

Sharks Cove commercialism disrespects law, neighbors

By John W. Thielst

As a 30-year resident of Oahu's North Shore and resident owner on Pahoe Road across from Sharks Cove for the last 13 years, there are a number of great things I've learned while living in our very special community.

Treat your family, friends, community, neighbors and the environment with respect. Through your actions, be a good steward of the land with honest, kindness and humility. Sadly, when those bedrock values are ignored, it affects all of us.

You might have read about or seen the "circus" of nine (or is it now 10?) food trucks — with accompanying lights, traffic, tourists and noise — that have appeared over the past months on the lots next to Foodland. This is the current phase of the "Sharks Cove Development" by

Hanapohaku LLC, which bought the properties from the highly respected Niimi family in 2014, after subdividing the lots in 2009.

My neighbors and I live along the narrow private Pahoe Road, directly across from and next to the development, which has been utterly under siege over the past several months from the spillover effects on our street and homes due to the poor planning on the three parcels now owned by Hanapohaku.

We have felt like hostages in our homes with cars jamming our street and using our driveways. Patrons, who are provided no bathroom on the property, are using the bushes or our front yards. These patrons also leave beer bottles and litter everywhere and we hear loud live music and videos blasting. Our kids and pets are not safe playing in our



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own front yards — stress levels are high — and it's like a war zone.

While we are not against a properly planned B-1 "neighborhood" commercial use on these lots, it must be done lawfully. Planning can be done well, as many businesses and landowners who have taken the time and care to engage and respect the community on the North Shore know so well. However, we are against the kind

of poor planning and misguided development that is happening at Sharks Cove, and the deliberate avoidance of the proper public review process.

It seems Hanapohaku has never notified the neighbors on Pahoe Road about its food truck or development plans; has never presented its food truck or development plans to the community or the North Shore Neighborhood Board; and has refused to conduct an environmental review and traffic study.

Instead of treating its development as one major project, Hanapohaku claimed that its three parcels are separate developments and valued each parcel's development at just under \$500,000, the legal trigger for a special management area (SMA) "major" permit. As a result, it has entirely avoided the public

scrutiny and hearing that would come by treating its development on these connected parcels as an SMA major permit. It has gamed the city's permitting system. Something is really wrong here.

Hanapohaku claims to be "environmentalists and stewards of the land" — but talk is cheap. If it wants to prove these claims to the community, the local neighbors and the many environmental stewardship organizations that opposed this unplanned and chaotic development that has racked up numerous fines and permit violations so far, then Hanapohaku should withdraw the three current SMA "minor" permits and begin a proper planning process with full community engagement.

Follow the law. Respect your neighbors. That's all the community is asking for. Simple, right?