

MĀLIA KA'AIHUE DIRECT TESTIMONY

PRESENTATION HEARING

Block D (Land Block 4, Project 1) (KAK 23-037)

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

A Mālia Ka'aihue, PhD, Founder and President, DTL Hawaii.

Q How long have you held this position?

A More than 9 years, since January 2014.

Q Please describe your educational background and professional experience.

A Please see my resume, marked as an exhibit in this proceeding.

Q Please tell us about your company, DTL Hawaii, and what it does.

A DTL Hawaii (DTL) is a multidisciplinary Hawaiian strategy studio that helps businesses, governments, organizations, and communities navigate change. DTL has built a respected reputation within the community as a creative interpreter of culture through planning and design. DTL's deep understanding and knowledge of Hawaii's sensibilities and sensitivities has led to it successfully facilitating dialogs, bridging perspectives and developing appropriate collaborative solutions to both challenging issues and exciting opportunities within our community.

Q Please describe the assistance that Victoria Ward, Limited (VWL) requested with respect to this project, Block D?

A VWL requested that DTL describe VWL's approach and commitment to integrating cultural narratives and elements within Ward Village developments, including Block D. VWL also requested that DTL present name candidates and recommendations for Block D, Block E, and the Diamond Head Plaza Park.

Q Why is it important to treat the process of developing, bestowing, and accepting the name for a project with respect and care?

A The Hawaiian word for name is *inoa*, and Hawaiians have long considered it to be a person's most important possession. It is believed that a name has *mana* (an influencing power or life force) and because of this, the name becomes a living entity and causes beneficial outcomes for the individual. This is why new names were traditionally chosen only after careful thought and consultation.

Q Has DTL developed a name for Block D?

A Yes, the name developed, recommended and chosen for Block D is *Melia*.

Q Please describe the process of how you developed the name Melia.

A The factors we use to arrive at the name candidates include reflecting on the significance of naming; evaluating name candidates based on the qualities of an effective name; evaluating the distinctiveness and ease of name candidates; evaluating the meaning, depth, positivity/negativity and ownability of name candidates; considering names inspired by the place or design of the building to be named; considering names inspired by VWL's brand messaging; and an overall discussion of these factors with VWL.

Q What is the meaning and significance of the name Melia?

A The name Melia reflects the melia flowers strung together to create the island favorite, lei pua melia, also known as the plumeria lei, which signifies the Hawaiian culture of hospitality. The pua melia flourishes year round making it a beloved gem of local culture and one of the most sought after flowers to make lei for all occasions. As a cornerstone ritual rooted in our island's way of life, making and giving lei is an expression of aloha that is a unique and celebrated principle of our island hospitality. Thus, the project name, Melia, reflects our rich Hawaiian tradition of hospitality and local Hawai'i flora.

Q Please describe VWL's approach and commitment to integrating cultural narratives and elements within Ward Village developments, including Melia.

A VWL demonstrates a commitment to respect and bring forward the history and culture of this special place by integrating cultural narratives and elements throughout Ward Village in several ways.

Location, Design, and Open Spaces

Melia will be located within Land Block 4 in the Auahi neighborhood, which is bounded by Auahi Street to the north (mauka), the future Diamond Head Plaza Park to the west, Block E to the east, and Ala Moana Boulevard to the south (makai). Block E and the Diamond Head Plaza Park are also integral parts of the cultural narrative. Block E will be named *Ilima*, and the Diamond Head Plaza Park will be named *Ka Lei Park*.

The location of Melia serves as a mauka-makai connection for area residents and visitors to Ward Village and the broader community. Being uniquely located between Ala Moana Boulevard, the commercial and retail lined Auahi Street, and facing Ka Lei Park, Melia is designed as a gathering place to allow residents and visitors to gather and connect with the 'āina and one another.

Melia's streetscape, wayfinding, and native landscaping is culturally- and place- based. Inspired by a native palette of shoreline and lowline indigenous flora, Melia will be accentuated with native and ohana tree planting groups, scented flowers, and utilitarian plants holding both spiritual and medicinal qualities. Exhibit 6 of the project application for Melia highlights many of the native landscape species that will be featured.

Melia's native landscaping will complement the existing botanical garden at the nearby IBM Building, and the wide sidewalks, public art, and retail and commercial space on the ground floor of Melia will create a balanced sense of place. Melia will also deliver homes in various configurations to accommodate a variety of 'ohana.

In addition, Melia will have convenient access to both Ilima and Ka Lei Park. The park will celebrate and integrate the native flora and fauna of the area, with special attention to shoreline species and public art that offer remembrance and reverence to our past, present, and future.

Ka Lei Park celebrates the cultural tradition of giving and receiving lei. Traditionally, lei were created with much reverence that included ceremony in each step of the process. Today, lei continue to be given and received in the traditional manner, but are more commonly shared in celebration of milestones in a person's life. Ka Lei Park will evoke the experience of sharing connection to 'āina and our island hospitality, and the park will be a gathering place that encourages visitors and residents to enjoy the connection this park will provide with nature, the native plants, and one another.

Building Location and Orientation

Melia's building location and orientation were carefully considered to enhance mauka-makai views and to seamlessly integrate Melia with a pattern of a connected, walkable, and active community at Ward Village.

Likewise, Ka Lei Park is intentionally located along Kamake'e Street to preserve the mauka-makai Kamake'e view corridor.

Mauka-makai views are not only important for visual aesthetics, but are also important to maintain metaphoric connectivity and balance that is and has been important to Hawaiian culture and the people of Hawai'i.

Use of Storytelling to Integrate Cultural Narratives and Elements

The Ward Village Neighborhood is a part of the former Ward Estate which extended from Thomas Square to the shoreline. The over 100 acres of lands in the Ward Estate generated income from various goods and crops, such as niu, makaloa grass, cattle, horses, taro, kiawe firewood, fish, and salt from the estate's salt pans. Thus, the lands underlying the current Ward Village Neighborhood have a long history of productivity, culture, and community.

Honoring its rich history and celebrating its bright future, the Ward village Neighborhood integrates cultural narratives and elements throughout its projects and connected public spaces.

As discussed previously, Melia will face the new Ka Lei Park, which will integrate native flora and fauna of the area and include public art. The natural integration of native flora and fauna in this area symbolizes the previously mentioned lei pua melia, or plumeria lei, that combines and reflects the rich Hawaiian tradition of hospitality and local flora of Hawai'i. The giving and receiving of lei are commonly shared in celebrations of milestones in our loved one's lives. It shows 'ohana and community coming together to honor, praise, and memorialize a special person, place or event. This same atmosphere of community and preservation of Hawai'i's traditions will be showcased through Melia and the Ka Lei Park's integration of native flora, fauna, and public art.

Auahi Street and Ala Moana Boulevard will conveniently link Melia and the Ka Lei Park with additional public spaces, all within walking distance. Thus, Melia and Ka Lei Park mend harmoniously together as the Ka Lei Park celebrates the Hawai'i tradition of giving and receiving lei – a practice that connects the 'āina (land) and kanaka (man).

At the center of Ward Neighborhood, the Victoria Ward Park (mauka and makai) is planned to integrate cultural narratives through storytelling elements inspired by the former estate of the Ward 'ohana, Old Plantation, which may include lyric sidewalks with ample shade and lush landscaping, play structures inspired by palai ferns, pergola structures inspired by the shade provided by waving palms, seating terraces in the makai park incorporating horses or cattle, and native flowers and flowering trees.

Through Auahi Street, Melia will also have convenient access to the 30,000 square foot *Ka La'i o Kukuluāe'o* (meaning, the calm of Kukuluāe'o) park, which will feature a keiki playground and open space, located on the west (Ewa) end of Ward Village.

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