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October 23, 2012

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Councilmember Tom Berg
City and County of Honolulu
City Council
530 S. King Street, Room 202
Honolulu, HI 96813

**SUBJECT: CONSULTATION FOR THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS HAWAII
SPORTS AND WELLNESS CENTER, KAPOLEI, HAWAII,
TMK 9-1-017-110**

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Dear Councilmember Berg:

Special Olympics Hawaii (SOHI) is proposing to create a multi-purpose sports, education, fitness and wellness facility, with an emphasis on providing accessible facilities to persons with intellectual disabilities. Currently, SOHI serves over 2,700 children and adults in Hawai'i annually. With the support of more than 7,000 coaches and volunteers these services are provided, free of charge without a facility of its own utilizing rented and leased space throughout O'ahu. The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL-Trust), recognizing the benefits SOHI provides to the community, extended the a long term land lease to Special Olympics for development of a multi-purpose Sports and Wellness Center on 2.45 acres in East Kapolei.

SOHI has applied for funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to pay for a portion of the capital improvement costs, triggering a need to document compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). This project has been previously evaluated and was determined to be in compliance with the Hawai'i Environmental Policy Act, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) Chapter 343 based upon its consistency with and physical location within the parcels evaluated as part of the East Kapolei Master Plan Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (1998). In 2010, DHHL-Trust consulted with OEQC requesting concurrence with their evaluation that the SOHI project was covered by the 1998 Final EIS. In 2010, OEQC responded that they were in concurrence with DHHL-Trust's evaluation and more importantly indicated that preparation of neither an environmental assessment nor supplemental statement was required under HRS Chapter 343. In 2011, the City and County of Honolulu, Department of Community Services queried OEQC again regarding compliance with Chapter 343. In a letter, dated September 27, 2011, OEQC again indicated that the project is in compliance with Chapter 343 requirements.

This letter is to advise you and your staff of the proposed conceptual plans and consult with you regarding the proposed project and to meet the requirements of NEPA.

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Project Location

The proposed improvements will occur entirely within the 2.45 acres of the parcel identified as Tax Map Key (TMK) 9-1-017:110 (por) owned in fee by the DHH-L-Trust within Honouliuli Ahupua'a, 'Ewa Moku on O'ahu. The Site is a generally flat parcel approximately 70 feet above sea level. It is located outside the tsunami inundation zone, and is in flood hazard Zone D, (undetermined). No wetlands or critical habitats have been identified within the Site. The project is located within the urban growth boundary established by the City and County of Honolulu, and within the State Land Use District, "Urban."

Project Overview

The objective of the proposed Project is to create a multi-purpose sports, education, fitness and wellness facility in Kapolei, with an emphasis on providing accessible facilities to persons with intellectual disabilities. The facility will include both indoor and outdoor spaces. It is anticipated that the indoor space will encompass approximately 15,600 square feet. The indoor space is expected to include an administration area comprised of six offices and open office workstations; support areas including lavatories, storage, library, kitchen, conference and reception areas; sports areas including three multi-functional rooms and a fitness area; as well as a warehouse for storage. Approximately 20,300 square feet of uncovered, outdoor recreational is anticipated to include a courtyard, and areas for sports such as 5-on-5 soccer and bocce ball. In addition, an outdoor covered hard court covering approximately 10,500 square feet is also proposed in the design. A parking lot is proposed as part of the Project and is anticipated to accommodate off-street parking for 37 cars.

Programming

While the proposed Project will be designed to include space for special Olympic athletes to train, it is not intended to provide facilities for the Special Olympics' summer/winter games. These activities will continue to be held at the venues similar to/or the same as those currently utilized by SOHI that are located throughout the State of Hawai'i.

The site is being design to address both sports and wellness. In addition to providing sports facilities, SOHI intends to utilize the space to conduct health screenings for those with intellectual disabilities. Health Screenings done annually at the Special Olympics games have revealed that people with Intellectual Disabilities face huge health disparities, often due to the lack of medical professionals willing to serve a person with Intellectual Disabilities. At SOHI's annual Healthy Athlete Village screenings done during 2011 State Summer Games, 49% had gum disease; 25.1% had missing teeth; 87.3% had gait abnormalities; 28.3% failed hearing tests; 28.6% had low bone density; and 8.4% have not had a vision exam in over three years. People with Intellectual Disabilities have 40% greater risk of preventable secondary health conditions than the general population. Instead of only being able to conduct these screenings once a year at State Games, this facility will enable us to provide these screening services – free of charge – throughout the year.

As a matter of information, according to the Department of Health, there are a minimum 15,000 children and adults who meet the eligibility requirements for Special Olympics program in the State of Hawai'i; and 5,030 are between the ages of 6-21. Data from the State Department of Education indicates nearly 4,000 Special Education students attend school in the surrounding

