



# Waikapū Community Association

*To enhance the quality of life for the residents of Waikapū through the preservation and appreciation of its history, natural environment, and values of its rural tradition.*

## **Testimony to the State Land Use Commission meeting of February 16, 2012 on the A&B Properties request for reclassification to the Urban District for the Wai`ale Project.**

Presented by Jacob Verkerke as President of the Waikapū Community Association.

Good afternoon Chair Lezy and Members of the Commission,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on the Wai`ale Project request for reclassification to the Urban District.

My name is Jacob Verkerke. I am a resident of the town of Waikapū and speak in my capacity as President of the Waikapū Community Association. Waikapū will be the community most impacted by the proposed project. The proposed Wai`ale development will be largely situated on lands that are part of the historical ahupua`a of Waikapū, and are as such part of the area that the WCA is actively focused on in its attempts to protect and strengthen the many facets of the endangered Hawaiian Small Town. The community of Waikapū offers a unique opportunity to revitalize and reemphasize all that is special and desirable in traditional small towns in Hawaii; too many of them have been lost. Many of them were lost through development proposals that did not properly plan for the protection of that special physical, cultural, and historical environment.

I represented the Waikapū Community before this commission on November 3, 2011, when we raised a number of important concerns about the lack of specificity in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for this project. Today the community of Waikapū returns to urge you to consider our earlier testimony in your deliberations, and to take action, as yet, to address our concerns. That action should take the form of conditions to be imposed, should the Commission reach a decision to approve the requested boundary change.

The most central issue of concern for the Waikapū Community Association is the threat this project represents to our community's continued separate identity as the last remaining traditional country town in Maui's Central Valley. That separate identity requires visually recognizable boundaries. Those boundaries are well defined in the recommendations provided by the General Plan Advisory Committee (GPAC) in their thorough work on the Maui Island Plan. The process of creating and adopting the MIP is not complete, and thus the parameters to be contained in the Maui Island Plan that should guide this Wai`ale development are not finalized. The Waikapū Community Association plans to vigorously present its case to the Maui County Council for inclusion of well defined open space boundaries maintaining visual separation between Waikapū and its northerly neighbors Wailuku and Kahului, such as proposed by the GPAC. The applicant claims consistency with the draft Maui Island Plan, but the boundary change application presents a master plan that was never reviewed as part of the of the Maui Island Plan Urban Growth Boundary maps. As presented in the Wai`ale Master Plan, the

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Wai`ale Community will provide insufficient separation at its northern boundary to preserve the visual distinction between Waikapū and Kahului. Even though it claims Waikapū as its location, this project will serve to draw Waikapū into Kahului and obliterate its separate, historical identity as a traditional country town.

**THE WAIKAPŪ COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION URGES THAT A FIRST CONDITION BE ATTACHED TO REQUIRE OPEN SPACE IN THE FORM OF A GREEN BELT BETWEEN WAI`ALE AND KAHULUI, SUCH AS INCLUDED ON THE GPAC RECOMMENDED DIRECTED GROWTH MAP FOR THIS AREA.**

Of grave concern to the community of Waikapū is also the preservation of areas of great natural, cultural, and historical significance within the proposed Wai`ale project area. The most obvious area of such significance, to a very great degree at that, are the extensive in-tact natural sand dunes and the burials contained in them. They should all be preserved and protected against further disturbances such as sand mining and development activities. The Directed Growth Maps approved by the GPAC and Maui Planning Commission for the Maui Island Plan have included this system of dunes in 'protection areas', recognizing their importance as cultural and natural resources. Such a protection area brings the additional benefit of maintaining a distinct separation between the existing community of Waikapū and its proposed new neighbor community of Wai`ale.

**THE WAIKAPŪ COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION URGES THAT A SECOND CONDITION BE ATTACHED TO REQUIRE PROTECTION OF THE WAI`ALE SAND DUNE SYSTEM AGAINST ANY DISTURBANCE, TO PRESERVE ITS NATURAL, CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND TO SERVE AS AN OPEN SPACE AREA OF SEPARATION BETWEEN THE PROPOSED WAI`ALE COMMUNITY AND THE PRESENT COMMUNITY OF WAIKAPŪ.**

The community of Waikapū is furthermore at a loss to understand how a project of the scope and impact of Wai`ale can be proposed and considered, while lacking a comprehensive discussion regarding issues of water sources and wastewater disposal. The allocation of surface waters in Na Wai Eha continues to be a contentious issue and water provided by existing on-site wells is already allocated for other A&B development projects. Where is the water for a project of this scale to come from? As for the disposal of wastewater, plans are no more conclusive. Our testimony submitted in November pointed out potential conflicts between the proposal to install injection wells in conjunction with onsite wastewater treatment, and the proposed Wellhead Protection Plan being drafted by the Department of Water Supply.

**THE WAIKAPŪ COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION URGES THAT A THIRD CONDITION BE ATTACHED TO REQUIRE THOROUGH STUDY AND ANALYSIS TO IDENTIFY ACTIONABLE SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS OF WATER SOURCING AND TREATMENT, INCLUDING DESIGN ALTERNATIVES TO REDUCE DEMAND AND DISPOSAL REQUIREMENTS.**

Attached to this testimony is a copy of the Waikapū Community Association Statement of Values, adopted in 2010. The Statement of Values describes what the Waikapū community has determined to be vital standards and guidelines for any and all endeavors affecting the community. Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments.