

JOSEPH FERRARO DIRECT TESTIMONY

PRESENTATION HEARING

Land Block 5, Project 3 (The Launiu) (KAK 23-001)

Q Please state your name, place of employment, and position.

A Joseph Ferraro, FAIA, LEED AP; Principal and Chairman of the Board, Ferraro Choi.

Q Please describe your educational background and experience.

A Please see my resume, marked as an exhibit in this proceeding. I co-founded Ferraro Choi in 1988, and I am licensed in Hawaii and New York. In 2008, I was recognized as a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects for significant contributions to environmentally sustainable professional practice, and I am a past president of the Institute's Hawaii Chapter.

I currently serve as a director on a number of boards including the Hawaii Architectural Foundation and the Liljestrand Foundation, and also serve as a member on various advisory committees, including the University of Hawaii's School of Architecture, and Malama Manoa, a local community-based organization.

Q Please describe your firm's experience.

A Ferraro Choi's mission is to preserve, protect and enhance the natural and built environment through sustainable architecture, interior architecture and research. Since 1988, our firm has provided architectural planning design and interior design services for commercial and institutional projects for private and government clients. My recent projects in Hawai'i include the corporate offices for HEMIC, Central Pacific Bank, and the NOAA Inouye Regional Center on Ford Island.

Our firm is a recognized leader in sustainable design in Hawaii. We value quality design, and strive to provide an environment that is both aesthetic and functional for every project.

Q What has your firm been retained to do for this Project?

A Ferraro Choi has been requested to provide architectural peer review assistance for various projects at Ward Village, including The Launiu.

Q Please describe the vision and inspiration for The Launiu.

A The Launiu as designed, will be a distinctive landmark at the Ewa entrance to Ward Village and Ward Avenue corridor at its intersection with Ala Moana Boulevard. The development complies with and exemplifies the integration of the major design

strategies of the Ward Neighborhood Master Plan (the “Ward MP”), and will be adjacent to an area created by the realignment of Auahi Street, which will be redeveloped into a pedestrian-focused open space, and integrated into the overall design of the development.

The design elements of The Launiu take full advantage of this key location, and the development will further the intent and vision of the Ward MP to provide mixed-use developments with street-level pedestrian activation through a variety of approaches including, open green spaces, and access to employment, recreation, retail and community activities.

The Project’s design also expands the City and County of Honolulu’s “complete streets” program, which values streets as important public spaces, and seeks to balance and further the needs and desires of pedestrians, bicyclists and others who use these community assets. The complete streets program encourages active street designs that are people-friendly, safe and convenient for all ages, and are multi-modal for walking, biking, public transit, and automobiles. The concept creates stronger and more livable communities that are aligned with the community’s vision and sense of place.

Q In accordance with HRS § 206E-5.6, please describe specific components of the Project and how each component will protect, preserve, and enhance desirable neighborhood characteristics.

A The Ward MP has four principal design strategies: 1) connection of public spaces; 2) reconstruction of Auahi Street as a pedestrian promenade; 3) Maintenance of mauka-makai view corridors; and 4) enhancements to streetscape design.

The Launiu design will significantly enhance the street-level activation, pedestrian engagement, connectivity and walkability in Ward Village and the greater Ward Avenue mauka-makai corridor at this key location within the neighborhood.

The development, for example, provides over 20,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space along its entire Ward Avenue frontage, wrapping around the building’s corners facing Ala Moana Boulevard and the former Auahi Street. The placement and design of these commercial spaces is designed to draw pedestrians to and from the development and reactivate this key intersection with Ala Moana Boulevard. The Launiu’s commercial area also is designed to complement the commercial and open space at Kalae across Ward Avenue.

The commercial area will also facilitate and encourage access to the area created by the realignment of Auahi Street, which will be redeveloped into an inviting, active open green space featuring extensive landscaping, walking and bicycle paths, seating areas, public art, and retail kiosks. These elements are designed to significantly enhance pedestrian engagement, activation and connectivity to and from Ward Avenue and

beyond, including the Auahi Street promenade, the nearby Ka La'i o Kukuluāe'o Park, and areas beyond Ward Village in Kaka'ako.

The design of other elements of The Launiu also enhance desirable neighborhood characteristics in Ward Village and Kaka'ako. A mid-block driveway and a sheltered vehicular pick-up and drop-off area integrated within the building's podium is designed to minimize pedestrian/vehicular conflict and provides flexibility for additional open space for pedestrians in the repurposed portion of Auahi Street.

The Launiu's architecture captures a mid-20th century Honolulu international coastal style, with a pleasing, undulating building design that draws inspiration from, and maximizes, mauka-makai views, and complements its location overlooking Kewalo Basin, urban Honolulu, and Diamond Head.

The ground floor retail space and homes on floors 2 through 6 will screen the parking garage within the podium along Ward Avenue and wrap around the corners of Ala Moana Boulevard and Auahi Street. The Ala Moana podium façade will feature architectural elements that the design architect states are reminiscent of a series of waves that mirror the movement and dynamism of the neighboring ocean. These elements are designed to provide an engaging three-dimensional effect along the portion of the façade most visible to pedestrians and vehicles. Pedestrians along Ala Moana Boulevard will also experience a shaded, landscaped pathway with a variety of interesting architectural elements along the podium, as well as public art, pavement treatments and appropriate lighting design.

Consistent with the Ward MP design strategy of preserving mauka-makai view corridors, The Launiu's tower is oriented in a mauka-makai direction, and the substantial setback for the tower along Ward Avenue preserves this important view corridor from the mountains to the sea.

The Launiu's design will be a distinctive and yet pleasing addition to the Honolulu skyline and complements and enhances the Ward Village and the greater Kaka'ako neighborhood area.

Q How does The Launiu complement and enhance Ward Village consistent with the Ward MP?

The Launiu employs design strategies that are consistent with other developments approved by HCDA under the Ward MP.

The Ward MP was developed to provide overall design and development strategies. The plan is not static, and therefore incorporates flexibility on how the plan is implemented given changing market, social and other conditions that occur over its implemented lifetime.

Based on the developments approved by HCDA in Ward Village to date, HCDA has recognized and supported this flexibility in the implementation of various architectural design and development strategies. This flexibility has enhanced the development of Ward Village, as it allows varied approaches to accomplish the overall design goals of the plan.

As an example, two of the four principal design strategies in the plan are to have Auahi Street as a pedestrian promenade and an enhanced streetscape design. While the plan illustrates one of many possible approaches to these strategies, HCDA has approved projects in Ward Village that effectively implement various concepts and designs to develop Auahi Street into a pedestrian promenade and activate surrounding streetscapes. These include ground floor retail / commercial spaces; attractive and distinctive architectural screening of parking podiums; landscaping and outdoor seating areas that encourage pedestrian gatherings; interactive sidewalk elements; public art; and passive areas that appropriately encourage pedestrians to rest or gather in a quiet, convenient setting.

These approaches are also consistent with the concept of “liners” that HCDA has referred to in the Master Plan Decision and Order, which HCDA defined as aesthetically pleasing facades that provide interaction with pedestrian traffic at ground level. HCDA noted that liners could include retail, office and residential uses, and the Ward MP also proposed to wrap parking garages with commercial or residential uses or with vegetation and/or architectural features. Accordingly, the concept of “liners” contemplates a variety of approaches and is intended to provide needed flexibility in implementing the design strategies of the master plan.

The variety of approaches considered and adopted by HCDA over the years to facilitate the development of Auahi Street as a pedestrian promenade and a design enhanced streetscape, have allowed Ward Village to mature into a more interesting, vibrant community of both residents and visitors. Architecturally, this variety in approaches to achieving the principal design strategies in the Ward MP, I believe and conclude, is superior to developing the Auahi Street Promenade and enhanced streetscape design through only one method, for example, continuous retail / commercial space, or only through landscape elements.

As discussed, The Launiu and the plans for the redevelopment of the former Auahi Street area embody this varied and flexible approach adopted by HCDA, and the development incorporates virtually all of the previously-accepted and approved design elements in Ward Village to enhance and activate the neighborhood streetscapes. Again, these include commercial / retail areas within and near the building, extensive landscaping around the development, outdoor seating, public art, podium level residential units, and interesting architectural elements and designs to enhance and screen the parking structure.