



## DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 13

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### **DRAFT REGULAR MEETING MINUTES THURSDAY, July 1, 2010 PAUAHI COMMUNITY CENTER**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Frank Lavoie called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. **with a quorum of seven (7) members present.** Note – This nine (9) member Board requires five (5) members for a quorum and to take official Board action.

**Members Present:** Alvin Au, Anthony Chang, Frank Lavoie, Lynne Matusow, Dolores Mollring, T.A. Ruby, Tom Smyth and Stanford Yuen (Arrived at 7:40).

**Members Absent:** Carlton N. Middleton.

**Vacancies:** None.

**Guests:** Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Dorothy Bonk, Y. Cain, Gary Payne, Gwendolyn Abella, FF3 K. Kahahawai (Honolulu Fire Department), Gary Omori (Honolulu High Capacity Transit Corridor Project), Sgt. Y.K. Chan and Sgt. L. Santos (Honolulu Police Department), Shawn Hamamoto (Councilmember Rod Tam's Office staff), Alfonso and Diane Ronquillo, Alan Feliciano (Safe Haven), Chu Lan Shubert – Kwok (Chinatown Business and Community Association), Representative Karl Rhoads, Connie Geisler (Ohana Housing Network Oahu), Bill Brennan (Mayor Mufi Hannemann's representative), Shelly Wilson and Keali'i Kane (Wilson Homecare), Mark Kikuchi (Department of Transportation Services), and Kazu McArthur (Neighborhood Commission Office staff).

**Chair Lavoie asked all to rise and join in a moment of silence for Al Canopin.**

**INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS:** Those present introduced themselves.

#### **CITY MONTHLY REPORTS:**

**Honolulu Fire Department (HFD):** Fire Fighter 3 K. Kahahawai reported,

- **June 2010 Statistics:** Included 7 structure fires, 1 wild land fire, 5 rubbish fires, 81 emergency calls and 29 miscellaneous calls.
- **Fire Safety Tip:** Cigarettes and other smoking materials are the leading cause of fire deaths in the United States. The latest fire on Oahu was a result of an unattended cigarette. The following are safety precautions. 1) Smoke outside. 2) Use deep, wide ashtrays placed on a sturdy table. 3) Extinguish cigarette butts with water or sand before disposal.
- **Child Safety Tip:** A child on Maui caused \$350,000 worth of damages while playing with a lighter in June. A child as young as two (2) years old can start a fire. Some fire safety tips included; 1) Keep matches and lighters out of children's sight and reach. 2) Teach children that matches and lighters are not toys. 3) Use only child-resistant lighters. 4) Teach children to tell an adult if they see matches or lighters.

**Honolulu Police Department (HPD):** Sergeant Y.K. Chan reported,

- **June 2010 Statistics:** Included 11 assaults, 3 burglaries, 6 drug offenses, 6 Driving Under the Influence (DUI), 5 family offenses, 5 graffiti, 85 motor vehicle collisions, 3 motor vehicle thefts, 16 property damages, 2 robberies, 2 sex assault, 4 prostitution arrests, 12 Unauthorized Entry of a Motor Vehicle (JEMV), 200 miscellaneous calls for service. It was also noted that motor vehicle collisions usually increase during summer months due to tourist season and school summer recess.



- Sex Assault: It was clarified that statistics recorded on sex assaults do not necessarily reflect sex assault cases in the downtown area; rather, the stats are derived from cases reported by the sex abuse center. It was noted that the sex abuse center services multiple neighborhood board areas.
- Fireworks: Information regarding proper firework use was shared with the community.

Questions, comments and concerns followed:

1. Camera Status Update: It was reported that all cameras are operational.
2. Leaf Blowers: Mollring reported that City crews were using leaf blowers and a generator on Fort Street Mall at multiple times beginning as early as 3:23 a.m. When confronted about the noise, it was reported that the work crew stated that HPD said it was ok if work is done 100 feet away from the building. It was noted that government work crews are exempt from current noise laws; however, work crews do need a noise permit when operating machinery outside of normal business hours. HPD will check noise permits to help reduce early morning noise disturbances. Matusow stated that due to other recent noise complaints, the Department of Facility Maintenance (DFM) should know better.

Neighborhood Citizens' Patrol: Mollring reported that there were no prostitution sightings in June. It was also reported that there has been no gang activity on River Street between 8:00 and 8:30 p.m.; however, there were a few new individuals sighted recently.

#### COMMUNITY CONCERNS:

Hawaii Pacific University (HPU): No representative was present; no report was available.

Honolulu Culture and Arts District: No representative was present; no report was available.

Safe Haven: Adam Feliciano clarified that Housing First and Safe Haven are not the same program. It was also clarified that the individuals who attacked two (2) HPU guards were not Safe Haven residents; however, Safe Haven is currently working with local churches and HPU to help reduce crime in the area. It was further stated that recent tests have concluded that there are no bed bugs at the Safe Haven facility.

Honolulu Rail Transit: Gary Omori reported that the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been submitted to the State Office of Environmental Quality Control (OEQC) for review. After review, OEQC will submit recommendations to the Governor on acceptance of the final EIS. The Governor must accept the final EIS before the project can commence. All public comments on the final EIS must be submitted in writing to the Department of Transportation Services (DTS) or to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). A \$195 million contract has been awarded for the construction of a rail project maintenance and storage facility located in Waipahu.

Chinatown Business and Community Association (CBCA): Chu Lan Shubert-Kwok reported that the Project Clean in June was a success and thanked the Board and HPD for assistance and support.

#### Public Concerns:

1. Excessive Car Noise: Concern was raised that cars are blasting music between 10:00 p.m. and 4:00 a.m. It was stated that it is difficult for HPD to cite individuals because the music is turned down when the individuals see police lights approaching. HPD stated it is possible for officers to receive permission to turn off pilot lights to cite individuals if necessary.
2. Foot Patrol: It was asked and clarified that there are a total of eight (8) foot patrol officers at night at any given time in Chinatown.
3. Drug Houses: It was asked and clarified that information regarding progress on drug houses cannot be disclosed in public; however, it was stated that there are narcotics officers working in Chinatown.
4. Screaming Man: Concern was raised of a mad screaming man in the area around the River Street/Beretania Street intersection. HPD will continue to check and admit the described individual to a hospital if necessary.

5. Dancing and Music: Au reported that there is loud music and dancing originating from an upstairs unit on Beretania Street and Smith Street between 10:00 p.m. and midnight on the weekends.

Stanford Yuen arrived at 7:40 p.m.; **eight (8) members present.**

#### ELECTED OFFICIALS:

Councilmember Rod Tam: Shawn Hamamoto circulated a handout and reported that the Transportation Committee is working on a timeline to resolve moped parking issues near HPU. It was also reported that Bill 34 regarding fireworks has passed first reading and has been submitted to council for second reading. It was also reported that additional freight loading zones in the Kekaulike Mall area are not recommended at this time as the makai side of King Street is currently a tow away zone. A work order has been sent to repaint existing freight loading zones.

Questions, comments and concerns followed;

Freight Unloading Area: Mollring suggested that an arrangement be made to allow for unloading of produce on Hotel Street, near Kekaulike Mall when there is no traffic.

State Representative Karl Rhoads: Karl Rhoads reported that there was a request to ban left turns into the Chinese Cultural Plaza (CCP) parking garage from Maunakea Street. It was also reported that SB605 regarding the use of Decibel C (DBC) scales to monitor noise levels is awaiting approval and input from the State Department of Health (DOH). It was further reported that residents will not have to pay the General Excise Tax (GET) on condo maintenance fees.

Questions, comments and concerns followed;

1. Cultural Plaza Left Turn: Matusow noted that Chinese New Year's was the only time left turns into the CCP garage was restricted. Smyth asked if left turn restrictions would be time based. Smyth also stated that it would be awkward to have a no left turn sign half way down the block.
2. Noise Meters: Smyth stated that the City has funds for the DBC meters.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Department of Parks and Recreation – Lack of Benches on Fort Street Mall: The item was deferred to allow the Mayor's representative to be present to provide a response.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Queen Emma Senior Condo Conversion: Shelly Wilson of Wilson Homecare and Don Huang of Collaborative Seven Development, LLC circulated handouts on the Queen Emma Two project. The proposed project will be to renovate an existing structure at 1270 Queen Emma Street and model the building to allow for a 117 unit age restricted senior condo. The estimated project schedule would take 14 months to complete. When renovated, Wilson Homecare would be the sole commercial tenant in the building. Tenants will be able to contract a variety of Wilson Homecare services at a cost that will be added to monthly charges. Apart from the contracted services, activities will be available to tenants to encourage an active lifestyle. It was also noted that the property is near hospitals, shopping areas and bus routes. Studio units will start at \$215 thousand and range up to \$295 thousand for a one bedroom penthouse.

Questions, comments and concerns followed,

1. Similar Programs: Smyth asked and it was clarified that there are other fee simple housing programs available in Hawaii; however, it was stated that the proposed program would be larger. It was pointed out that this would be the first program in Downtown.
2. Ownership: Smyth noted that since the unit would be owned, family members of a senior tenant would be able to sell the unit to persons on the program waiting list in the event that a senior tenant passes away.
3. Pricing: Ruby asked if the condos are priced for the general public. The Answer was yes.

4. Unit Size: Matusow expressed concern over the small size of the proposed units and stated that the units were less than half the size of hers and that she and others she knew would find it too small and not consider moving there. It was stated that the rooms are designed small to encourage tenant activity outside of the unit.
5. Pets: Matusow asked if pets would be allowed. She was told it would depend on the rules set forth by the Association of Apartment Owners (AOAO). Matusow stated that it is usually the developer's responsibility to set up the rules before an AOAO exits.
6. Cost: Au asked what the estimated cost of the project was. The response was \$18 million.
7. Construction: Smyth asked if construction on the building would be less as the existing building will be recycled. The response was yes. It was noted that many aspects of the existing structure make the project easier and environmentally friendly.

**Seeing no objection, the agenda was taken out of order to hear the report from the Mayor's representative and to discuss the lack of benches on Fort Street Mall.**

Mayor's Representative: Bill Brennan reported the following;

1. Trash at Kamali'i Park: The Fort Street Mall/Downtown crew has been instructed to remove trash bags from the area as soon as they possibly can to deter individuals from going through the trash bags.
2. Fort Street Mall Signage: The Section Supervisor is investigating to determine appropriate locations for signage and will submit a request to fabricate the signs needed. Signs will be installed upon receipt.
3. Wilcox Park Sign: The sign will be cleaned and/or replaced as needed. If replacement is necessary, a new sign may have to be ordered and fabricated to be installed upon receipt.
4. Hotel Street/Smith Street Jay-Walking: DTS recently retimed crosswalks in the Downtown area as part of an ongoing fine-tuning of the traffic signal optimization; however, the public is reminded that Jay-walking is illegal and HPD is currently enforcing pedestrian crossing rules.
5. Queen Street/Bishop Street Sign: The Queen Street/Bishop Street sign and post was reinstalled on June 15, 2010.
6. Fort Street Mall Seating: The City has contacted the Fort Street Mall Business Improvement District (BID) about installing benches along Fort Street Mall; however, the BID is short of funding. The City is looking into installing toadstools. It was stated that the toadstools would provide seating and resolve the issue of people lying down on benches. Funding will be sought in the next budget.
7. Homeless Issues: The homeless forum was a success. It was stated that the Mayor will not impose the River Street Residence project on Chinatown residents if the community does not support the program.

Questions, comments and concerns followed;

1. Fort Street Mall Benches: Mollring stated that an elderly woman was forced to sit on a fire hydrant due to the lack of benches on Fort Street Mall. Smyth noted that new signage indicates that sitting or leaning on planters is not permitted. It was noted that previously the City's response was for people to sit on the planters. Matusow stated that the community has already waited eight (8) years since the last Mayor removed the benches from Fort Street Mall and the community will have to wait another year to get funding for seating.
2. Leaf Blowers: Mollring again stated that City work crews were using leaf blowers and a generator at 3:23 a.m. at Fort Street Mall/Beretania Street.

Fort Street Mall Benches: Time for further commentary on the Fort Street Mall benches was made available.

Question, comments and concerns followed;

Alternative Options: Matusow stated that it is difficult for elderly individuals to sit on toadstools. Matusow suggested that benches similar to those found on Beretania Street fronting Times and Foodland be used on Fort Street Mall. It was also suggested that benches be reallocated from the area makai of King Street.

**The agenda was returned to order.**

Midblock Crosswalk: Mark Kikuchi (DTS) reported that Maunakea Marketplace has allowed part of their driveway to be used to install handicap railings to allow for a midblock crosswalk on Pauahi Street between River Street and Maunakea Street. Construction should be completed by the end of the year.

Kekaulike Barnes Dance Crosswalk: Mark Kikuchi stated that since road work will be taking place on King Street, a proposal was made by CBCA to install a Barnes Crosswalk on King Street between River Street and Maunakea Street. A Barnes Crosswalk would allow pedestrians to cross the street diagonally as well as straight across. Pending costs, it was also proposed that an ornamental dragon design be placed at the center of the crosswalk on the road. Two designs have been submitted for pricing.

Questions, comments and concerns followed;

1. Painting: Smyth asked if the painting of the ornamental design will be contracted out by the City. Kikuchi said yes.
2. Ornamental Design: Au noted the large art district in Chinatown and suggested that community members be allowed to submit designs for the crosswalk. It was also suggested that a community board be formed to decide on the final design.
3. Traffic Hazard: Concern was raised and it was answered that paint used on the ornamental design would have a non-slide coating.
4. Crosswalk Need: Smyth expressed that there isn't a real need for a Barnes Crosswalk at the indicated intersection as pedestrians can walk freely on both sides of King Street.

Pauahi Street Parking Spaces: Lavoie noted that the Board had already requested that eight (8) parking stalls on the mauka side of Pauahi Street between River and Maunakea Streets be designated No-Parking. Lavoie stated that the testing period for the designated stalls has passed and reminded the Board that if nothing is done, the stalls will remain No-Parking. Chu Lan Shubert-Kwok stated that though the No-Parking stalls were implemented to reduce drug activity, the stalls also cause a lack of parking space for the community and affects the success of surrounding businesses. It was also noted that the designated stalls haven't put an end to drug activities as dealers just move down the street. It was proposed that a number of stalls be changed to allow handicap and/or public parking during the day and revert back to No-Parking stalls at night as most drug activities occur at night.

Questions, comments and concerns followed;

1. Crime Reduction: HPD stated that though drug activities still occur in Chinatown, there has been a significant reduction in drug activity on Pauahi Street since the No-Parking stalls have been implemented.
2. Reasonable Request: Au expressed that parking is available elsewhere and noted that the proposed midblock crossing will increase access to Pauahi Street. It was expressed that the sacrifice of eight (8) parking stalls is worth the reduction of crime in the area.
3. Business Neglect: Yuen expressed that though there is a reduction in crime; businesses are suffering due to the lack of parking for customers. It was expressed that if the goal is to eliminate crime in Chinatown, all street parking areas should be removed. It was requested that input from Pauahi Street business owners be taken into consideration.
4. Foot Patrol: It was stated that No-Parking stalls only affect businesses as drug dealer's just move down the street. It was expressed that foot patrols would have more of an effect on crime reduction.

5. Handicap Stickers: Concern was raised that if current No-Parking stalls were converted to handicap stalls, stalls would be misused as drug dealer's use stolen or borrowed handicap stickers to park in handicap areas. It was suggested that handicap stalls be monitored to prevent misuse.
6. Night Patrol: Lavoie asked and HPD clarified that patrolling of the area at night would be easier if No-Parking stalls were implemented at night. It was stated that a higher rate of arrests are made during daytime hours due to visibility of the crime. HPD also noted that it is illegal for a police officer to approach an individual and ask for handicap documentation.
7. Abuse of Privileges: Mollring stated that family members of handicap individuals are borrowing handicap stickers and abusing handicap parking privileges. Concern was raised of improper use of handicap parking.
8. Handicap Spaces: Smyth noted that there is a difference between handicap spaces and cars with handicap stickers parking in metered parking stalls. Kikuchi clarified that handicapped spaces cannot be designated for on street parking, as the handicapped space must have an adjacent space for entry and egress for the handicapped. That these spaces occur in parking lots and garages.

**Yuen moved to restore all eight (8) parking stalls during daytime hours. There was no second and the motion died.**

Board Elections: Chair Lavoie entertained nominations for Board officers. Matusow nominated Lavoie as Chair, Au as Vice-Chair, Smyth as Secretary and Mollring as Treasurer. No other nominations were made.

**Seeing no other nominations, the Board re-elected all Board officers by UNANIMOUS CONSENT, 8-0-0 (AYE: Au, Chang, Lavoie, Matusow, Mollring, Ruby, Smyth and Yuen)**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: **The June 3, 2010 Downtown Neighborhood Board No. 13 regular meeting minutes were UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED AS CORRECTED, 8-0-0 (Aye: Au, Chang, Lavoie, Matusow, Mollring, Ruby, Smyth and Yuen).** Corrections included the following:

- Page 7 – The motion to accept the speaking limits should have added...Amount of time used by Board members in giving a report will not be counted toward the member's speaking time for question and comment on the report.

#### BOARD REPORTS:

Chairs Report: Chair Frank Lavoie reported,

- Other Liquor License Applications or Street Closures: There were no problems with liquor license applications that were received applications from Aloha Tower, as they are regular temporary applications that have never raised issues.
- Future Agenda Item: The request to have the City Smith/Beretania Parking lot remain open until 2:00 a.m. was deferred.
- Neighborhood Commission: Smyth reported that about 30 people attended the Conference of Chairs at Kapolei Hale. It was stated that there are no major policy changes to the Neighborhood Plan. It was also stated that there was a lengthy discussion on the complaints process. Smyth asked Corporation Council and it was stated that a Board member cannot file a complaint against the whole Board; rather, complaints must be filed against individual Board members. Other items discussed included the discontinuance of the agenda template, the use of prayers in meetings and Board member attendance guidelines. Matusow reported that the Commission is sanctioning the Ewa Board.
- T.A. Ruby: T.A. Ruby has expressed her desire to continue service on the Board after three absences. There was no objection to allow Ruby to remain on the Board.
- Writing of Chinatown Newspaper Board Report: It was stated that the Chinatown newspaper allows the Board to submit a 200 word article each month. Lavoie clarified that the Chair is responsible for writing the article and is allowed to be mentioned as the author of the piece. No objections were raised. Matusow

clarified that the Downtown Planet did reserve a column for a monthly article by the Downtown Board Chair and that when the Chinatown Newspaper came into existence, they were asked to do the same.

Treasurer's Report: Mollring reported a balance of \$1,142.31.

City and County Affairs: No new updates.

Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization (OMPO): Smyth reported that the transportation improvement projects for 2011 through 2014 are being reviewed. The major projects with impact to the Downtown Board area deals with the Vineyard off-ramp and the proposal to switch the direction of one way traffic on Piikoi Street and Pensacola Street.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The next regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday August 5, 2010 at the Pauahi Community Center; 171 North Pauahi Street at 7:00 p.m.
- The Neighborhood Citizen's Patrol meets each Tuesday on the Diamondhead side of Kukui Plaza at 8:00 p.m. Please consider joining the patrol and supporting its efforts as they express their service and pride in our Downtown/Chinatown community.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Submitted by Kazuaki McArthur, Neighborhood Assistant.

Reviewed by Frank Lavoie, Chair