



‘ĀINA HAINA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

September 2011

PRESIDENT: Wayson Chow • TREASURER: Art Mori • MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Jeanne Ohta • RECORDING SECRETARY: Les Higa
BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE: Lenore Johnson, Melia Lane-Kanahele, Gregg Kashiwa, Chien-Wen Tseng

EARTHQUAKES. TSUNAMIS. TONADOES. HURRICANE SEASON. AND 2011 ISN'T OVER YET.

Attend the AHCA General Meeting and learn what to do, where to go, what supplies to have so you can be prepared natural disaster strikes! Special guest **DANNY TENGAN** OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL DEFENSE will be there with expert advice!

Please Attend: The ‘Āina Haina Community Association General Meeting

Date: Wednesday, September 21, 2011 **Time:** 7:00 p.m.

Place: ‘Āina Haina Elementary School Cafeteria

OTHER ITEMS ON THE AGENDA:

Wailupe Stream clean-up and flood control planning

New development on upper Hao Street

‘Āina Haina Shopping Center updates and community input

SAVE the ‘Āina Haina Post Office!

Parking and traffic since Hawai'i Kai Foodland closure

Alamoku Reservoir Planning & Proposal

Annual Election of Board Members

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‘ĀINA HAINA SAYS “NO!” TO WEDDINGS

The ‘Āina Haina Community Association prevailed on July 7, 2011, presenting information that caused the Kalani-Iki – Kuli’ou’ou Neighborhood Board #2 (NB#2) to unanimously vote to rescind a May 5, 2011 resolution supporting Hongwanji Resource Corporation’s permit applications for the Outrigger Canoe Club property at 5415 Kalaniana’ole Hwy. near Kawaiku’i Beach Park.

In May 2011, the Kalani-Iki – Kuli’ou’ou Neighborhood Board #2 (NB #2) was presented with a proposal for permit applications for the ‘Āina Haina Outrigger Canoe Club property.

Watabe Weddings Corp., Hongwanji Resource Corp. (HRC) and their development planner made a presentation which implied that the property would be used by the Honpa Hongwanji for Church-sponsored retreats, youth activities, group meetings and only occasional weddings of Church members. Based on that presentation, NB #2 passed a resolution recommending that the City & County Department of Planning & Permitting approve permits for the development and use of the property by HRC.

Despite urging of NB #2 Board members, Watabe and HRC did not meet with the AHCA Board until late June. Upon extensive questioning, it was found that Watabe, a Japanese commercial destination wedding company, was in fact the proposed new tenant and that HRC was applying for permits on Watabe’s behalf without a formal business relationship. HRC was also found to be a *for-profit* corporation not specifically or clearly related to Honpa Hongwanji. As such, the inference that the Church would be the main user of the property was suspect.

AHCA’s Wayson Chow presented the findings at the July 7 NB#2 Board meeting to ensure full disclosure to the Board and community. With support from Niu Valley’s Jeanine Johnson and many members of ‘Āina Haina and nearby communities, staunch opposition to establishing commercial operations in residential neighborhoods was clearly expressed. AHCA’s Anson Rego asked that the NB #2 Board rescind its prior resolution on the basis of incomplete and

misleading disclosures made at the time it was passed.

In response, NB #2 unanimously passed this resolution:

“Because of the significant difference between the information given us at our May meeting and the information presented today, I move that the Neighborhood Board #2 rescind its approval of this project and publish this decision to the Department of Planning and Permitting.”

Closing out this chapter, HRC withdrew its applications for permits at the Outrigger Property on July 26, 2011.

SAVE OUR POST OFFICE!

On July 27, the ‘Āina Haina Post Office narrowly escaped the United States Postal Service’s threatened closure of four O’ahu Post Offices. But in early August, ‘Āina Haina Community Association learned of USPS pending reductions in the ‘Āina Haina Post Office staffing and hours, and of its coming lease expiration in February 2012. AHCA sprung to action with its Petition Campaign to avert closure. The petition states:

“We, the undersigned taxpayers, strongly urge that the lease for AINA HAINA POST OFFICE, an essential government service, be extended for three or more years, and that the Current Hours of Operation (Mon-Friday: 10 a.m.—12 noon, 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.; Saturday: 9 a.m.-12 noon), and that Current Staffing (Two U.S. Postal Clerks) continue.”

In its July 25, 2011 meeting, the AHCA Board voted to support and defend the ‘Āina Haina Post Office’s current retail service hours and staffing.

The proposed USPS reductions in Post Office hours and staffing could be disastrous to our neighbors and businesses, our kapuna, POI box lessees, and residents unable to drive to the Kahala or Hawaii Kai Post offices.

Representatives of the USPS HQ for O’ahu are invited to the **AHCA GENERAL MEETING**. We hope they will come to answer questions and hear your concerns about proposed limits and potential closure of this community cornerstone.

Be sure to attend to learn more, voice concerns, sign the petition, and help by asking neighbors and friends, to sign AHCA’s **Defend ‘Āina Haina Post Office** Petition!

Watabe Weddings Corporation

Founded in 1964, Watabe Weddings Corporation is a publicly-traded commercial destination wedding company. According to a February 14, 2004 Star Advertiser article, Watabe Weddings Hawaii, the company’s largest operation, “handled a record 16,595 Japanese weddings in Hawaii in 2000.”

Having just lost its lease on the John Dominis Chapel to a competitor, Watabe is now without a Chapel facility near the Waikiki/Ala Moana area – the heart of the Japanese tourist trade.

Though the present number of O’ahu weddings has not been disclosed, Watabe claims an average 10% annual growth with more than half its business in Hawai’i.

For over forty years, residents of ‘Āina Haina have opposed commercial operations in the residential communities of East O’ahu. AHCA wishes Watabe well in its efforts to find a more suitable site.

DEVELOPMENT ON UPPER HAO

*Many recently voiced concerns about site preparation on Hao St. near the hiking trail. This 9.5 acres of residentially-zoned private land has been controversial for decades. A range of City land use, permitting and planning departments - even the City Council itself - have recognized the risk of development there. AHCA and NB#2 have unsuccessfully asked the City to purchase the property as originally intended. Following is a history of this property and the surrounding 80+ acre preserve purchased by the City in 1999 to **avoid potential hazards to current and future residents**:*

1970 October 2 In the oldest record of development applications for this land, the City Planning Department Deputy Director notes that "The proposed subdivision is within a potential slide area."

1974 Holiday Mart submits application for private tennis club totaling 85.8 acres on TMK 36024001 & TMK 36004001.

1974 December 11 Director & Chief Engineer, Dept. of Public Works, states in a memo on the Holiday Mart application that "The preliminary soils evaluation shows that there has been a slide in this area and creep areas are also present. *We do not recommend development of this site.*"

1976 A proposed cemetery on the two parcels is vehemently opposed by the community. The applicant's cemetery proposal was not adopted by the City Council.

1979 Hong Kong-based Volumes Corp. buys the residentially-zoned lot (TMK 36024001) for \$325,000.00. \$650,000 more is paid for the 85-acre surrounding parcel. (TMK 3600401).

1980 Volumes Corp. applies for permits to develop a 15-1ct residential subdivision. Application expires.

1981 February 27 Volumes sends letter stating it will comply with City requirement to inform future buyers that they are in a potential slide area, and indemnifying the City from liabilities arising from any development permitting.

1981 August 11 City Dept. of Land Utilization Director issues recommendation to City Council that TMK 36024001 (9.2 acres) and TMK 36004001 (85.2 acres) be rezoned to P-1 Preservation. The report states "*Steep slopes in this part of Aina Haina Valley are subject to soil slippage. Therefore, the proposed rezoning by City Council is (1) in accord with proposed City land use policy; (2) generally in accord with general land use policies; and (3) would protect the public interest by eliminating the potential for residential development on lands subject to soil slippage... This request is being made because of concerns that hazardous slope, soil, and slide conditions exist on the site which would be detrimental to future residents living on and existing residents living near the property in question.*"

1998 City & County applies to rezone TMK 36024001 and TMK 36004001 (98/Z-6), converting both residentially-zoned properties to preservation land.

1999 City Council approves \$5M to buy both parcels deemed unsuitable for residential development due to slide risk and soil instability. The budget attracts media attention since the total assessed value is just \$466,100 for BOTH parcels.

2000 The City purchases ONLY the 85-acre parcel for \$1,874,000 (TMK36004001). Volumes Corp. retains the smaller residentially-zoned parcel. The City purchase and failure to purchase the smaller parcel are not disclosed to the public, AHCA, and/or to Kuli'ou'ou-Kalani Iki Neighborhood Board #2 (NB#2).

Nothing explains the City's failure to buy both lots per its 1999 resolution in response to the Dept. of Land Utilization's report that soil instability and landslide risks made both parcels **unsuitable for development**. The failure to purchase **both** left control of TMK 36-024-001 to private developers.

2004 Volumes Corp. sells the 9.5-acre parcel to Island Title Ko Olina Hotel #10 LLC for \$2,136,189.

2006 New owner submits proposal to City Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) for a 25-home gated community at the mauka end of Hao St. City denies permit, primarily based on the Board of Water Supply's inadequate water pressure concerns.

2006 The parcel sells for \$2,369,700 to another Jeffrey Stone-owned Residences at Aina Haina LLC (RAHL).

2007 RAHL proposes a 12-lot subdivision to comply with BWS service limits. The application expires after the DPP raises other concerns not adequately addressed.

April 19, 2011 DPP approves RAHL Sewer Connection Permit application to serve eight single-family dwellings.

Mid-late July 2011 Leaflets appear on Upper `Aina Haina utility poles alerting neighbors to excavations and clearing.

July 21, 2011 City Councilman Stanley Chang files an urgent Request for Investigation with the City DPP.

July 28, 2011 The AHCA files Requests for Investigation, Information and Photocopying with City DPP and requests immediate "Cease & Desist" Order pending DPP investigation of possible grubbing and/or grading without a permit.

August 3, 2011 The City DPP states that "no permit was required" since the owners cleared "only 13,000 sq. feet" as a preliminary step toward soil engineering studies.

This property lies outside the Urban Growth Boundary; has been identified by the City as an area where soils are "potential indicators of slow-moving landslides;" and borders Wilupe Stream. It's essential that any development minimize the risk of construction and slide debris in this essential flood control waterway for all of `Aina Haina.

Soil and hydrological reports back to 1971 are missing from public records. If anyone has valid access to the studies submitted with prior permit applications, US Geological Survey or US Army Corps studies for this property, please let us know how we can obtain copies. Mahalo for your help!



`Āina Haina Community Association
c/o The `Āina Haina Public Library
5246 Kalanianaʻole Hwy.
Honolulu, HI 96821

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**AINA HAINA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
MEMBERSHIP DUES & ENROLLMENT FORM**
(Dues are \$10/year per adult*)

TYPE OF ENROLLMENT

☐ New ☐ Renewal

TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

☐ Resident ☐ Business

Name of Business: _____

Name of Member: _____

Street Address: _____

CONTACT INFORMATION

email address _____ landline # _____ cell # _____

I prefer to be contacted by: ☐ email ☐ landline ☐ cell phone

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU

☐ Post Office Closure

☐ Disaster Preparedness

☐ Wailupe Stream Clean-up

☐ Flood and Slide Control

☐ Traffic Safety

Other _____

ANY SUGGESTIONS? _____

*Due to a long-standing misinterpretation of our bylaws, we've been undercharging. \$10 per adult/year would help to improve communication, cover research expenses and a lot of valuable things. For the price of membership, you get to vote. If you and your family cannot afford \$10 for each adult in your household, contribute what you can but please understand that only the registered member will be eligible to vote at AHCA meetings. Mahalo for your understanding.