

## Hawaii Kai panel rejects cabins

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Hawaii Kai residents made their views clear again that they do not want vacation cabins built on two parcels of preservation land between the Hawaii Kai Golf Course and the ridge overlooking Makapuu Beach.

After hours of testimony, the Hawaii Kai Neighborhood Board voted 13-0 against the project at a meeting that lasted late into Tuesday night.

Developer QRM LLC envisions building 181 cabins on two parcels, referred to as Queen's Rise and Mauuwai.

Attorney William McCorrison, representing QRM LLC, had the opportunity to speak for only a few minutes before the board's vote.

"I understand this is an emotional issue for the community," said McCorrison, who had brought display boards showing the cabins in clusters of both eight and 12, "but you really want to work toward solutions. You can't just say no."

At an earlier meeting with the board on Jan. 8, McCorrison tried striking a deal with the community, offering to transfer Queen's Rise to the city or a qualified nonprofit entity if it would agree to let QRM develop Mauuwai.

This deal, he said in a letter to the board dated Monday, would expire with its vote or the sale of Mauuwai or Queen's Rise, whichever occurred first.

But neither project ever had a chance with the upswelling of opposition against the developer.

Community members -- who protested the same developer in 2006 -- saw it as a ploy and did not even like that the deal was framed as an either/or choice.

They also wanted to know why McCorrison will not reveal the partners behind QRM, which in county records has Robert Gerell listed as its manager.

A petition with more than 250 signatures was already in progress Tuesday night, and by the end of the meeting, there was a box full of more.

"There's a point where you say, enough already," said Hawaii Kai resident Gregg Steuber.

News of the pending development brought Paul Paaaina from Nanakuli to speak out against it.

Paaaina said there were valuable cultural and natural resources at the nearby Ka Iwi coast, where he used to take his kids diving and camping.

"Makapuu and Kaena Point -- it's all we've got left," he said. "Isn't it overdeveloped already? Enough is enough."

State legislators have also waded into the battle.

Rep. Gene Ward (R, Kalama Valley-Hawaii Kai) introduced four different bills in the House relating to Ka Iwi -- one which asks the state Board of Land and Natural Resources to buy the coast with land conservation funds, and another asking the state to reclassify the land while directing the city to meanwhile not issue permits.

A companion bill by Sen. Clayton Hee (D, Kaneohe-Kahuku) has been scheduled for a hearing in February. Rep. Lyla Berg (D, Niu Valley-Kahala) also has a similar bill pending.

Ward said McCorriston presented the project as a threat -- through a "buy me out, let me build or I'll take you to court" approach.

"This community is not easily threatened," said Ward.

The decision now lies with the city, which would decide whether to issue QRM a major conditional-use permit to build on the preservation-zoned land. The permit request would require a public hearing.