

**JOSEPH FERRARO DIRECT TESTIMONY**

**MODIFICATION HEARING**

**Land Block 1, Project 6 (Mahana Ward Village) (KAK 23-027)**

**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 Mahana Ward Village.

**Q Please describe the modification requested for this Project.**

A As contemplated by the Ward Neighborhood Master Plan ("Ward MP"), and consistent with other developments in Ward Village and the Mauka Area, Victoria Ward, Ltd. is requesting one modification to the 2005 Mauka Area Rules (the "Vested Rules") for

Mahana Ward Village to increase the mixed-use platform height from forty-five (45) feet to seventy-five (75) feet in order to move the parking up and away from the street front, create street-level mixed-use commercial space, and accommodate more open space in and around the development.

The design of Mahana is constrained by various factors, including State and County right of ways, utility accessways and easements, and surrounding conditions and uses. These include the HART station and guideway easement to the north and northwest; a burial preserve that is part of the adjacent 'A'ali'i (KAK 16-075) property; and sewer and concrete drain easements that bisect the Mahana Ward Village site and require a 24-foot vertical clearance and a 25-foot horizontal clearance.

**Q Hawaii Administrative Rules (“HAR”) §15-22-22 provides that modifications are permitted if the applicant can demonstrate that: (1) the modification would provide flexibility and result in a development that is practically and aesthetically superior to that which could be accomplished with the rigid enforcement of this chapter; (2) the modification would not adversely affect adjacent developments or uses; and (3) the resulting development will be consistent with the intent of the Mauka Area Plan.**

**In your professional opinion, does the platform height modification provide flexibility and result in a development that is practically and aesthetically superior to that which could be accomplished with the rigid enforcement of the rules?**

**A** Yes. Particularly in light of the various site constraints, the increase in the platform height to 75 feet provides significantly more flexibility in the design of Mahana Ward Village. This modification allows a significant volume of the parking within the platform to be pulled up and away from the perimeter of the development, which provides additional volume for the inclusion of street-level retail and mixed-use space, additional ground-floor open space, and residential units in the podium, all of which result in a development that is practically and aesthetically superior to a rigid enforcement of the 45 foot podium height limit.

The conceptual renderings of the platform and streetscape shown in Exhibits 29 - 32 of the Application illustrate that the commercial areas and related space will significantly increase pedestrian access and activation in and around the platform, including through the plaza area facing Ward Avenue, a unique, open, triple-height colonnade (which allows for open sightlines, ample sunlight and cooling breezes, while also providing rain protection and shade for pedestrian access and seating for food and beverage options), and the podium residential units facing Halekauwila and Victoria Ward Park.

In addition to the residential units, the platform will also include architecturally-interesting elements, including green walls, a series of vertical panels, and landscaping to screen the parking garage and create a three-dimensional effect along the portion of the façade most visible to pedestrians. In short, the modification results in a building form that is aesthetically superior to a structure without the modification.

Notably, both the platform and the residential tower are set back further from Ward Avenue than required under the Vested Rules, thus materially preserving, protecting and framing both the Ward Avenue and Victoria Ward Park view corridors through Ward Village.

In my opinion, Mahana Ward Village’s platform design thoughtfully and effectively implements the concepts originally proposed by VWL’s Ward MP, which HCDA determined, among other findings, would “provide flexibility for different uses and various design strategies noted in the Master Plan, including concealed parking structures and pedestrian-friendly facades, which will result in a development that is practically and aesthetically superior to one which could be accomplished without such modifications.”

**Q In your professional opinion, does the modification adversely affect adjacent developments or uses?**

A No. The platform height modification is fully consistent with the Ward Master Plan, and significantly, is also consistent with other developments approved and constructed within Ward Village, including The Park Ward Village across Halekauwila, as well as Anaha, A’eo, Waiea, Ke Kilohana, ‘A’ali’i, Kō’ula, Ulana, and The Launiu. In my professional opinion, granting this modification will not adversely affect adjacent developments or uses, but instead will ensure that Mahana Ward Village is consistent and compatible with the design and architectural character of other developments within Ward Village and the Mauka Area. This facilitates a more cohesive, aesthetically pleasing experience for the residents and visitors of the Ward Village community and the greater Kakaako area.

On a practical level, the inclusion of residential homes on floors 2 through 7 of the platform (overlooking Victoria Ward Park and Halekauwila), in addition to providing a diversity of housing options, will also foster a greater sense of community, and enhance neighborhood / street-level awareness within Ward Village.

In addition, the modification also does not adversely affect other elements of adjacent uses and developments. The modification will not materially impact Mauka-Makai view corridors, and will alleviate the need for (and potential impacts caused by) subsurface excavation for parking. The modification will also not result in adverse shadow effects on the neighboring uses.

**Q In your professional opinion, do these modifications result in a development that is consistent with the intent of the Mauka Area Plan?**

A Yes. The Mauka Area Plan envisions the development of mixed-uses, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, preservation of major view corridors, open space, and recreational space.

As contemplated in the Ward MP, and as recognized in HCDA's Decision and Order approving the Ward MP, the modification to the platform height is consistent with these design objectives. The modification will result in a platform that will significantly increase street-level pedestrian interaction, activation, and access; provide additional open space in and around the building; provide nearly 17,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space; facilitate a more aesthetically-pleasing and activated streetscape; and materially preserve the Victoria Ward Park and Ward Avenue view corridors. The modification will advance the Mauka Area Plan's (and the Ward MP's) vision for an active, pedestrian-oriented mixed use urban community with compatible design characteristics at this mauka gateway to Ward Village.

**Q In your professional opinion, are these modifications necessary to implement the live, work, play vision of the Mauka Area Rules and the Ward MP?**

A Yes. As demonstrated through other developments in Ward Village and the Mauka Area, the proposed modification for Mahana Ward Village is integral to creating a neighborhood where residential, commercial, and retail uses are incorporated to be mutually beneficial to each other.

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