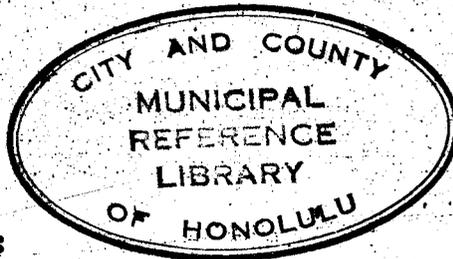


Honolulu City Planning Comm.



December 30, 1932.

Memo to Mayor Wright:

As per your verbal request I give you herewith a summary of the work carried on by the Planning Commission and its staff.

As you know, the personnel of the Planning Commission contains nine business men of the city, of the highest caliber, who are willing to give up regularly one hour a week, and as much more as is necessary, to consider things referred to them by the Board of Supervisors, or otherwise coming before them in their official capacity. Several of these men have served for a great many years. For example:- Mr. J. D. McInerney has served for 14 years; A. R. Keller 13 years; J. M. Young- 8 years; L. P. Thurston- 4 years; Hugh Howell- 4 years; M. B. Carson- 4 years; Vincent Fernandes- 2 years; C. W. Dickey- 2 years.

The one important feature to be considered in connection with the services of these men is that they serve entirely without pay, and render to the city a service that would be difficult to obtain thru paid service within any reasonable sum for which such services could be purchased. It is therefore only fair to a Commission such as this that somewhere in the City Government there should be an employed staff or personnel for carrying on the routine duties connected with city planning work.

Among the matters coming before the Commission, which have been in the past a combination of duties performed by the employed personnel and the members of the commission, at their stated sessions, are such things as --

Applications for establishment of business areas, which is a very important item in itself and one that requires in many cases great amount of time and deliberation, together with investigations.

The preparation of ordinances for the establishment of business districts.

The preparation of all ordinances pertaining to traffic, set-lines, changes to the building code, etc.

Examination of all applications for subdivisions, in conference with the owners, for the purpose of fitting subdivisions into the City Plan for the promotion of a systematic and comprehensive development of the city.

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Under arrangements made with a number of the large land owners of the city, the plans for all prospective buildings facing certain streets, such as Kapiolani Boulevard, Kalakaua Avenue, and a number of other locations, are first submitted to the Planning Commission for approval before construction is authorized.

The re-checking and systematising of the house numbering system of the city, which is now about fifty percent corrected, and unless continued will eventually cause the City Government much embarrassment, and the taxpayers much expense.

Constant vigilance has been maintained to prevent the establishment of stores and other forms of business in unauthorized areas.

Most of the preliminary drainage plans during the past eight years have been prepared by the City Planning Division. There is great need for additional drainage plans for the entire city. A start has been made on these plans, but time has not permitted their completion. A study of the entire drainage system by competent personnel is necessary before a comprehensive drainage plan can be prepared.

The City Planning Division has during the past six years handled the granting of all permits for sidewalks, curbs, etc. It is very important that this function be handled by the office directing the city planning work, or otherwise many curbs, sidewalks and driveways would be constructed on streets where set-back lines are established and would eventually have to be removed. In such cases the city would be required to bear the total expense of reconstruction.

During the past two years the City Planning Division has handled all matters of a traffic engineering nature, in cooperation with the Road Maintenance Department and the Police Department. There is great necessity for the continuance of this work in some branch of the engineering department as a great deal of the traffic regulation of the city is, from the standpoint of safety, primarily an engineering function. A total of 54 lives to date is entirely too high for a city the size of Honolulu.

The City Planning Division has in the past taken care of nearly all of the projects coming before the Public Works Department which do not fit into, in some regular way, one of the established branches.

All of the above enumerated duties, together with other numerous matters of a miscellaneous nature, which have in the past been carried on by the City Planning Commission or its staff, must of necessity be continued in some branch of the Municipal Government. I see no way by which any phases of the work can be eliminated. Under these circumstances the matter of expense to the Municipal Government would be practically the same whether they are carried on by being consolidated with some other department, or justified thru

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an independent unit. The advantage, I would say, would be greatly in favor of the latter, utilizing some of the personnel which has been trained thru years of service to handle the work. Much of the efficiency of this work depends upon the knowledge of the work that has gone before, and the maps and other information on file in the engineering department.

Without in any way considering the personal element involved, I strongly recommend, for the purpose of efficiency and economy, that the work of the City Planning Commission in all of its phases be continued substantially as it has been operating during the past few years.

Chas. R. Welsh

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42

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1. City planning - Oahu.
2. Honolulu - City planning.