

KULA COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION
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<http://kulamaui.com>

*The vision of the Kula Community Association is to preserve open space, support agriculture, maintain a rural residential atmosphere,
and to work together as a community.
The specific purpose of this association is to improve the quality of life for the residents of Kula, to promote civic welfare and generally to benefit the community of Kula.*

Public Testimony for the Council meeting of December 19, 2006

To: Chair Riki Hokama, Maui County Council Members

From: Karolyn Mossman, Kula Community Association President

Subject: Proposed, Maui County Outdoor Lighting Bill, first reading

The county has outdoor lighting standards have long been outdated and not responsive to the community needs. Over the past several years various proposals have been recommended, only to have the proposals not make it through to final reading. So the Kula Community Association was hopeful that this time around comprehensive outdoor lighting standards would finally be adopted.

It appears that this hope is to again not be realized. The current proposal is described as a "first step". We believe the bill is grossly inadequate as submitted and needs to be returned to committee to address the many issues stated in our position.

“Position

The Kula Community Association supports a bill for Outdoor Lighting Standards which would establish standards for outdoor lighting to: maintain safety, security, and production; promote energy conservation; improve environmental conditions for astronomical studies, wildlife, and plants; and minimize unsafe and unsightly light trespass, light pollution, and glare.”

We are saddened to make this recommendation, because we want to see the council finally act on this issue, however this proposal is so watered down as to be virtually meaningless.

In October 2001 we sent forth a copy of this position with the following explanation. This was in reference to the then proposed lighting ordinance proposal, PWT-32: Draft Maui Outdoor Lighting Standards, which we believe much more comprehensive and forward thinking.

“Explanation

The Kula Community Association (KCA) Board of Directors has reviewed and discussed the "Draft Maui Outdoor Lighting Standards". The KCA Board supports the proposed ordinance and asks that there be serious consideration to the full acceptance of its content.

The KCA has been active in the past in recommending remedies for our state and county lighting practices. We responded to detailed questions from the County Public Works Committee on Outdoor Lighting in 1995 and supported lighting standards in the 1996 Upcountry Community Plan Update. Our association and others proposed comprehensive outdoor lighting standards which were not adopted. Such standards are long overdue.

The proposed "Maui Outdoor Lighting Standards" would address many problems caused by our existing inappropriate lighting. A few of these concerns are: light trespass and pollution, energy waste, glare, visual clutter, unsafe travel conditions, and endangered wildlife. As population increases and urban areas grow, these problems will intensify, resulting in diminished safety, economy, and quality of life.

The KCA Board believes outdoor lighting restrictions, established and enforced by a comprehensive ordinance, are the only remedy to poor lighting practices. We urge the Maui County Council to adopt the proposed "Maui Outdoor Lighting Standards".

Key components that have been removed, or modified from the previous proposal, which are in conflict the intent of our outdoor lighting position are;

- Low pressure sodium (LPS), should be the primary light source for roadways and parking lots. Without this provision, our summit observatories, and endangered wildlife will continue to be threatened.
- Residential light trespass needs to be addressed. Our citizens deserve to be protected from public and private nuisances of poor lighting. This could be done during the planning stage of new construction, and enforced by complaint afterwards.
- Parking lots, and commercial buildings, should have time limits of operation. When a business is closed, lights should be off to curtail light trespass, light pollution, and conserve energy. Some States mandate this requirement.

We understand a concern has been raised by the Maui Police Department regarding seeing color adequately. We believe the committee should persist in having the Department present factual information showing the decrease in apprehended suspects or other data from the Big Island or other jurisdictions due to the new lighting standards used.

Our community association finds no compelling data to support this, and with the lack of this data believes we continue to need a comprehensive outdoor lighting standard that not only maintains safety, security, and production; but also promote energy conservation; improve environmental conditions for astronomical studies, wildlife, and plants; and minimize unsafe and unsightly light trespass, light pollution, and glare.

Mahalo for your consideration on this matter. If you have questions you can reach me at 878-2982.

cc: Maui County Mayor

