

January 31, 1925.

Honorable John H. Wilson,
Mayor, City and County of Honolulu,
Honolulu, Hawaii.

Dear Sir:

I have the honor to submit herewith report of the City Planning Commission for the biennial period 1923-1924, and of the expenditures of moneys appropriated for this purpose by the Honorable Board of Supervisors of the City and County of Honolulu.

	1923	1924
Appropriations, Salaries and Expenses . . .	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
Expenses	<u>2,147.45</u>	<u>2,214.55</u>
Amount lapsed	852.55	785.45
Appropriations, Permanent Street Survey	\$ 24,000.00	
Amount expended		<u>6,712.34</u>
Amount lapsed		17,287.66

The personnel of the Commission remains the same as for the previous biennial period, Messrs. J. D. McInerny, P. E. Spalding and H. R. Macfarlane being reappointed at the expiration of their term, June 30, 1923; and Messrs. A. R. Keller and G. P. Denison being reappointed at the expiration of their term, June 30, 1924. The personnel of the Commission is as follows:

- Appointed members- J. D. McInerny, President
- H. R. Macfarlane
- P. E. Spalding
- G. P. Denison
- A. R. Keller

- Ex-Officio Members- Mayor John H. Wilson
- City Engineer, Louis S. Cain

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In June, 1924, the meeting place was changed from the Assembly Hall of the Kapiolani Building to the Stock and Bond Exchange in the Stangenwald Building. This change was made in order to have a quieter place for conference, and one which would always be available, the assembly hall being in constant demand for other purposes.

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The year 1923 was devoted mainly to minor problems, practically no large projects being matured during that year because of the lack of funds and engineering help to conduct an engineering survey for the establishment of street lines and grades.

During the sessions of the Territorial Legislature the Commission attended two hearings. The first, on April 18, was before the House Committee on County Affairs, where the relative order of importance of the three projects, - King Street Widening, School Street Extension and Queen Street Extension, was discussed, especially in their relation to immediate relief of traffic congestion on King Street where is concentrated all travel between Honolulu and Schofield. To care for these projects, authorization was given to the City and County to float a bond issue up to \$750,000, the distribution of same being left to the Board of Supervisors.

The second hearing was before the Judiciary Committee of the Senate on April 23, in connection with the proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance, under the provisions of which the supervisors would have power to restrict as well as extend the fire limits. The Commission voiced its disapproval of this amendment, feeling that it would be an entering wedge to undermine the efficiency of the Zoning Ordinance, and altho the bill passed the Senate, it fortunately did not receive the signature of the Governor.

In order that the City Planning Commission should be given legal standing in the eyes of the Legislature, Senate Bill No. 157, was introduced, authorizing the amendment to the revised laws of 1915 enabling the Board of Supervisors to create a City Planning Commission with specific powers, and the same was passed as Act 150. The amended paragraph reads as follows:

"7A. To create a city planning commission to be charged with the duty of formulating rules and plans to regulate the future growth, development and beautification of the City and County of Honolulu in its public and private buildings, streets, parks, grounds and vacant lots, and to perform such other duties as the board of supervisors may prescribe; and to recommend the establishment of building zones."

Much time was spent during the year 1923 in follow up work on questions arising from enforcement of the street ~~plan~~ for the reclamation district at Waikiki which have been approved by the Waikiki Reclamation Commission, the City Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. In each case that has come before the Commission for discussion emphasis has been laid on the vital importance to the plan as a whole of preserving the wide rights of way, even when the immediate building of permanent roads is neither practicable nor necessary.

With the widening of the Waikiki Drainage Canal from 150 feet to 250 feet, accomplished thru the last legislature, changes in development plans for the upper side of the canal have been under study. If the plan suggested by Mr. Bigelow, chairman of the Waikiki Improvement Commission, is followed, the proposed sea wall on the upper side of the canal would be done away with, and the proposed boulevard running parallel to the canal abandoned. In its place they would suggest: first, that the bank be permitted to slope gradually

to the edge of the water; second, that the parking strip be planted to rare trees and shrubbery, creating there a tropical garden such as Honolulu has long felt the need of, and which can now be found only in private estates; and in the third place, they would build thru this park a winding drive, with possibly a bridle path. The lower side of the canal would remain as heretofore planned, with retaining wall and boulevard.

The most serious handicap faced by the Commission during the year 1923 was the lack of permanent street locations and grades for the city of Honolulu. Our street plans for Waikiki and Kapalama were good so far as they went, but they are little more than paper plans, and subject to many changes after actual surveys of the land have been made. Appreciating the importance of a foundational survey as a prerequisite for any development projects of any importance in Honolulu, the Honolulu Chapter of the American Association of Engineers brot the matter to a definite head in its recommendation to the Board in October asking that an appropriation of \$2000 per month be set aside to cover the cost of surveys required to fix street lines and grades under the supervision of the City Planning Commission, the results of this work to be later incorporated into our proposed comprehensive city plan toward which the city may grow.

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The year 1924 started off propitiously with an appropriation of \$24,000 per year made available by the Board of Supervisors for the permanent street survey of the city. Under the wording of the appropriation, however, the control of the work was tied up in the City Engineer's Office, and pending the status of Louis Cain as City and County Engineer, no appointment of a special engineer was made for the new work until the first of June when the appointment of Capt. Charles R. Welsh of Schofield was made by Engineer Cain on the recommendation of the City Planning Commission.

Thru some misunderstanding the original appropriation was placed under the control of the Engineering Department of the City instead of under that of the Planning Commission, and it was not until October that a change in title of appropriation was secured. A second change was made in the wording of the appropriation in December to enable Capt. Welsh to handle investigation work on problems that come before the Commission from time to time, and which cannot legitimately be classified as permanent street survey work. The new reading of the appropriation placed the engineer's salary under the following- "City Planning Commission, Engineering Expenses and Incidentals on Permanent Outlays", and makes makes possible a much more comprehensive work on the part of the City Planning Engineer.

Following the appointment of Engineer Welsh as City Planning Engineer, the Commission outlined the following order of procedure in developing a permanent street survey of the city, and directed the Engineer to proceed as rapidly as possible on this basis: First, that the survey begin in the Kapalama District where much building development has long been delayed because of ~~xxxx~~ this lack; Second, that following the Kapalama survey, or in conjunction with it, a similar survey be made of that portion of the Waikiki district which is still without lines and grades; and Third, that this survey be

followed up as rapidly as possible thruout the city until the findings are sufficiently complete to incorporate into a City Plan.

A preliminary survey of the Kapalama district, however, revealed a very serious drainage problem which demanded solution before a permanent street survey could be satisfactorily inaugurated. The flood waters which gather from the valleys of the Koolau Range of mountains and tear down across the Palama district and to the sea represent a run-off of approximately one thousand acres of mountain slope, and have been a very serious handicap to any development work in this district.

In his report to the Commission under date of August 8, 1925, Engineer Welsh recommended that the water should be trapped at the lower end of these valleys and carried thru underground box drains of approximately one thousand feet in length to the junction of School and Houghtailing Streets where both drains are united. From this point the drain would be an open canal 6' in depth and 18' in width. Due to the gradual flattening in grade the width increases to 60' at the north side of King Street. This width continues for 750' where the grade strikes sea-level. At this point the canal widens to 100' with a depth of 9' and continues at these dimensions approximately 4000' to the sea. The total cost of construction is estimated at \$957,000.00. The report of Engineer Welsh was based on a five inch rain fall for one hour with a run off of 70%.

The plan presented in this report was endorsed by the Commission on November 20, and was presented to the Board of Supervisors, and in turn referred to the Attorney's department to secure a ruling as to ways and means of carrying on this improvement. Opinion rendered by Mr. N. D. Godbold of that office ruled that a drainage system could not be constructed on the assessment plan as an independent proposition nor in connection with proposed street work which is merely incidental. Therefore, the method of accom-

plishing this drainage system remains for solution during the new year, 1925. In the meantime a street layout for the drainage section is nearing completion and will be undertaken either in combination with, or following the completion of the drainage system.

SUBDIVISIONS:

Twenty seven subdivision plans have been presented to the Commission during the year 1924, none of which have been approved where streets were shown at less than 40 feet in width. The Commission is pledged to wider streets for Honolulu, not only in the business districts, where the congestion is perhaps the most keenly felt, but in the residential district as well, and the Commission believes that the most logical place to initiate a program of wider streets is in the many new subdivisions now being opened up in Honolulu. Theoretically no doubt every one believes in wide streets, and yet the natural tendency in subdividing large holdings into individual lots is for the owner or trustee to set aside as narrow a strip as is possible for road purposes, so as to conserve the maximum amount of land for house lots. He is interested, and naturally so, in the immediate returns, while the City Planning Commission is always thinking and planning in terms of a future Honolulu. The Commission has gone on record as willing to approve of no subdivisions with streets less than 40 feet in width, and that width only in cases of unimportant connecting streets, limited in length and service. ~~By 40 feet wide means~~ A street 40 feet wide, however, is in reality a 40 foot right-of-way, including sidewalk area, and not a 40 foot paved area. There has been a very commendable spirit of cooperation on the part of many of the owners presenting subdivision plans, and it is hoped that this spirit will continue.

Below is listed the subdivisions in the order received and taken up by the Commission:

1. Thomas Pineapple property, Kalihi Jan. 4, 1924
2. Castle Terrace, Manoa Feb. 7, "
3. Kahala Heights Feb. 21, "
4. School Street, opposite Asylum Mar. 13, "
5. East Manoa & Jones Street Apr. 3, "
6. Thomas Pineapple Co., new plan Apr. 3, "
7. Helumoa, Waikiki Apr. 3, "
8. Kawananakoa, Nuuanu Valley Apr. 3, "
9. Parker & Jones Street Apr. 17, "
10. Lanakai Beach Tract, Kailua Apr. 25, "
11. Heen-Crawford Tract, Manoa Valley May 1, "
12. Wahiawa property, by Clarence Pringle . . . May 8, "
13. Wailupe May 22, "
14. Kapahulu Road May 29, "
15. Kaneche June 5, "
16. Colonial Hotel property, Emma Street . . . July 3, "
17. Robertson Home, Nuuanu July 3, "
18. Magazine and Spencer Streets July 24, "
19. Wahiawa Terrace, by Thurston Taylor . . . July 24, "
20. Kapahulu Road, Kanaina Ave. July 31, "
21. Waialse-iki, Isenberg property Sept. 11, "
22. Burbank Tract, Wylie Street Oct. 9, "
23. Dowsett Tract, Nuuanu, Lots 62ANov. 20, "
24. Kaimuki Crater Tract Dec. 4, "
25. Judd Street Park Tract, Nuuanu Dec. 18, "
26. Kalihi, Center and King Streets Dec. 18, "
27. Dowsett Tract, Lots 41,42, & 43 Dec. 16, "

In ~~the~~ passing on subdivision plans that have come before the Commission during the year, there has arisen some question as to the legality of approving subdivisions in which provision is made for a street that is "blind". According to Section 1888 of the Revised Laws of Hawaii, 1915, "No streets opened upon private land in said district or town shall be considered to be for the use of the public unless both ends thereof communicate with the public system of streets....." Strick adherence to this ruling would apparently make it impossible for property owners to open up land a small section at a time as is now being done. An opinion from the Attorney's office states that ... "The City and County cannot accept a street unless both ends thereof communicate with the public system of streets", but... "A subdivision of real estate may be authorized altho the proposed streets therein cannot be accepted by the City and County. As there is no law to prevent such action it becomes a matter of policy to be considered by you in determining what your recommendation shall be. As the City and County cannot repair and maintain such streets as we have under discussion, it seems to me that is one fact you should consider in arriving at a conclusion and in making your recommendation". The Commission considers this an important ruling, and copy of same has been sent to property owners who are seeking approval of their subdivision plans.

BUILDING SETBACK RESTRICTIONS

The Commission is also working on the question of setback building restrictions on certain streets of the city, especially on the boulevards such as Kalakaua and the new Kapiolani Boulevard. It is hoped in some way to prevent the building of unsightly stores and garages sbutting these boulevards. The Commission feels very keenly that some step must be taken by the city and county to insure

such such building restrictions, if Honolulu is to develop into something more than an ordinary deaport city. There are legal problems to be met in accomplishing this, however, and some change in the present laws may be necessary before any permanent restrictions can be established. The advisability of securing a law ~~in~~ which would automatically place building restrictions on any streets designated as boulevards has been suggested as perhaps the easiest and fairest way to regulate such a provision.

ZONING ORDINANCE UNDER FIRE

The Zoning Ordinance has been under fire on several occasions during the year 1924. In February the Engineers' Association recommended certain changes in the ordinance to permit second class buildings already erected prior to the passage of ordinance, in which provision was made in the construction for additional stories, to be constructed not to exceed six stories or 75 feet in height, of second class construction. An example of such building was sited in the Union Trust Building on Alakea Street. Upon investigation it was found that many other buildings in the fire district would be affected by such a change, and after a conference with the architects of the Engineers' Association it was agreed to keep the ordinance intact, feeling that the backbone of the ordinance would be broken with such a change, and the very purpose of the ordinance likely to be thwarted.

In May Mr. R. W. VanDusen appeared before the Commission in the interest of a mainland company desiring to erect outside the fire limits a six-story hotel of second class construction, with certain additional restrictions, and asking amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to make this possible. On investigation the Commission reported that they had found no satisfactory reason to justify any change in provisions of the ordinance.

In November the Building Inspector, Louis Abshire, presented a lengthy argument and plea in favor of permitting second class construction in Fire District No. 1 on the assumption that the present requirement of first class construction was proving a hindrance to industrial development. He would "allow second class structures of not more than four stories in both Fire Districts, and require only structures of more than four stories to be of Class A construction thruout."

The Commission is yet to be persuaded that the present requirements are working more than a temporary hardship on industry. The Zoning Ordinance as it stands today represents, the Commission feels, the best judgment of Honolulu's thinking men and women, and it also feels that Honolulu is still too near to the actual process of putting into operation this ordinance to get any proper perspective of its real value to Honolulu. There is still a feeling of uneasiness among property owners lest such regulation by the government of private property retard building expansion and react against the city's growth, but the Commission feels confident that the ordinance will stand the test of time, and in the end justify its existence by the benefits eventually accruing from more stabilized land values.

BANDSTAND COMPETITION

Late in August, at the suggestion of Building Inspector Abshire, the Board of Supervisors assigned to the Commission the task of selecting a new location for the Kapiolani Bandstand to take the place of the old stand, now demolished, in the grounds of the Public Baths, and of conducting a competition for appropriate bandstand design.

The mauka-ewa corner of the plot near the old lily pond within the park proper was chosen for bandstand site. This site was chosen for several reasons: First, in order to take the congestion of traffic away from Kalakaua Avenue, and make possible an uninterrupted concert; second, to take advantage of the prevailing winds; and third, because of the fact that this site would command a large area where large crowds can be taken care of comfortably, and where parking can be planned for.

Plans and specifications were drawn by Engineer Welsh in cooperation with the registered architects of the city, and the date of closing the competition was set for January 29, 1925.

According to these specifications, the competition calls for a design suitable for band concerts and other open air programs in Kapiolani Park; plans to include an acoustic sound reflector; cost not to exceed \$7775.00; prizes to be awarded as follows- First, \$100, Second, \$75, and Third, \$50. The selection of successful design is to be made by the City Planning Commission together with the competing architects.

The Commission is hoping that the results of this competition will be successful enough to encourage competitions for other civic building in the community,

FORT STREET ARCADING

The possibility and advisability of widening Fort Street by means of arcading was presented in an interesting report by Engineer Cain, who claimed that the arcading plan would allow two lanes of traffic, parking on both sides of the street, and ample room for a single car line; and poles, unsightly lines overhead, and awnings would be eliminated and the street made far more attractive. He estimated the cost of a plain design with no ornate finish as approximately \$11.50 per front foot per year for ten years for each property owner, which amount he felt would be more than compensated by the increased business made possible by such a plan.

No definite action was taken other than to give the plan a little publicity thru the papers and to send copies of plan to Fort Street merchants with the suggestion that to be affective the plan would have to be initiated by the merchants themselves.

UNSIGHTLY DISPLAY OF GARBAGE ON STREETS

Although only indirectly city planning work, the subject of the unsightly display of garbage on the city sidewalks prior to its collection by the City Garbage Department has come up again and again before the Commission. A few years ago when free collection was inaugurated by the city, one of the provisions of the ordinance designated that all garbage should be placed on the sidewalk area to insure collection, it being impossible for the small personnel of that department to carry the containers out from behind the homes. The result has been that boxes and containers of all sizes, shapes and degrees of dilapidation, filled with every imagineable bit of debris and wet and dry garbage, green cuttings and cocoa palms, and banana leaves, have been placed on the curbs after the yard work has been completed and there allowed to remain, sometimes for days, before collection. An attempt was made by the commission to regulate this nuisance thru an ordinance which would require the placing of the garbage within the property line rather than on the curb, and which would limit the hours of such display to the hours of 5 p.m. to 8 a.m. The ordinance was referred to committee of the Board and there it became pigeonholed. The commission still believes the problem to be a very serious one, and is planning to renew its efforts in behalf of this ordinance or a similar one.

The City Planning Commission closes the year 1924 with more satisfaction than at any previous time. With the acquisition of a City Planning Engineer and a staff of field workers, the Commission looks forward to a period of really

constructive work, when recommendations may be backed up by tangible facts and figures. In the final analysis, however, this period of constructive progress will depend in a very large degree upon the cooperation of public opinion. Back of successful city planning in any community lies a highly developed civic consciousness seeking expression, and perhaps the most important task of the commission is to help awaken and develop this civic consciousness.

Listed below are the subjects coming under discussion by the Commission during the year 1924. These subjects are listed not in the order of importance, but alphabetically.

1. Bandstand for Kapiolani Park. Competition.
2. Bill Boards.
3. Building Set-Back Restrictions, general and specific.
4. Central Fire Station Site.
5. Comfort Stations.
6. Fish Cannery Site on Ala Moana Road.
7. Garbage on city streets.
8. Geological Survey.
9. Harbor Tower
- 10.0 Insane Asylum Site.
11. Kapalama Drainage
12. Kapiolani Drainage.
13. Koko Head Park.
14. McKinley High School Swimming Tank.
15. Road Improvements, including-
 - Manoa Hill Widening
 - Waialae Road Widening
 - Wyllie Street Widening
 - Coelho Lane Widening
 - King Street Widening
 - Fort Street Widening by means of Arcading
 - Metcalf Street Widening

15. Road Improvements (con'y)
 - Oahu Avenue Extension
 - Waipahu Plantation Road Improvement
 - Diamond Head Road as Scenic Drive
 - Kapiolani Boulevard Development.
16. Permanent Street Survey
 - Kapalama
 - Waikiki
 - Other parts of city
17. Shade Tree Commission
18. Sidewalk Repairs and Upkeep
19. Street Widths
20. Territorial Office Building.
21. Traffic Commission Report on Development of new streets.
22. Waikiki Reclamation District-
 - Development and control of plan for that district.
23. Zoning and Building Ordinance under Fire.

Respectfully submitted

J. D. McInerney, President
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

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