano Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), American Red Cross (June 27 lava flow shelter manager)

I am a wife and mom of two terrific young adults.

I believe in being self reliant and supporting others in doing the same.

I refer to some as auntie and uncle depending on the circumstance.

Ice shave...shave ice...no madda so long da kine flava is right.

When giving directions mauka/makai depends on who I give um to.
I can say when giving direction, "you know ..its across the old Safeway." Opps they go Prince Kuhio. (for those who may not know the old Safeway was in the "Ben Franklin" building.)
remember when the only stop light between Hilo and Mountain view was at Puainako?
Remember when Kea'au natural was where the gas station is. The barber and laundromat were on the same side of the street. Sears was Hilo shopping center.

Kurtistown was Hara store and the PO and park. No one beeped there horn. If you were at a stop light and the light changed, you waited. If it turned red again you got out to see if uncle was ok.

Food fair was downtown. Abundant life was in the old Hilo Drug. Spencers was Woolworth,
The planning department was J. C. Pennys. Ice was the stuff we kept fish cold with, not a damaging substance.
Children and Youth understood what the word respect meant . They mostly practices it. When we had to wait for something somewhere we would....talk to each other...not text.

It took ½ hour to get to from Kurtistown to Hilo at rush hour.
There was no Pu'u 'O'o vent or cone.
The saddle was a slow, windy mostly solitude drive.

The pace was slower. There was no internet. There were no electric poles or phone service in our neighborhood. There were 7 driveways in a mile.

We have lived the change. Its 35 years later.

General Plan input meeting- remote site Pahoa

Staging

Our family chose to participate from Pahoa as this was the site offered in our district.
The staging of the gathering place reflected, in a number of ways, the reality of our under served community.
We could not have video feed of the presenters as I understood that it would have been blurry due to the lack of techno infrastructure.
We gave our opinions on paper as apparently clickers and software were not available or useable at our location.
It was revealed that there were some sort of visual boards where participants in *Hilo* were able to give additional input by using the "dot" method. Dots??? what??? where? We were excluded from this process.
Under-served again.
What disallowed from boards and dots being made in multiples for the remote sites?

The playing field and treatment of participants (in remote sites) reflected what has become normal. Hilo gets better service and attention.

There were folks from Puna in Hilo. I wonder if these were the Kea'au to Volcano folks as its just as easy to go to Hilo as Pahoa for them. (especially taking into consideration Highway 130 at night)

If you look at the bus schedule, for those relying on mass transit to engage in the process, they were excluded. This is especially true of upper Puna, Pahala, Hawaiian Ocean view. Please consider this as you review data.

Families with small school aged children, Island wide, are not likely to pack up the family during dinner, homework, bath time on a school night and travel 10-40 minutes each way to participate.
Families at poverty level are not likely to use gas, if they have it, to attend.

My intent is not to criticize but rather remind and perhaps educate consultants and planners of the reality in “under served subdivisions.”

The Presentation

I am a college grad however I started to fade and get lost in the explanation of forecasts. Its not that it was that complicated. It was just fast and I was trying to follow it on a screen. I thought of those in our community and one by one sensed they would have disconnected from the process we were engaged in from the start. I realize part of the process is to explain what the process the *planning department* chose is however....

Curious if the concept of charettes got weighted into the community planning equation?

We were alerted at the start that there are no right or wrong answers. We were also told a bit later that we didn't have to answer all questions.

As the night went on and as the percentages were posted (*excluding remote locations*), the process felt tainted. Responses reflected only the demographics of those in Hilo.

As percentages and opinions were revealed, planners *did* label responses as interesting and good by their tones and attitudes. It was *not* clean. I look forward to reviewing the tape of this meeting to see if I may have been in error. Those around me saw a similar influencing of participates, be it intentional or unintentional. Please guard these videos for future reference and as a self teaching tool.

Questions very obviously were leading. This was so apparent that two participants left.

I recall IPAs having a screen to explain them. I must have missed the one for CDP's

There was no question about if CDP are the plan,etc. There was one for IPA's.

For those at our remote site it was a challenge to stay positive and engaged when the “trend” of the questioning did not reflect clean intent to get input from our community. I do ask the question, Did the consultants and long range planners use our work, the PCDP and others, as a basis to build upon. We were assured that this was to be the case longitudinally.

Questions that did not appear in this poll were:

How do you feel about your CDP being implemented?

Has the implementation time table been followed in priority areas?

In your opinion are County agencies doing their parts to deliver level of service in accordance with CDP implementation tables?

Does the County take the CDP document ,adopted by ordinance, 8 years ago as the voice of the people?

Question 29

If you had a scenario now, which would it be?

We do have scenario, in fact, it is not a scenario it is a plan, *THE PUNA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN* adopted by *ordinance*.

In conclusion, we are still engaged in the process. Our remote site was *not encouraged by our experience. Lets work on the process together.*

Thank goodness Harry will be back soon!