

---

---

## HOUSE 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  
4

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  
10

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  
19

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  
24

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  
32 important natural and cultural resources of our State and  
33 nation; and



1  
2 WHEREAS, THE NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA defines the commercial  
3 and residential core of the Nuuanu-Liliha Historical Corridor,  
4 and stands as a neighborhood landmark encapsulating a unique and  
5 spectacular history such as is found nowhere else in the world,  
6 and which should be preserved and shared for current and future  
7 local generations, as well as the millions of individuals who  
8 visit the State each year; and  
9

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

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

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

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

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



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  
7

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  
15

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  
32

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  
40



1 WHEREAS, numerous private residents of the district and  
2 elsewhere on Oahu, as well as organized citizen groups, have  
3 already voiced concerned inquiries as to the maintenance of THE  
4 NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA as the cherished town center it has become  
5 after over a century, gathering substantial press coverage and  
6 further increasing interest and awareness of the issue; and  
7

8 WHEREAS, a leasehold purchaser bought THE NUUANU SHOPPING  
9 PLAZA on May 23, 2009, and has expressed intention to the  
10 Outdoor Circle and to the State House of Representatives that it  
11 will cooperate to preserve the character and integrity of THE  
12 NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA by maintaining the historical lychee tree  
13 and the banyan tree contained within the building of the former  
14 Hungry Lion restaurant; and  
15

16 WHEREAS, THE NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA was sold to the  
17 purchaser with the agent's understanding that "rather than  
18 another investor buying the shopping center and allowing it to  
19 degrade, the community now has a user who wants to...be part of  
20 the community"; now, therefore,  
21

22 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
23 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session  
24 of 2010, that THE NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA, formerly known as the  
25 Chun Afong Estate and the Chun Hoon Market, and the landmark  
26 lychee tree and banyan tree contained upon its site are  
27 recognized as historic jewels of Hawaii; and  
28

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that now more than ever in this  
30 competitive environment of tourism destinations, we cannot  
31 afford to allow our State's unique identity to be eroded, so it  
32 is crucial that we preserve our built environment as well as our  
33 natural environment; and  
34

35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that THE NUUANU SHOPPING PLAZA and  
36 its historical trees should always be treasured and protected by  
37 the State of Hawaii and its residents; and  
38

39 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
40 Resolution be transmitted to the Administrator of the State  
41 Historic Preservation Division.



1  
2

~~Jim~~

OFFERED BY:

Celine W. H. Chung

Rick Cabanilla

~~Amigan~~

Govinda Hiden

Junice Woods

Ray Sanchez

Zit

Barbara Mammot

~~Barbara~~

Cindy Evans

Martin

Barbara

Beaker

Jay B. Berg

MAR 10 2010

