

ARBORIST ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes

Meeting on November 17, 2005

Department of Public Works Conference Room #703 – Aupuni Center – Hilo, Hawaii

Present: AAC members: Chairperson Leonard Bisel, Michael Kraus,
Jan Anderson, & Esther Imamura (Planning staff)

State Agency Representative: Gordon Heit, DLNR

Public: Francis Benevides, Sr.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 a.m. by L. Bisel, Chairperson.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Acceptance of minutes from the September 22 and October 20, 2005 meetings was deferred.

Change in agenda order to accommodate the public:

ANNOUNCEMENT

Mr. Francis Benevides, Sr. stated his concerns about the darkness and poor visibility under the canopy of the Banyan Tree at the former Green Onion Restaurant site. He suggested that the tree be trimmed in three or four places to allow sunlight to come through. He also mentioned a similar problem with the trees along Banyan Drive.

Chair Bisel noted that only this Banyan tree is on the Exceptional Tree list so it's something that the Committee will consider. We have no control over the Banyan Drive trees.

M. Kraus commented that the tree can't be pruned to get light underneath it without damaging it irreparably. Also, the openings wouldn't last more than a couple of months.

Possible suggestions to improve safety under the dense canopy included painting of the line more often than normal, strengthening the center line median – make it a bright color and also marking the curb to identify them, adding some more reflective aspect to the paint, or installing rumble strips. Chair Bisel will check with the Department of Public Works, Traffic Division to see if any of these suggestions could be implemented to improve traffic safety under this tree.

Hawai'i County is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Signage for the Mango groves:

Chair Bisel submitted an electronic copy of the sign to Ben Ishii about a week ago.

2. Draft letter to Haili Church regarding the False Kamani Tree:

J. Anderson is working with Chair Bisel and M. Kraus to complete the letter. She has asked for clarification from Corporation Counsel Noda regarding an owner's incumbency to comply with a recommendation made by the Committee. She noted that we may need to augment the Planning Department and/or the Committee's enforcement procedure to deal with noncompliance. Corporation Counsel Noda's response will be forwarded to all members.

3. Logo Contest:

A winner (Rose Foggia) was selected by judges David Tamura, Vicki Vierra and Eric Jeschke. Although it was not camera ready, the judges were willing to have her finalize it. The judges also selected two entries that they considered to be honorable mention ones.

Corporation Counsel Noda will coordinate with the County Council to have Puna District Councilmember Gary Safarik present the award (Certificate of Merit) to Ms. Foggia at their December 21, 2005 Council meeting in Hilo.

4. Hawaii County Planting Plan:

Chair Bisel reported that Hawaii Community College instructor David Benitez was willing to take on the GPS survey of the mango groves as a project for his class. However, although it was too late for this semester, they will work on sections of the grove during subsequent semesters. Chair Bisel was asked to provide information such as the exact number of trees, aerial photographs, if any, and documentation regarding the groves.

NEW BUSINESS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. E. Imamura distributed two communications which were received by the Planning Department. One was a nomination from Shaun McElhannon for a Banyan Tree at Hawi. M. Kraus volunteered to examine the tree.

2. Also distributed was a copy of an October 21, 2005 memorandum to Chairperson Stacy Higa and the County Council from Parks and Recreation Director Engelhard regarding the Ordinance to remove the Quinine Tree at Kalakaua Park from the List of Exceptional Trees. Chair Bisel reported that the letter was drafted and submitted within a couple of days of our last meeting. Therefore, he was not able to get in touch with Director Engelhard to include language that the Committee had expressed prior concerns that if the tree had been properly maintained and some of the warnings of problems were heeded ahead of time, that the demise of the tree could have been avoided. However, our minutes will still contain this sentiment.
3. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, January 19, 2006 in the Planning Department Conference Room at 10:00 am.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 a.m.

Approved: February 16, 2006