



**CITY COUNCIL**  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

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## MINUTES

### AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE MEETING

MONDAY, June 2, 2008

The Agricultural Development Task Force held a meeting on Monday, June 2, 2008, at 1:06 p.m. in the Council Committee Meeting Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Room 205, Honolulu Hale, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Yuki Kitagawa (Chair)  
Cal Lum  
Richard McCormack  
Jimmy Nakatani  
Kapu Smith

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:** Dean Okimoto (Vice Chair)  
Charley Ice

**ADMINISTRATION/OTHERS PRESENT:**

Ikaika Anderson	(Council Chair Marshall's Office)
Kimberly Ribellia	(Councilmember Dela Cruz's staff),
Robert Sumitomo	(Department of Planning and Permitting)
Clarice Hashimoto	(Mayor's Office)
Megan O'Brian	[Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District (OSWCD)
Lisa Schofield	[OSWCD/ Oahu Resource Conservation & Development)
Kevin Kinvig	[United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service]
Daryl Arai	(Department of Agriculture (DOA), Loan Division)
Dean Matsukawa	(DOA, Loan Division)
Alan Gottlieb	(Oahu Cattlemen's Association)
Mark Takemoto,	(Dole/Castle & Cooke)
Jeannine Souki	(Watanabe Ing & Komeji for Castle & Cooke Hawaii/Dole)
Thomas Yamabe	(Kamilonui Farmers Cooperative)
Dave Arakawa	(Land Use Research Foundation)

AGENDA ITEMS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the May 5, 2008 meeting were approved as circulated.

ITEM 2      OAHU RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Chair Kitagawa called upon Lisa Schofield of Oahu Resource Conservation and Development Council (ORCDC) and Kevin Kinvig of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to continue their presentation from the previous meeting.

They provided the following update:

1. Conservation plans are written to assist farmers to: a) solve problems relating to enforcement of rules and dealing with storms runoffs, b) provide opportunities for farmers to be better land stewards and/or c): more effectively operate their land for the long-term.
2. There are 800 farms on Oahu.
3. There are 150 –200 farms with conservation plans.
4. Reducing the current backlog of 53 requests for conservation plans may take 6 to 9 months.
5. The Counties of Maui and Hawaii strongly support Agriculture with annual budgets of \$500,000.
6. The ORCDC is currently working with the City's Office of Economic Development on a conservation-planning grant. It wants to further strengthen the partnership to promote agricultural development.

Member McCormack inquired whether there were any studies providing statistics which reflect savings due to the implementation of conservation plans. Mr. Kinvig responded that he would research the matter and report back to the Task Force. Ms. Schofield added that conservation plans are projected for 5, 10 or 25 years, and when implemented are effective.

Mr. Kinvig requested the Task Force's assistance on how best to get the support of the City Council on this issue.

The Task Force recommended the OSWCD do the following:

1. Propose a definitive amount for funding and number of planners needed.
2. Meet with its Executive Board to identify pertinent issues for funding relating to agricultural development and support.
3. Report their findings at the next Task Force meeting.

Mr. Kinvig announced that the ORCDC is hosting an Ag Technology Field Day at HARC's Experiment Station in Kunia on June 24, 2008. The topics include cover crops, windbreaks and pest control.

The following individuals testified:

1. Kevin Kinvig, USDA
2. Lisa Schofield, ORCDC

### ITEM 3 OAHU LIVESTOCK SLAUGHTER PLANT

Chair Kitagawa called upon Member Lum who requested that this item be placed on the agenda.

Member Lum informed that:

1. Oahu has only one USDA inspected slaughterhouse for hogs and cattle.
2. The co-op that owns and runs the slaughterhouse on Oahu intends to cease cattle slaughter within the next 60 – 90 days due to economic reasons.
3. There are potential buyers for the equipment and a tenant to rent the facility.
4. The closure came up at the end of the legislative session.

5. The closure poses public health and safety issues.
6. The State believes that a USDA inspected plant is necessary for each island.
7. A possible solution may lie in the USDA approved mobile slaughter unit that is available for under \$200,000 through a mainland company.
8. A partnership including the State, City and County and the private sector is being explored for funding.

Member Lum requested input from Alan Gottlieb on the issue.

Mr. Gottlieb stated his support for Member Lum's concerns and remarked that without a legal place to slaughter animals, bigger problems could develop.

Member Nakatani commented that the Department of Agriculture (DOA) provided an excellent lease with low rent to the co-op to provide slaughter operations to help the industry on Oahu. He suggested that Member Lum and the Cattlemen's Association meet with the Director of the DOA and the Board of Agriculture with regard to their policy on this issue.

Member Nakatani questioned whether the property can be rented out for uses other than for the purpose of slaughter. Until this is determined, searching for funds and an alternative slaughterhouse is premature. The DOA has the overall responsibility for agriculture and should work on possible solutions for this issue.

Chair Kitagawa called upon Mr. Matsukawa from the State's Agricultural Loan Program. Mr. Matsukawa expressed support for Member Lum's position and pointed out the importance of the issue because it affects a safe food supply and the natural beef industry. He further commented that Rancher Lum should not shoulder the issue alone as it affects the whole industry. Mr. Matsukawa expressed agreement with Member Nakatani that this is a policy issue that should be addressed by the BOA.

Mr. Matsukawa agreed to do the following:

1. Meet with the State's Ag Resource Management & BOA to discuss the potential problems and try to find solutions.
2. Research the lease to see if there is any leverage in forestalling the closure of the operation.

The Ag Task Force agreed to draft a resolution in support of the slaughterhouse issue.

The following individuals testified:

1. Alan Gottlieb, Oahu Cattlemen's Association
2. Dean Matsukawa, DOA, Loan Division

Chair Kitagawa's took up Items 3 and 4 as they are interrelated with no objections from the members present.

ITEM 4            SUBDIVISION OF AGRICULTURE LANDS  
ITEM 5            SENATE BILL 2646, CD1 – RELATING TO IMPORTANT  
AGRICULTURAL LANDS (IAL)

Chair Kitagawa stated that he wanted to discuss these two items together because Ag Subdivisions is going to be an integral part of the IAL.

Chair Kitagawa called upon Thomas Yamabe to present testimony from the Kamilonui Farmers Cooperative.

Mr. Yamabe expressed the following objections: 1) The Bill was drafted with little knowledge of the state's socio-economic theory, 2) The 15% urban designation would not support the Ag industry, 3) The Bill will destroy the sustainable plan that the City has had in place for the past 50 years, and 4) The State is trying to pass legislation that would apply to all counties failing to recognize that each county has different objectives.

Chair Kitagawa called upon David Arakawa to present testimony from the Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF).

Mr. Arakawa stated LURF's strong support for Senate Bill 2646 CD1 and commented as follows:

1. The Ag stake holders, including farmers, ranchers, landowners, the Department of Agriculture (DOA), the Dean of the University of Hawaii's Tropical Ag Department and the Legislature agree that the best way to preserve Hawaii's IAL and promote the agriculture viability in the state is to enact Senate Bill 2646.
2. The Bill's comprehensive incentives will:
  - Increase agricultural opportunities and activities.
  - Help farmers by encouraging landowners to dedicate lands as IAL.
  - Provide both financial and non-financial incentives to keep agricultural businesses viable
3. The request to reclassify 15% to urban, rural or conservation has regulatory controls that are extensive and strict. State laws require compliance with all county plans as a criteria for rural reclassification. All county planning and zoning requirements remain in tact.

Chair Kitagawa remarked that Mr. Arakawa's testimony alleviated his concern about the effect the Bill would have on the county's role in administering provisions of the Bill.

Reclassification on Oahu is an issue because it does not have a Rural classification. The closest counterpart to Rural is Country. Mr. Arakawa commented that an application to the Land Use Commission (LUC) for reclassification must be in compliance and consistent with relevant county general and community development or community development plans.

The following individuals testified:

1. Thomas Yamabe, Kamilonui Farmers Cooperative (M-1409)
2. David Arakawa, LURF (M-1407, M-1408)

Related communications:

- M-1407 David Arakawa, Executive Director, LURF, writing in strong support of Senate Bill 2646, CD-1.
- M-1408 Hawaii Farm Bureau & LURF, writing to the State Senate President, requesting timely consideration of SB 2646 HD2 and SB 546 SD2 HD1.
- M-1409 Glenn Nii, President Kamilonui Valley Farmer's Co-op, writing in opposition to SB 2646.

ITEM 5 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Kitagawa, at the request of the Task Force to increase public participation, will contact the Farm Bureau to find a site for an evening meeting to discuss the issue of Ag Subdivisions.

Chair Kitagawa announced that the next meeting will be scheduled for July 7, 2008.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.