

HOME FOR LIFE TASK FORCE
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 229
Tuesday, October 5, 2010

DRAFT MINUTES

Members Present: Bill Brizee (State Building Code Council), Karen Iwamoto (Building Industry Association), Lei Learmont, Tony Lenzer, Toby Morris (Contractor), Marni Murdock (Architect, AHL Design), Richard Olmsted (AIA), Richard Port, Joan Riggs (ASID Professor of Interior Design), Dexter Suzuki (EOM Hawaii), Francine Wai (Executive Director, State Disability and Communications Access Board), Joy Yadao (St. Francis Hawaii)

Members Excused: Coral Andrews (Healthcare Association of Hawaii), Jackie Boland (AARP), Lucy Lessard (American Physical Therapy Association), Jack Levin (Architect, Cleve and Levin), Amy Monk, Holly Boling Ruiz (American Society of Interior Design), Eudie Schick (PABEA Chair), Valorie Taylor (CFS), Hannah Wong (Architect, Pacific Atelier)

Others in Attendance: Questor Lau, Mike Lau, Jane Sugimura, Curt Kiri, Ruth H. Kam, Sen. Les Ihara, Jr., and Melissa Vomvoris (Sen. Ihara's office)

I. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Co-chairs Francine Wai and Joan Riggs at approximately 4:40pm. Introductions were made by everyone in attendance.

II. Review and approve the minutes of August 31, 2010:

It was moved by Richard Port and seconded by Dexter Suzuki to approve the minutes. Motion passed unanimously.

III. National Conference on Universal Design and Housing – October 9-12:

Co-Chair Wai noted that Jackie Boland is not available to attend and invited any member that would like to attend the conference as the registration is already paid for. Toby Morris was interested and would check his schedule and flights. Joy Yadao offered to attend if Toby Morris is unable to.

IV. Reports from Working Groups

Group 4 – Universal Design: Tony Lenzer briefed the task force on some group findings. There are no current state laws or incentives on Universal Design in Hawaii. Found information on funding sources to make housing more accessible. State Department of Human Services has a project called “Going Home Plus Project” funded by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This grant allows for simple

modifications for homes of Medicaid recipients. Limited funds are available until 2016. City & County of Honolulu has the rehabilitation loan program that provides low interest loans for home repair loans to low income homeowners that need repairs or to make accessible. This year there is \$1.5 million in program. Max amount loan is \$75K for individual homes. 18 loans were made last year, but only about 5% going to accessibility features. The rest were to bring homes up to code and for repairs. Hawaii County Office on Aging has a home modification program which uses federal funds from the National Family Caregivers Support Program. Last year expended \$15K to install grab bars and shower seats, and other minor improvements. Maui County had a grant from the U.S. Dept of Housing & Urban Development in the amount of \$670K. This was specifically for the type of work we are interested in. They upgraded 42 homes of low-income seniors. Modifications ranged from ramps, widening of doorways, converted tubs, etc. Average work was \$15K. Maui contracted Habitat for Humanity, which kept, costs low.

Toby Morris reported the group is looking at different associations in Hawaii such as National Kitchen & Bath Association and BIA to see if they were offering any classes on Universal Design. A survey was sent out with not much result. Barbara Nishikawa from BIA said no Universal Design classes have been scheduled and was not sure of the demand, as instructors have to be brought in from the mainland and cost is an issue. CAPS classes have been done. Nishikawa was optimistic at looking into bringing a Universal Design class. Spoke with G. Ludlow at NKBA and she said that they teach a CAPS class for certification and they offer Universal Design classes online. They have a UD instructor who teaches at Century College in Minnesota. These two organizations, in cooperation, may be able to have Universal Design classes in the near future.

Joan Riggs reported they also looked for professional agencies that may teach Universal Design in Hawaii and found none. Also, looked at Higher Education by surveying 12 departments, of which 5 responded. Not much taught in the area of Universal Design for the home except in the course she teaches for interior designers. Curt Kiriu, General Contractor, does public speaking to elderly groups and civic groups focusing on educating the general public in the area of aging in place. The people who do teach UD are at the School of Social Work at UH, the Occupational Therapy program at KCC, the Center on Disabilities at UH, and Chaminade, which offers some courses in the area of residential design. The need is to develop a multifaceted, continuing education course for all these agencies/industry professionals/educators which would be bigger and broader in the area of Universal Design.

Group 3 - Assessing At-Risk Persons and Home Environments: Dexter Suzuki reported the group has done cursory research with local professional resources for best practices and on the Internet to seek viable home assessment tools that could be utilized by health and building professionals, and family caregivers. Through this experience we have found that the field of information and resources is very exhaustive, ever changing, and difficult to standardize except in general categories.

The use of the internet also provides the ability to sort the vast quantity of information based on the user's search requirements and will provide various options and solutions. Potentially missing are local Hawaii resources that may not be available on the web.

The group suggests a legislative resolution or bill to help consolidate statewide and county “caregiver” information and resources into one Hawaii website. If money is available through legislation/grants/donations, a company or person could be hired to develop the content architecture, framework, search engine, and usability criteria. In addition, a blog would give any individual the opportunity to ask for help and receive answers or solutions to their specific needs or questions. Having one web source as the Hawaii caregiver clearing house makes it easier to promote. If HFLTF continues, a working group could help to refine the resources and include professional white papers and programs that best address the needs of the Hawaii caregiving community. (Written report submitted)

Group 2 - Home Modification for Accessible Living: Toby Morris reported they put together a panel to find out what is unique to Hawaii for the needs of those living at home and needing accessible living modifications. The panel was made up of Pat Tompkins from Stay Healthy at Home St. Francis, Liz Nelson from St. Francis Hospice, Jan Takada from Outpatient Care at Tripler, John McDermott from EOA, Amy Goo, a Queens Social Worker, and Mike Hirano from Project Dana. A Q&A session focused on barriers unique to Hawaii. Some answers were: fear of letting someone into their home to do the modifications, lack of financing, houses are small with little land area to put ramps, two-story homes with stairs, and hilly neighborhoods. Also, condos need to be looked at.

Curt Kiriu, contractor in attendance, mentioned other barriers that he has come across, such as: single wall construction is a problem to support grab bars, etc., many homes built on stilts, source of electricity is a problem as specialized equipment needs larger wattage than what is currently existing, and hard to widen doors because many are structural and can't be moved.

Group 1 - Codes & Laws: Bill Brizee introduced Questor Lau, Architect who shared a video from his website www.allkinds.org about Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) which allow for multiple dwellings on a single lot similar to “Ohana Units” but differences are the huge sewer fees and the requirement of two attached parking stalls. This type of dwelling needs to be explored as it will reduce seniors’ cost of accessible living modifications.

The group wants to send out a questionnaire to the four counties to get the zoning requirements and ask Sen. Ihara if he would assist. This questionnaire will provide the HFLTF with the current regulations in all 4 counties and will act as the starting point for our recommendations. (Written report submitted)

V. **Establish committee to formulate Draft Final Report**

Co-Chair Wai requested each working group to come up with a summary of their findings. If each group could designate one person to summarize and send the information to us, then Francine, Joan, Tony & Dexter will compile and formulate a preliminary report to submit to the Legislature. Francine & Joan will send out a template for the working groups to accomplish this. If each group could have their summaries completed just after the November meeting a report can then be generated by the December deadline.

VI. Timeframe for Task Force Work:

Each group shall determine the scope of their work accomplishable in Phase I by November 16, 2010. The Interim/Preliminary report is due to the Legislature on December 31, 2010.

a. Next Meeting date:

Tuesday November 16, 2010 at 4:30pm, Hawaii State Capitol, Conf. Room 229

VII. Adjournment:

Co-chair Wai adjourned the meeting with no objections at 6:20pm.

Handouts:

- Accessory Dwelling Units Model State Act and Local Ordinance
- Email information on Accessory Dwelling Units