
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NUUANU SHOPPING
PLAZA AND ITS UNIQUE TREES.

1 WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the State to
2 preserve the architecture, objects, and sites of the numerous
3 cultures that make up our island community; and
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5 WHEREAS, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966
6 states "the historical and cultural foundations of the Nation
7 should be preserved as a living part of our community life and
8 development in order to give a sense of orientation to the
9 American people"; and
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11 WHEREAS, the State of Hawaii recognized its special
12 commitment to historic preservation in Hawai'i Revised Statutes
13 §6E-1, stating in part, "the legislature further declares that
14 it is in the public interest to engage in a comprehensive
15 program of historic preservation at all levels of government to
16 promote the use and conservation of such property for the
17 education, inspiration, pleasure, and enrichment of its
18 citizens"; and
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20 WHEREAS, the Nuuanu-Liliha area was recently selected as
21 the Historic Corridor for the Island of Oahu in a recent
22 publication, a corridor which extends from the Pali Lookout,
23 through Chinatown and ending at Honolulu Harbor; and
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25 WHEREAS, the Nuuanu-Liliha corridor uniquely reflects all
26 of Hawaii from the Battle of Nuuanu, in which Kamehameha the
27 Great unified the Islands, through its myriad of multicultural
28 temples, its quaint "frozen in time" mom and pop stores from the
29 1940s and 1950s pre-Statehood days, and through Honolulu Harbor,
30 which received many of our multi-ethnic immigrants for over a
31 century; this corridor houses most obviously some of the most



1 important natural and cultural resources of our State and
2 nation; and

3
4 WHEREAS, THE NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA defines the commercial
5 and residential core of the Nuuanu-Liliha Historical Corridor,
6 and stands as a neighborhood landmark encapsulating a unique and
7 spectacular history such as is found nowhere else in the world,
8 and which should be preserved and shared for current and future
9 local generations, as well as the millions of individuals who
10 visit the State each year; and

11
12 WHEREAS, THE NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA, formerly the Chun Afong
13 Estate, and later the Chun Hoon Market, marks a most pivotal
14 moment in the history of Chinese establishment in Hawaii, as the
15 illustrious history of its site is linked on countless levels to
16 the history of Chinese immigration, prosperity, and cultural
17 enrichment in the Hawaiian Islands; and

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19 WHEREAS, the original operator and owner of the site now
20 called THE NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA, Chun Afong, established
21 himself as the first Chinese nobleman and millionaire in Hawaii
22 after arriving to Hawaii in 1849 from the village of Yeong Mui
23 Cha to work in his uncle's retail store at the age of twenty-
24 four, and ever enterprising, this man soon set up his own shops
25 and became more visible in Hawaiian society as he increasingly
26 prospered; and

27
28 WHEREAS, by the 1870s, he had become partner to a sugar
29 plantation on the Island of Hawaii, and incorporated his own
30 sugar plantation in 1884, quickly gathering interests in other
31 sugar and coffee plantations; and

32
33 WHEREAS, Chun Afong played a major role in the integration
34 of Chinese immigrant society into local society, directing a
35 major ball in 1856 to fuse cultures and greatly heighten the
36 prestige and prominence of the Chinese in the Hawaiian and
37 foreign communities; and

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39 WHEREAS, he also encouraged Chinese immigration by
40 reserving many labor jobs for Chinese, and increased Hawaii's
41 convenient accessibility from China by continuously sailing a
42 vessel between Hong Kong and Honolulu; and



1 WHEREAS, in 1879, Chun Afong became the first Chinese to be
2 appointed a noble of the Hawaiian Kingdom, and was almost
3 immediately thereafter nominated Chinese Commercial Agent, a
4 series of appointments which signaled China's awareness that the
5 Chinese population in Hawaii now constituted a sizeable
6 community; and
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8 WHEREAS, he served as trusted confidante to many prominent
9 members of local society, including King David Kalakaua and the
10 influential missionary doctor Gerrit P. Judd, as his wife Julia
11 Fayerweather was foster sister of the former and ward of the
12 latter, and his eldest son became the first Chinese to attend
13 Hawaii's Protestant missionary-established preparatory school,
14 Punahou; and
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16 WHEREAS, much contemporary and postmortem attention and
17 curiosity gravitated towards Chun Afong as Hawaii's "merchant
18 prince": Jack London's 1909 novel, *The House of Pride*, offered a
19 fictional account of Afong's life; Eaton Magoon Jr. caricatured
20 Afong's 4 sons and 12 daughters in the 1961 Broadway musical, *13*
21 *Daughters*, featuring actor Don Ameche in the role of Afong
22 himself; and the late Bob Dye documented Afong's life in the
23 1997 biography, *Hawaii's Merchant Prince*, and;
24

25 WHEREAS, contained within the THE NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA is
26 what is reported to be the oldest lychee tree still existing in
27 the State of Hawaii, which was planted over one hundred years
28 ago by Chun Afong himself, has repeatedly born fruit as recently
29 as 2008, and which has roots so delicate that the lychee tree
30 would not survive if efforts are made to replant the tree
31 elsewhere; and
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33 WHEREAS, THE NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA and its historical
34 lychee tree are contained within the Punchbowl Special Design
35 District, so that even to discuss the tree's removal as a
36 distant prospect would require a special permit issued after a
37 complex process of review by the City and County, a party who
38 has thus far stood wholeheartedly firm about maintaining the
39 tree in its current planting; and
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41 WHEREAS, numerous private residents of the district and
42 elsewhere on Oahu, as well as organized citizen groups, have
43 already voiced concerned inquiries as to the maintenance of THE
44 NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA as the cherished town center it has become



1 after over a century, gathering substantial press coverage and
2 further increasing interest and awareness of the issue; and
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4 WHEREAS, a leasehold purchaser bought THE NUUANU SHOPPING
5 PLAZA on May 23, 2009, and has expressed intention to the
6 Outdoor Circle and to the State House of Representatives that it
7 will cooperate to preserve the character and integrity of THE
8 NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA by maintaining the historical lychee tree
9 and the banyan tree contained within the building of the former
10 Hungry Lion restaurant; and
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12 WHEREAS, THE NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA was sold to the
13 purchaser with the agent's understanding that "rather than
14 another investor buying the shopping center and allowing it to
15 degrade, the community now has a user who wants to...be part of
16 the community"; now, therefore,
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18 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
19 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
20 of 2010, the Senate concurring, that THE NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA,
21 formerly known as the Chun Afong Estate and the Chun Hoon
22 Market, and the landmark lychee tree and banyan tree contained
23 upon its site are recognized as historic jewels of Hawaii; and
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25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that now more than ever in this
26 competitive environment of tourism destinations, we cannot
27 afford to allow our State's unique identity to be eroded, so it
28 is crucial that we preserve our built environment as well as our
29 natural environment; and
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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that THE NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA and
32 its historical trees should always be treasured and protected by
33 the State of Hawaii and its residents; and
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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
36 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Administrator of the
37 State Historic Preservation Division.
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[Signature]
Lida Cebonilla
Jessica Woolz
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OFFERED BY:

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MAR 10 2010

