

**Name: Michele Lincoln**

**Agenda Item: C Goal 2.3 Responsible Stewardship of Resources, Culture and Character, and D Goal 2.5 Safe, Healthy, Livable Communities for All**

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### **Testimony for CPAC Meeting October 22, 2019**

Testimony for Tuesday's Meeting October 22

In regards to using the word "shall" in the community plan, if it is something you feel strongly about then make sure to include the word in the policies and actions. Even then, it is easily overturned with resolutions by the county council.

Case in point, on page 23 #6 of the 1996 West Maui Community Plan, stream channels and gulches are deemed unsuitable for development. The WMC Plan states to keep those regions open space as greenways for public use and visual separation.

The community plan states "Existing development of these stream channels, gulches and other areas shall be maintained and shall not be expanded. Drainage channels and siltation basins, should not be considered for building sites, but used rather, for public open space."

It goes on to identify 14 streams and gulches in West Maui. Quote: "The following streams and gulches...to be kept as open space: a. Kahoma Stream..."

The exact areas in Kahoma forbidden by the community plan to develop are now considered "infill". Now houses fill the space where recreational areas were supposed to be located in this densely populated area.

Reading the minutes from the 1996 CPAC meetings reveals the same discussions the current CPAC are having over unimproved open space and developed parks. Where Kahoma Residential exists was supposed to be more natural landscape with biking and walking trails. Where Kahoma Village is being developed was supposed to be an improved public community park.

By the time the county council got through altering the CPAC's plan, the 1996 West Maui Community Plan Page 20 #11b identified "A new community-oriented park along the south bank of Kahoma Stream and between Front Street and Honoapiilani Highway." Then on page 54 regarding the same property it describes a Project District with a quarter of the property as a park and the remainder "shall be evenly divided between commercial/business uses, multi-family and senior citizen residential uses."

None of those things happened. Instead, over 200 homes are being developed in this area called Kahoma Village. It was approved with complete disregard for the historical significance or safety in the event of a tsunami.

Choose your battles! Ask yourself. Is this the hill you want to die on? If something is really important to the community, then use the strongest language possible recognizing it still may be ignored and overturned in the future.

The following are suggestions for policies and action from October 22 meeting:

#### Responsible Stewardship of Resources, Culture, and Character

##### Actions

#4 Expanding Historic District suggestions: A designated enforcement officer should be included for this region. Perhaps a specialized position could be established to enforce historical district regulations, environmental regulations, and cultural code of conduct, along with police responsibilities.

Vehicle violations, vandalism, assaults, thefts, shop-lifting, loitering, littering, hawking, illegal vacation rentals, drug dealers, and all the other unlawful activities that take place in this district will require an enforcement plan.

#6 Suggestions for off-road vehicles: Create network of trails away from residential areas and sensitive watershed regions. Work with off-road enthusiasts and fire prevention experts to create a trail system that would provide fire-breaks. Off-road vehicle use would keep vegetation down in designated areas. Perhaps former cane roads could be incorporated into the trail system.

#7 (Policy #3) Suggestions to determine the distance for buffer zone restrictions around gulches: Consult insurance companies and FEMA for safety recommendations and guidelines. Also, be aware that loi terraces, irrigation pump stations, or even foot bridges could be considered "structures".

#10 Be aware, the Ridge to Reef and other watershed management entities on West Maui do not include management of Kahoma or Kanaha Streams. These are the two major streams located right in Lahaina. Kahoma and Kanaha Streams are important for high consideration and protection. They affect ocean water quality by "Baby Beach" and are responsible for potable water too.

#11 Army Corps of Engineers has in the past implemented practices that have proven detrimental to the environment. Include language that as long as the USACE watershed study reflects the wishes of the community and protects Hawaiian cultural practices then the community plan would implement their recommendations.

#### Safe, Healthy, Livable Communities for All

##### Policies

#3 Regarding the wording for development of trails where it states "access along the tops of gulches", please consider many archeological structures and loi terraces are near the streams.

Iao Valley has trails near the water and they have many flood events compared to Kahoma so there must be a way to make trails safe but also accessible to streams.

#6 Regarding parks located in residential neighborhoods, please change the walking time of “five to 10 minutes” to an estimated distance. With elderly and small children, that use a park for health and safety, close proximity is vital.

Also, eliminate the word “new” residential as many congested older existing residential neighborhoods lack recreational areas. Look at the density of Lahaina-luna and compare the ratio of park and open space to see how it lacks recreational areas within walking distance.

#7 Change the wording regarding parks being “fully accessible to visitors of all abilities”. As an example of unnecessary expenditures, a small neighborhood park on Lahaina-luna has covered a hillside with an expensive concrete ramp. The park already had an entrance from the sidewalk on the mauka side that would have been less costly to make handicap accessible.

Also, would places like Slaughter House Beach require a ramp? Then consider all the access to trails proposed in the community plan. Do you really want paved paths throughout native forests?

#9 In addition to increasing transportation options in West Maui, create incentives to diminish the desire to rent cars. To reduce visitor traffic on the Pali, consider automatic sensor toll features to be required on rental cars. Make the toll fee high enough to discourage multiple unnecessary trips across the island. Provide more public transportation and encourage higher resort parking fees to help reduce the amount of rental cars. Until Maui’s infrastructure is improved, limit the number of rental cars allowed on the island.

#10 Ideals for livable communities like sidewalks and bus stops and other neighborhood amenities should be required in urban type neighborhoods. For future agriculture housing neighborhoods, some of these features may prove to be unnecessary and make housing too expensive for the farm labor wages.

#11 Restrict modular manufactured homes made with materials that rust and corrode.

#12 Have the policy read as follows: “Support projects that provide housing for resident households based on actual incomes of the workforce and are consistent with other Community Plan policies.”

HUD guidelines are skewed because of high-end development. Stop using the requirements based on median income percentages identified by HUD.

Statistics show 73% of West Maui’s workforce earns less than \$44,000 annually. If agriculture is to become viable, housing needs to be affordable for farm wages.

Currently only 25% of a Maui housing project needs to be affordable according to HUD’s affordable guidelines. That means many of the homes can be priced at \$760,000 and meet that affordable requirement.

In the two recent Kahoma housing developments, many of the higher priced “affordable homes” had to be sold on the open market because first time home buyers could not qualify for loans or deed restrictions were a deterrent. Some of the homes meant to be affordable were sold to existing home owners that already have multiple houses.

Something has got to change and the community plan can help set a precedent.

#### Actions

#5 Include policy with ways and means to increase tree canopies on the West Side overall, not just in urban areas. In 1948 the nation of Israel was a barren wasteland. Today Israel has verdant forests and farmland. Find out how they accomplished this and emulated what worked or didn't work for them.

Public tree planting events like they did last year on West Maui could be expanded with visitor programs. Purchasing and planting trees in designated areas could become an opportunity of eco-tourism.

#6 Consider the millions of visitors yearly that will have access to sensitive nature preserves on existing government trails. There are ways to protect and preserve public access lands with imposed limited uses.

Residents should be able to access the trails with limited restraints. Visitors should have to make reservations with a fee to help with operation expenses and control overuse. To visit Haleakala before 7 am, reservations are required so the concept is already instituted.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these suggestions.