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Local community groups opposed to the massive expansion planned at Turtle Bay Resort received further encouragement last night at the North Shore Sustainable Communities Plan Meeting #3 in Haleiwa. The meeting featured a presentation about the culmination of a two-year process in which the Public Advisory Committee for the North Shore completed a final-draft version of the revised plan. The plan to be submitted to the City's Department of Planning and Permitting now deems resort zoning "inappropriate" for the North Shore of Oahu. The plan also features an additional statement supporting the Ko'olauloa (where the resort resides) community's position opposing expansion at Turtle Bay Resort, particularly as it relates to impacts on North Shore infrastructure.

Meeting host Scott Ezer, of planning firm Helber, Hastert and Fee (the firm tasked with facilitating and preparing the plan for the City and County of Honolulu) acknowledged that opposition to the proposed expansion was unanimous amongst the 23 community members on the influential advisory committee and stressed that although the resort is not located within the North Shore Plan's rural boundaries that "what happens at Turtle Bay doesn't stay at Turtle Bay." Residents of both Ko'olauloa and the North Shore have long held that impacts on infrastructure and traffic caused by the outdated expansion plan would have a devastating effect on the quality of life in both communities and Oahu in general.

The news comes on the heels of the announcement that Defend Oahu Coalition's Amicus Brief, filed in support of sister organization Keep the North Shore Country's lawsuit, was accepted for consideration by the Hawai'i State Supreme Court. The brief, announced at last week's "Talk Story 2: the second in a series of community forums regarding the future of Turtle Bay", stresses support for the existing hotel at Turtle Bay Resort but contends that an additional 3,500 resort and condominium units is "an idea whose time has come and gone". The group argues that "benefits promised to the community as a condition of the approval of the expansion project have never materialized" and that "...this case represents the epitome of unplanned and ill-conceived development and should be stopped until the appropriate studies have been performed and considered."

Keep the North Shore Country and the Hawai'i Sierra Club filed suit against the City and County of Honolulu's Department of Planning and Permitting asking that a supplemental environmental impact statement be required of the developer at Turtle Bay due to changes in conditions on the property and in surrounding communities since the original EIS was done almost twenty-five years ago. Oral arguments in the case will be heard at the State Supreme Court at Aliiolani Hale on Thursday, December 17th starting at 9 a.m.

Copies of the North Shore Sustainable Communities Plan Public Review Draft and Defend Oahu Coalition's Amicus Brief are available in their entirety at: www.DefendOahuCoalition.org