

AIRPORT ZONING BOARD
PUBLIC HEARING - HILO, HAWAII
May 15, 1953

A public hearing of the Airport Zoning Board was called to order by Chairman George K. Houghtailing at the County Building, Hilo, Hawaii, May 15, 1953, at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Mr. George K. Houghtailing, Chairman
Mr. Charles J. Pietsch, Jr., Member
Mr. Olen V. Andrew, Member

Attending: Mr. David Furtado, HAC Commissioner of Hawaii
Mr. Mark E. Martin, Manager, Honolulu Airport
Mr. John E. Batchelder, Manager, Hawaii County Airports
Mr. Hiroshi Kasamoto, Planning & Traffic Commission
Mr. Alex Penovaroff, Hilo
Mr. & Mrs. Manuel Costa
Mr. Ernest B. Costa
Mr. Rolla Mitchell
Mr. Edward K. Wagner, Hilo
Miss Eileen Nakagawa, Hilo

HOUGHTAILING: This meeting is called in compliance with Section 3 of Act 182, Session Laws of 1945. The Airport Zoning Board is here to discuss rules and regulations in reference to the building of structures and planting of trees to heights that would be hazardous to flying safety. The Zoning Board consists of Mr. Pietsch, Mr. Andrew and myself. Mr. Martin will work out the technical details relative to the regulations. He has prepared maps showing the limits to which buildings can be erected, as well as the heights of trees and other structures. At this time I wish to present Mr. Martin, who will discuss with you the regulations as they affect Hilo Airport.

MARTIN: Essentially, what we have done is to follow the C.A.A. standards as to allowable heights around the airports. I see just one land owner here who is immediately adjacent to the airport and I discussed the situation with him some time ago. Mr. Costa recognizes that his land is in variance of allowable height. However, we would like to point out to you right away that these zoning regulations, when they go into effect, will not be retroactive. Existing non-conforming structures will not be affected. Essentially, what we are doing is zoning a radius of about two miles around the airport. There are different standards applying to the ends of runway 8-26 and runway 3-21, and still another standard applying to the sides of the runways. We have a preliminary map worked up here which will be followed very closely. You are free to come up and look at this map and I will explain anything I can about it.

KASAMOTO: I am from the Traffic Commission. Is the map similar to the one worked out about two years ago?

MARTIN: It is quite similar, although there are minor changes. We followed the standards of C.A.A. on that also. We have made the restrictions different in some minor respects.

KASAMOTO: Is it practically the same?

MARTIN: I believe you will find that is correct. I don't recall all the details of that old map. Roughly, what we have done is to take areas out from the ends of the runway on a slope, so as you get further away you are allowed a greater height. It is the fairer way for the property owner. In the final analysis, we will have photographs of the entire area so that we will be able to look at that and tell exactly what the allowable height will be for any area. I don't have the photographs ready for Hawaii, but I can show you what we have done for Honolulu. (Displays map of Honolulu Airport.)

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- HOUGHTAILING: We of the Planning Commission, in interpreting the Act, feel the Act is broad enough so that we can also zone land use. We are waiting to discuss the matter with the Attorney General's office.
- FURTADO: Is there anything now to prevent me from building next to the airport; for example, an apartment house?
- HOUGHTAILING: Whatever the Building Department permits in Hilo; if it is in the building code. After the adoption of our regulations, that will be changed.
- FURTADO: Does the Building Department ever deny a building of any height in that area?
- HOUGHTAILING: It has never come up.
- FURTADO: The Bulk Sugar Plant has had several complaints about height.
- MARTIN: The Water Tower is higher than the Bulk Sugar Plant. The Bulk Sugar Plant is below our requirements.
- FURTADO: The KILA Tower at the Naniloa was ordered to lower their height.
- HOUGHTAILING: That was cleared by C.A.A.
- MARTIN: Heights are allowed to 180 feet in that area.
- FURTADO: At the ends and approaches of runways?
- MARTIN: It is most restrictive on the approaches and a short distance on the sides. Then it flattens out.
- FURTADO: Mr. Costa's home; what about that?
- ANDREW: We want to make a common sense approach to these things. Sometimes there will be instances where there will be alterations and still perfectly safe to have things higher. Mr. Costa's home is somewhat higher than is allowed on the map. This board will have the power to grant a variance if, in the interests of safety, such variance can be granted.
- BATCHELDER: Does this board anticipate making a survey and forwarding recommendations to H.A.C. on things that exist at this time?
- HOUGHTAILING: Nothing would be retroactive, if there is a building or a structure above height regulations, unless it is such a hazard that the only solution is to lower it to meet our standards.
- FURTADO: If such a condition existed, and you decide it would not meet your requirements of safety, would you order the owner to lower the height?
- HOUGHTAILING: The H.A.C. would pay for the lowering.
- PIETSCH: We should get these regulations adopted soon so that no new hazards can be erected.
- HOUGHTAILING: We have been told that the H.A.C. has been deprived of federal funds due to the lack of airport zoning.
- KASAMOTO: There is an area of territorial land at M----- and H-----. An area that falls within the two-mile area and has elevation of more than 180 ft. I am wondering if any provisions would be made to develop that area.
- MARTIN: We have on this map certain shadings and in that one area, we know the elevation of the land exceeds our zoning requirements. There is no doubt that a special study of this area will have to be made. Several homes have already been developed in that area. The Board may have to permit a blanket variance in that area. I believe the Board would consider a blanket variance with certain limitations.

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- BATCHELDER: If, as a hypothetical case, you have already covered the land use. Supposing, for example, the Attorney General gives this Board the authority to govern land use and we have an undesirable situation such as might arise from our county dump -- when it is decided that an undesirable situation exists, do you work through H.A.C.?
- HOUGHTAILING: The H.A.C. is the working organization for this zoning board. The H.A.C. reports to the Zoning Board. The Zoning Board then takes the matter under consideration.
- BATCHELDER: Then it should be forwarded to this Board regardless of whether I think it is a hazard?
- HOUGHTAILING: If in doubt, report.
- ANDREW: Smoke, blinding lights, electrical interference; anything of that order should be reported; also electrical interferences which might interfere with instruments in the tower or that might interfere with aircraft.
- MITCHELL: This two-mile radius? Is that a blanket height of 180 ft. or is it sloped out?
- MARTIN: Ten thousand feet is the radius out from the ends and sides of both runways. The approaches are sloped out.
- PENOVAROFF: Don't you think this board should take it upon themselves to advise the Attorney General's office of the fact that the land use should be regulated? I am thinking of a number of things. The fuel tanks around the airport--unless some restriction is placed on these--can be a definite hazard. There are always hazards around the airport. In some places the Hilo Airport is built closely to the town of Hilo, and there is property right in the vicinity of the airport which could be severely damaged if something happened.
- HOUGHTAILING: We are awaiting a ruling on that sort of thing from the Attorney General's office. The act is ambiguous in the case of safety of people and property.
- ANDREW: This Board has gone on record as desiring to increase the control of the land use.
- THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


George K. Houghtailing, Chairman