DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
KA'ĀINA HULL, DIRECTOR
JODI A. HIGUCHI SAYEGUSA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR
REIKO MATSUYAMA, MANAGING DIRECTOR

October 18, 2023

Public testimony and/or agency comments received by the Planning Department as of October 18, 2023, 1:30pm for the October 19, 2023, Kaua'i Historic Preservation Review Commission meeting regarding the following item:

H.1. **Nomination to the State Historic Register**
The Makai Golf Course at Princeville
Property Address: 4080 Lei O Papa Road
Tax Map Keys: (4) 5-4-005:022; (4) 5-4-005:049; (4) 5-4-005:054; (4) 5-4-006:003; (4) 5-4-006:005; (4) 5-4-006:006; (4) 5-4-012:001; (4) 5-4-012:006
Princeville, Hawai'i

Public record: County of Kaua'i Planning Department, testimony received for the Oct. 19, 2023 Kaua'i Historic Preservation Review Commission meeting. Addresses, phone numbers, emails and children's ages blacked out by Protect Princeville.

Ace Hodgin, M.D.
[redacted]
Princeville, HI 86722

Personal cell: [redacted]
Home: [redacted]
Personal email: [redacted]
PHCA email: [redacted]

October 17, 2023

Marisa Valenciano
Kauai County Planning Department
4444 Rice Street Suite A473

Delivered via email

Re: Opposition to Petition of Albatross Alliance

Dear Ms. Valenciano:

This letter is to convey my strongest OPPOSITION to the Petition for the designation of historical significance for the 27-hole golf course in Princeville commonly referred to as the 18-hole Makai Course and the 9-hole Woods Course (collectively Golf Course). Please consider this letter testimony.

A plain reading of the proposal indicates the Golf Course fails to meet any reasonable test of historic significance. Frankly, I find the proposal preposterous, ill-conceived, possibly nefariously self-interested and insulting to the peoples and citizens of Hawaii.

This designation is fraught with problems. Among them are:

1. The landowner nor the Homeowners Association (HOA), namely, Princeville at Hanalei Community Association (PHCA) have been engaged in nor have approved this Petition;
2. The Petition is from a foreign Nevada LLC whose ownership is not clear nor is it clear what if any sincere interest it has in Hawaii or history;
3. Such a designation could play havoc with repair and maintenance of critical utilities whose lines run through and node boxes sit on the Golf Course property;
4. The single most used (by residents and visitors) amenity in PHCA could be impaired by this designation, or at a minimum its ongoing maintenance or expansion could be burdened. That amenity is NOT the Golf Course, it is our shared use path, build and

maintained by PHCA that runs from Prince Albert Park along Ka Haku Road along and often sitting on (under a lease agreement) the Golf Course;

5. Working class citizens of Kauai would lose a potential opportunity for the development of work force housing on the Golf Course property by the existing landowner;
6. PHCA member owners could lose out on great benefit from working cooperatively with the Golf Course owner that could both enhance our community amenities as well as our Association's financial position thereby somewhat offsetting member dues or the possibility of needing to reach out for County of Kauai resources;
7. Loss of a possibility of the owner making a new land dedication to insure most of the Golf Course, including the entirety of the Makai Course, be kept open and functioning in perpetuity. Burdening the site with a historic designation could end the functions of the golf course including its pristine upkeep and maintenance;
8. Finally, without any proof, but with some suspicion, this proposition could be being made by a small yet highly self-interested group who does not represent Princeville in any formal way. At a minimum before any action is taken, I think the County should investigate and understand who (i.e., which individuals) is behind the Petition, and what might be motivating them before any action is taken.

Now, Ms. Valenciano, please forgive my jumping right into the issue at hand. I hope your day is going well. I know you are fulfilling your duty to the citizens of Kauai. I appreciate that you make yourself available to take input and testimony on matters of importance.

Some background on me and my family. I've been a full-time resident of Kauai for the last 8.5 years (only off island 5 weeks in the last 5 years). My home in Princeville was purchased by my wife and me 11.5 years ago. I've been a frequent visitor to Kauai for over 25 years. Prior to our moving here full time my daughter and her family rented the property from us. My daughter has lived on Kauai for well over 20 years and met and married her husband here. His family has strong ties to Hawaii and Kauai going back 5 generations, counting their two children, both of whom were born here in Wilcox Hospital. As long as my granddaughters [redacted] are here, my wife and I will be too.

Currently I serve my community as the Vice President of PHCA. Given the limited time frame to draft this letter I am responding solely as a homeowner and member of PHCA and not in an official PHCA capacity. PHCA and my role in it is mentioned by way of letting you know I am well informed on the needs of our Princeville Community. PHCA serves in many ways as a quasi-municipal agency and has ownership and responsibility among other things for maintaining roads and drainage infrastructure, a public use park, and a security patrol services that work closely with Kauai Police Department when necessary.

Now I'd like to address the concept of the Golf Course being given a historic designation. As I've mentioned, one would think such a proposal would come supported by various interested not for profit entities within the Princeville area. That is NOT the case. Conceptually, a historic designation for a barely 50-year-old golf course built in the 1970s by the land developer who

was also developing a resort community is beyond rational comprehension. It is an affront to the peoples of Hawaii whose own history is rich and storied. There are genuine historic sites in Hawaii and on Kauai, but Golf Course is NOT among them.

I and my wife understand that we are not from Kauai, nor will we ever be viewed so. We are interlopers here, just as are the majority of the overwhelmingly white affluent (as are we) other owners here. I feel fortunate to be able to live in such a wonderful place. But I know I'll never be viewed the same as those whose families literally built the culture and community here on Kauai. That is a fact I've accepted. The best I can do is be a good steward and respectful of those who came before me. Many I've met here feel the same way. Unfortunately, some take a different view. At times their behavior demonstrates an ingrained arrogance that is not compatible with life in Hawaii. It is an artifact from their time living on the mainland. Virtually all of us here in Princeville are mainland expatriates. Frankly, from time to time, their actions and statements make me feel shame (for them). One example from two years ago I've not been able to stop thinking about was the hostile opposition put forward by some towards a proposed Hawaiian Cultural Park in the Queen's Bath area. It was capped off by an embarrassing presentation made that was so demeaning and embarrassing that I won't even site the references it used. As outrageous as the claims were, a small yet vocal group, representing only their self-interest, and not the community as a whole, managed to kill the project. By the way, a Hawaiian Cultural Park was in Princeville's original plans from 50 years ago.

Let me address property rights, PHCA and the actual landowner of the Golf Course. I firmly hold that private property rights are fundamental and foundational to our way of life. It does not matter whether the owner is a large corporation or a new family starting out with their first home purchase. Either everyone has rights or eventually no one will have rights. The role of government is a delicate balance in assigning and overseeing these rights. I know the representatives of the Golf Course owner (also the 1Hotel owners) personally. They are good well-meaning people. Anyone who says they are not, is just wrong. Their interests are in alignment with the best interests of Princeville as a whole. After all, Princeville is a resort community and a visitor destination area (aka VDA). The 1Hotel (though not the Golf Course) is also a member of PHCA and has the same rights as any individual homeowner. The Golf Course is entirely surrounded by PHCA. More than half of the of property ownership in Princeville is used for vacation rentals. Many of our residents are part time residents. A smaller group yet chose to live here full time as have my wife and I and my daughter and her family. All our property owners have the same rights. To think or act otherwise flies in the face of the rule of law and our governing documents. There is no special status among PHCA membership.

In casual conversation with the Golf Course owners, they have spoken about their options and together we have floated ideas. They are interested in developing a portion of the currently unused Woods Course into low density high end large home lots along with some smaller, yet still low density lots and homes (any home in Princeville is pricey). They are confident doing so would not burden utilities nor traffic. They also have a need for work force housing and are willing to so build such a project in accordance with County guidelines. As everyone knows, housing for working families on Kauai is a dire situation. Anyone willing to so invest should be

given ample consideration for doing so. PHCA and our member owners could benefit first from the additional dues revenue if these properties come under PHCA management. The 1Hotel and Golf Course owners are also interested in community improvements that would enhance our overall community for residents and visitors alike. Among those ideas are:

1. A permanent land dedication for the Makai Golf Course;
2. Building expanded shared use paths for walking and bicycling;
3. Additional community park space for PHCA using the undeveloped portions of the Woods Course;
4. Enhancing and then turning over to PHCA a trail to Anini Beach;
5. Construction of a paid membership-based family pool at the Golf Club (currently the pool is NOT open to families, nor is there any other option for families other than purchasing a unit at one of the condo properties or building your own pool);
6. Adding a sit-down restaurant at the Golf Club to the benefit of residents and visitors alike;
7. Expanded parking capacity in the heart of Princeville (something sorely needed) through the building of a parking structure to replace the existing large surface parking lot at the golf club. Doing so would greatly also enhance the aesthetic appearance of that location;
8. The aforementioned workforce housing;
9. Also previously mentioned enhanced revenue stream based on new owner dues to allow PHCA to fulfill its duties and even perhaps slow the rate of dues increases (our dues are based on lot size, so large lots pay higher dues);
10. And any others we can find where mutual benefit occurs.

None of this could or would occur under the proposed Petition.

Likewise, none of it has yet to occur prior to the proposed petition because a small self-interested group of PHCA members who have taken on the Golf Course owners through litigation. PHCA has yet to take any position regarding that litigation though it has been monitoring the situation closely for more than 2 years.

In my personal opinion I think those self-interested residents have stirred up angst among additional owners, though still a small yet vocal and shrewd group. I know of what I believe to be a larger group of owners who are open to discussion and negotiation for community benefit with the Golf Course and hotel owners. A survey was conducted a couple years ago that supports that premise (though the data is often misquoted). The larger group of owners is either uninformed, apathetic, or disinterested, and has yet to take a side. I suspect that group is made up of the owners of individual properties used for vacation rentals.

Let me apologize for the length and intensity of my letter. The topic is important and one I take quite seriously. If you or anyone in the County Government wishes to reach out to me, please do not hesitate to do so anytime. My personal contact information has been provided. I really am quite down to earth and approachable and can be easily engaged in conversation.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Ace Hodgin, M.D.

October 18, 2023

Delivered via email

Marisa Valenciano
Planner
County of Kauai Planning Department
4444 Rice Street Suite A473
Lihue, HI 96766
mvalenciano@kauai.gov

Re: Testimony on Petition to add Princeville Golf Courses to Register of Historic Places in Hawaii

Dear Ms. Valenciano:

Please accept this letter from me in my official capacity as a Princeville at Hanalei Community Association (PHCA) Board of Directors (BOD) member. Currently I serve as Vice President. Today I have communicated with two more of the 4 total BOD members but have not been able to reach our President. The two BOD members I did reach this morning share the thoughts I will express below. Please then accept this as testimony, representing a consensus among 3 of the 4 members, but due to my inability to marshal a BOD meeting on short notice it is not an official position of the PHCA BOD.

Three of four PHCA BOD members have not had discussions with Albatross Alliance about their petition. It was brought my attention yesterday and subsequently I communicated with 2 of the 3 remaining BOD members this morning.

The three of us would like the opportunity to speak with the Albatross Alliance so that we can learn more about their proposal. We all endeavor to be up to date and fully informed on matters of importance occurring within our community.

By way of background, PHCA is a homeowner's association (under HRS 421J) and represents approximately 3,000 residents and owners in Princeville. Beyond enforcement of our CC&Rs we also own and are responsible for the repair and maintenance of 11 miles of roads in Princeville and the drainage under them. Additionally, we own and maintain a public use park, Prince Albert Park, and provide security patrol services throughout the Community. All those activities are funded through the dues assessments of our member owners.

Thank you for your time and taking our testimony into consideration.

I did submit my own personal testimony letter yesterday.

Sincerely,

Ace Hodgin, Vice President
Princeville at Hanalei Community Association
Board of Directors