

**Department of Planning and Permitting  
City and County of Honolulu  
650 South King St. 7th Fl.  
Honolulu, HI 96813**

**Subject: Testimony on 2121 Kuhio Tower for Public Hearing: Feb 12, 2013**

**Greetings everyone,**

**This proposal brings both good news and bad news to Waikiki. The good part is that Waikiki is overdue for renewal of its aging buildings. As an urban resort, a major new project has great potential to uplift the look and feel of the entire area.**

**The bad news comes with the extreme straddling width and orientation proposed, counter to Waikiki Special District Guidelines. Page four addresses view corridors and windflow by stating "The long axis of all new high-rise structures should be oriented in a mauka-makai direction". While it's true that their lot is crosswise to that axis, the proposed building footprint accentuates that to an unprecedented degree.**

**Furthermore, this proposal introduces the first "straddling" monumental wall where any of the mauka-makai streets terminate into Kuhio. An aerial view of Waikiki shows an existing mauka-makai fabric of building and block orientation, with exceptions standing out like eyesores.**

**These objectives should not be taken lightly. They came from a time when people saw the diminishing appeal of Waikiki as it evolved helter-skelter. In the recent 1990s downturn, I was witness to much effort and dedication expended for Waikiki renewal through umpteen brainstorming meetings.**

**Look at a tower project perhaps most true to the guidelines: Liliuokalani Gardens At Waikiki, which fills up an entire block near the east end. Instead of a monopolizing wall it staggers two cylinders, nearly lost in a large garden. It offers residents cleverly oriented views, but with minimal blockage for those living, visiting, or walking nearby.**

**In summary, it's understandable for a new proposal to ask for the maximum variance. But to concede to that can make a mockery of past adherence to the guidelines and to the vision of the future those guidelines entail. Please, let's move on to the plan B for this development, rather than making a lasting monument to premature concessions.**

**Thank you, John Thorvaldson, 2115 Ala Wai Blvd, Honolulu**