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HAWAII ARCHITECT

September, 1983

Keelikolani Hale



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HAWAII ARCHITECT

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Features

Revising the CZC 11
by Michael M. McElroy
Director, Department of Land Utilization
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Number One—Bar None! 22
by Morris Schecter, AIA

Departments

Headlines The "Sub-Urbanization" of Downtown Honolulu 4
by Lewis Ingleson
President, Hawaii Society/AIA

News Announcing the First Annual Hawaii Architect Yearbook 7

Archi Fest 1983 8

Awards HS/AIA 1983 Design Awards 12
Award for Excellence in Architecture
Norman Lacayo, AIA, Inc.

Architectural Review Keelikolani Hale State Office Building II 16
by Alfred Preis, FAIA/ME

Cover Keelikolani Hale designed by Architects Hawaii
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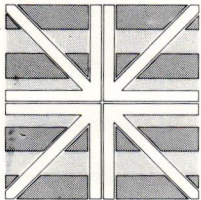
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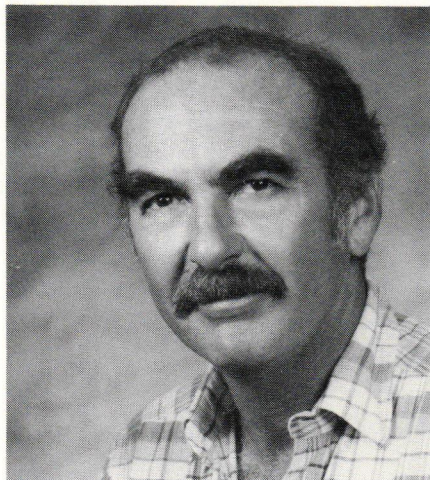
The "Sub-Urbanization" of Downtown Honolulu

by Lewis Ingleson
President, Hawaii Society/AIA

In my 25 years in Honolulu, vast changes have occurred in our urban environment. This is particularly true of downtown Honolulu, which is certainly more beautiful but not nearly as interesting as a quarter century ago. I am disturbed by what I call the "sub-urbanization" of the central business district which is manifested by an overabundance of open space, too many blank walls, and too few retail shops fronting the sidewalk. Comparison to the typical suburban shopping mall is all too obvious. The end result of this "sub-urbanization" is that downtown Honolulu is becoming bland, anonymous, and uninteresting. It will no longer be a people place, a place to shop, browse, and meet friends.

Downtown should be the most urban environment on the island. It should be the most densely built and intensely developed. There should be open spaces, of course. However, these open spaces should enhance rather than detract from the urban qualities of the district. They should be spaces that are scaled for the pedestrian. They should be interconnected, so that as one moves through downtown, one becomes aware of the dynamics of a network of separate yet interrelated spaces; narrow alleys that lead to small plazas that relate to a street that in turn opens into a larger plaza, all designed to reinforce the impact of these varying spaces.

It is the relationship of these spaces to each other, both as to size and location, that will give downtown visual interest. One



major plaza adjacent to or across the street from another, and yet another, will become boring, as will one narrow alley adjacent to another. It is not enough that every new major project built downtown have a vast, paved plaza fronting it, no matter how well designed. We need to find the methods by which open spaces downtown will relate to create a more interesting and exciting urban environment.

William Whyte, one of the nation's foremost commentators on the design of urban America, at the recent AIA Convention in New Orleans, graphically illustrated what he calls the "Blank-Wall-with-Sapling" phenomenon, numerous examples of which can be found in downtown Honolulu. As we all know, a blank wall can be beautiful, but is all the more so in contrast to other architectural elements that have a great deal of texture or other visual restlessness. Too many blank walls, like too many vast open spaces, become boring and uninteresting. The

blank wall is really the vocabulary of the suburban shopping center, e.g. Pearlridge. It should not be the vocabulary of the urban center, if downtown is to be the unique place we want it to be.

Related to the blank wall syndrome in downtown is the loss of more and more retail shops that open to the sidewalk. In almost every city in the world, it is the small storefront shops that generate visual interest. The rhythm and texture of the urban street scene is enhanced and reinforced by the 20-foot module of interesting specialty shops. In downtown Honolulu, many of our new projects present blank faces to the street. Or at best, we find one financial institution after another, which while necessary is not particularly interesting to look at.

It is time that the planners of the future of downtown Honolulu, both public and private, become aware of what they are creating. It is to be hoped that those responsible for the development of new projects will give consideration to the inclusion of retail shops in their projects. Let's hope the architects responsible for these projects will fully consider the impact of the blank wall, and use it judiciously. And finally, government planners, in their revisions to the CZC, need to fully understand the potential results of granting large floor area bonuses for the inclusion of open space in new projects. All must work together in making downtown Honolulu an exciting, interesting, and inviting people place, rather than a beautiful, but sterile, landscape. HA

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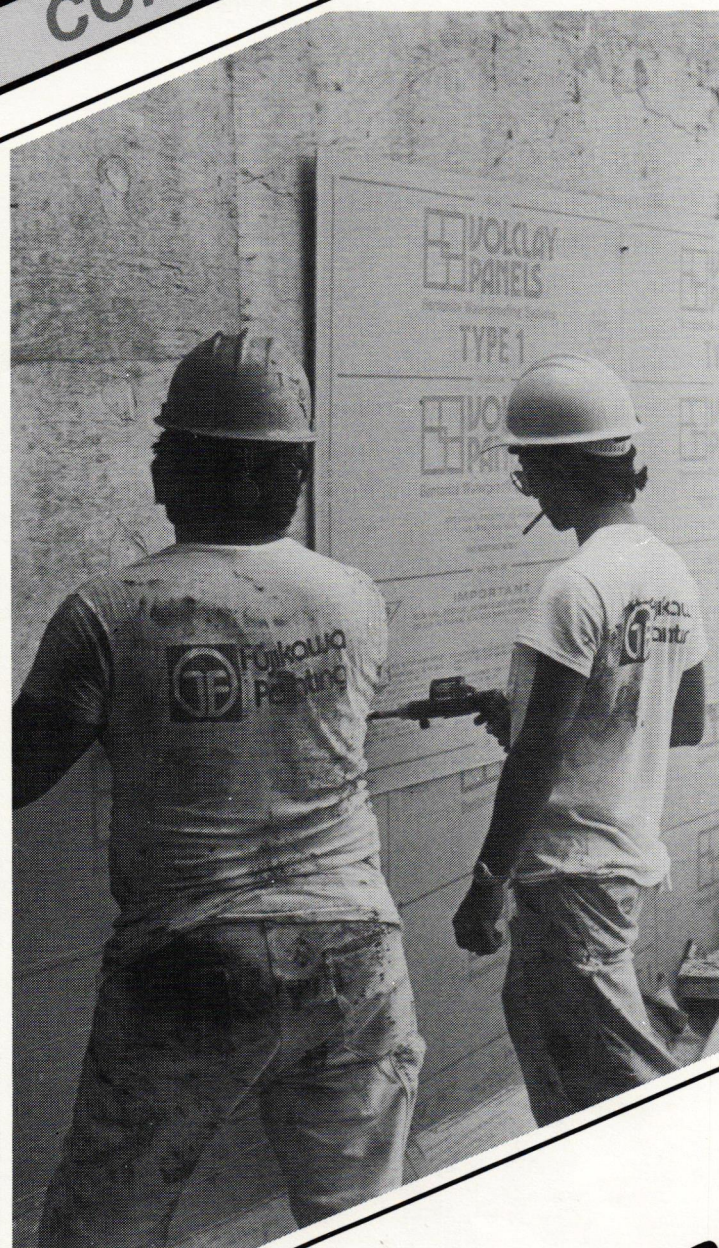


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November 13—we hope this will be a real success once again; and

- Commemorative poster and shirt—of course.

Watch for more information about the convention in the October issue of the *Hawaii Architect*.

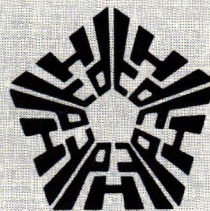
The committee wishes to sincerely thank those who responded to the survey in the HS/AIA July Memo. The response was both overwhelming and extremely helpful. There should be, as a result of this response, a very effective program of professional development seminars at the convention, one which will prove timely and of value to us all.

The committee needs help from anyone who can volunteer time or energy—preferably both—in preparation for the convention. Please contact directly any of the following committee members:

Norman Hong/Chairman	533-4445
Daniel Chun/Facilities & Food Arrangements	526-2283
Lyna Burian/Program	524-4485
Bob Luersen/Exhibits & Activities	524-1070
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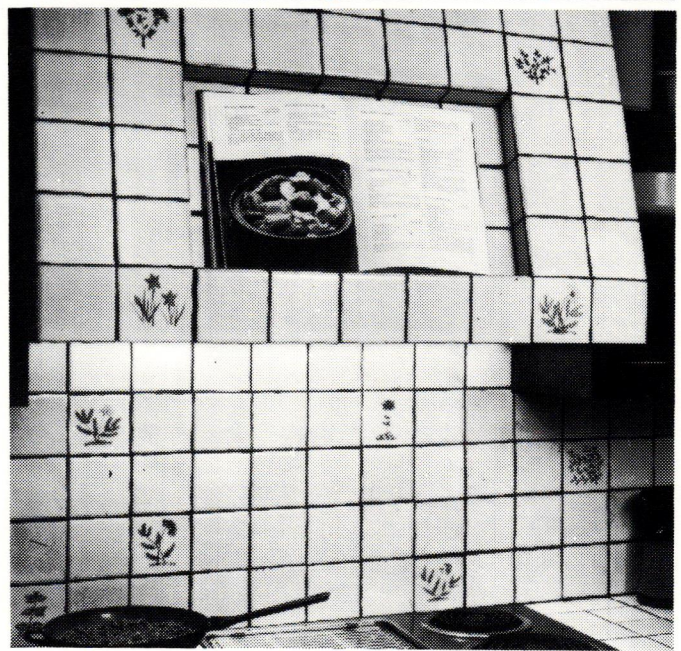
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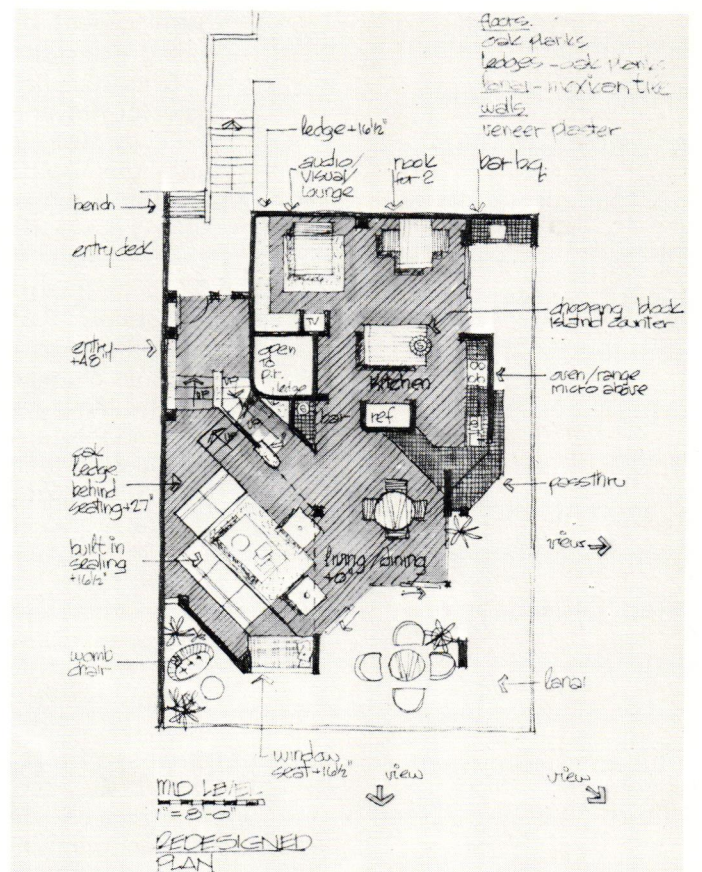
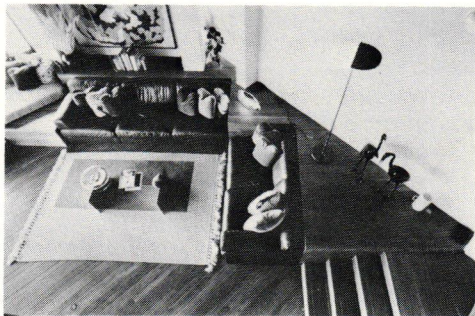
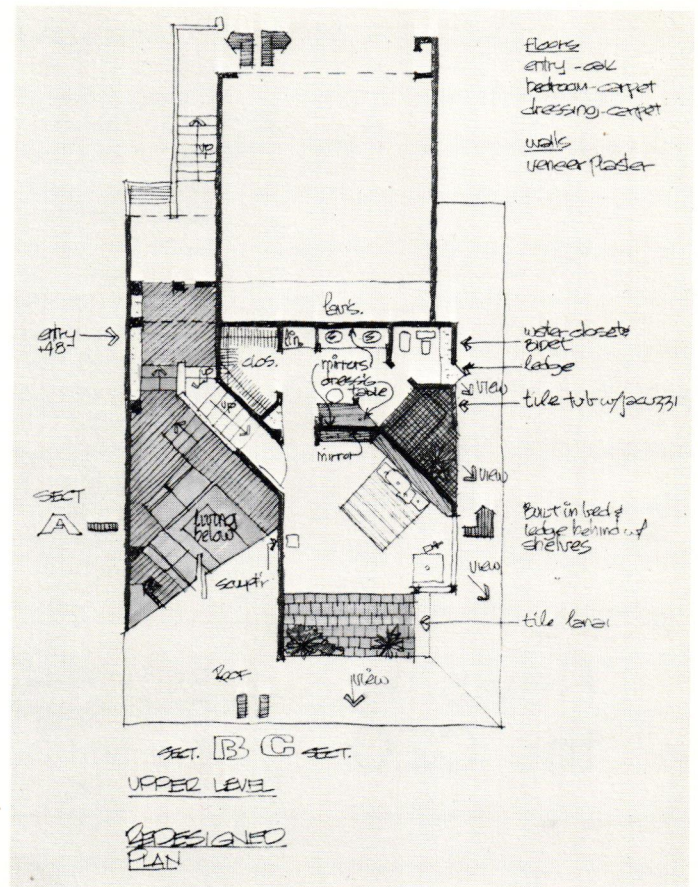
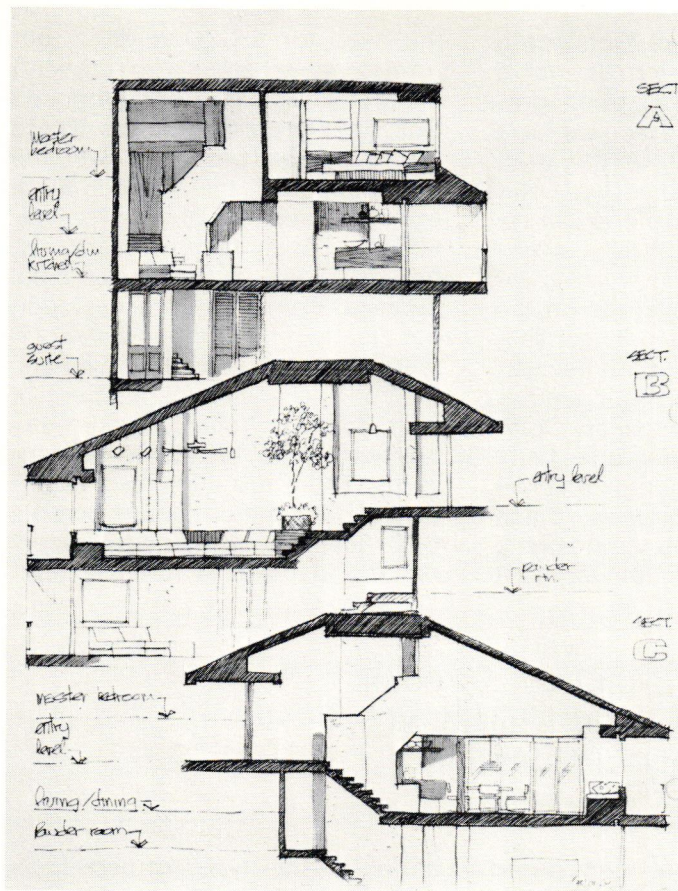
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	<p>I was asked by Hawaii Architect to report on our Comprehensive Zoning Code (CZC) revision program. This is timely, since we have just finished our first working draft of the proposed Land Use Ordinance (LUO) that we hope will replace the CZC.</p> <p>Our staff has been working intensively for the past year on the CZC revision; staff work, consultant studies over the past decade, and the viewpoints of our agency liaisons and Citizen Advisory Committee have been carefully weighed in preparation of what we call initial DLU proposals. Since the City Charter calls upon zoning to implement the development</p> <p>the need for a CZC revision, but how we view zoning's role in land use management is our proposed treatment of permitted uses. There are two basic problems with the existing CZC in this respect. First, existing treatment of uses is typically Euclidean in some cases, i.e., non-dwelling uses in residential districts. Permitted uses are often not clearly related to legislative intent, i.e., in the industrial districts. Secondly, the CZC's treatment of uses does not reflect modern-day physical, social, or economic concerns. There are numerous examples of this; one of them is that the CZC does not really address current trends toward de-institution-</p>
<h2>Revising the CZC</h2>	<p>by Michael M. McElroy, Director Department of Land Utilization City and County of Honolulu</p>
	<p>plans, we have also considered how we can best carry out the intent of the development plans; this is no small task, since the generality of the development plan policy documents and the variety of implementing methods through zoning can make translating the development plans into an interesting exercise.</p> <p>While the first draft LUO has a new format and organization, the reviewer will find many familiar passages from the current CZC. This is intentional; we have designed the LUO to be an evolutionary document. Much of the current CZC is workable and supportive of the General Plan and development plan intent, so we have attempted to avoid change for change's sake. On the other hand, many changes are needed to reflect development plan intent, to improve administrative processing, or to address long-standing problems of land use in Honolulu.</p> <p>I will focus here on only a few issues of interest to you: our basic approach to permitted uses in all districts; our proposed overhaul of cluster housing provisions; and changes in apartment district regulations. These three issues illustrate well, I feel, our approach to the revision itself and to land use management in the future.</p> <p>An issue that illustrates not only</p> <p>alizing certain types of care facilities.</p> <p>We have spent many months examining all of the uses in the CZC and district intent sections and have made some major changes. I will not pretend that we have solved all the problems with ease or with the wisdom of Solomon, but we have consulted with a great many interested people and have attempted to balance typical land use with other, more subjective concerns. Our recommendations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grouping uses to the extent possible by function and impact, and re-evaluating their relationship to district intent. • Adding new definitions for new use groups. • Adding new conditional use categories and changing principal uses to conditional and vice versa; adding standards by which we can evaluate land use impact and establish hearing thresholds for each conditional use. • Eliminating transitional uses in residential and apartment districts. • Defining "public" uses, and adding certain high impact uses to the existing Plan Review Use procedure. • Adding provisions to ac-

Continued on page 20





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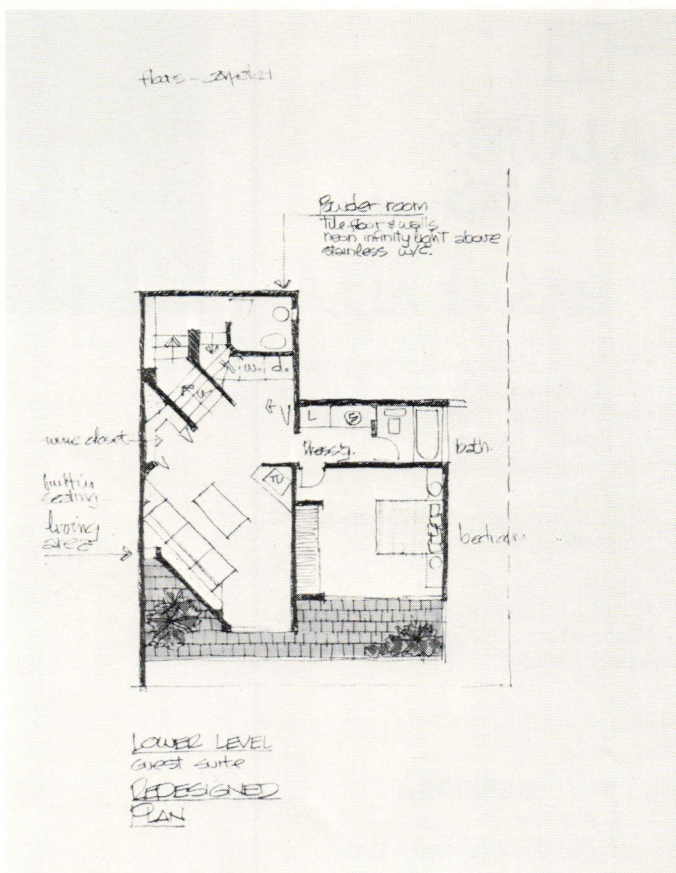
Design Awards

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The owner/developer of this very nice "townhouse" project in Lanikai wanted to turn his own undeveloped unit into a special weekend retreat for his wife, himself, and occasional guests.

There are three major levels, each for specific functions. The entry and powder room are on secondary levels. The active area, where everybody meets, is mid-level and consists of the living/dining area and the kitchen/den with wraparound lanai. The passive areas are the master bedroom suite above and the guest suite below.





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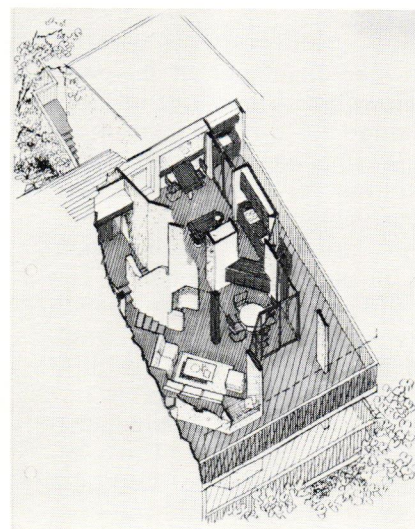
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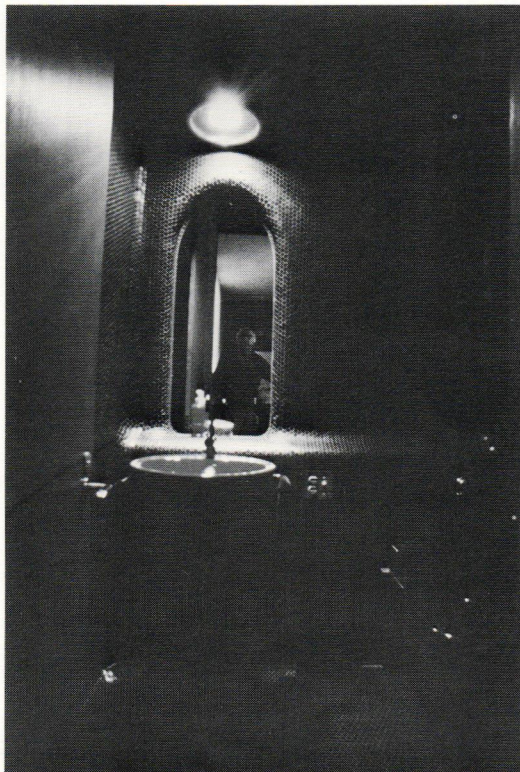
low. Guests have their own living room and lanai.

Our objective was to create a romantic getaway environment which was very gracious, yet relaxed. This was a departure from the owners' formal and structured everyday life. They particularly wanted a large kitchen in which to experiment and entertain their friends.

The house was designed so floor areas would become ledges and ledges seating and the white walls would integrate with white ledges.

Since it was a weekend spot, we created some fun and lighthearted areas such as the powder room, which has floors, walls, and niches molded and covered with pastille tiles.

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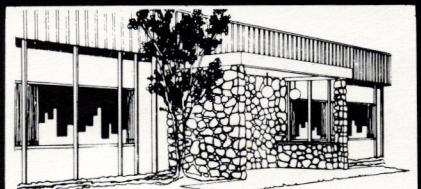
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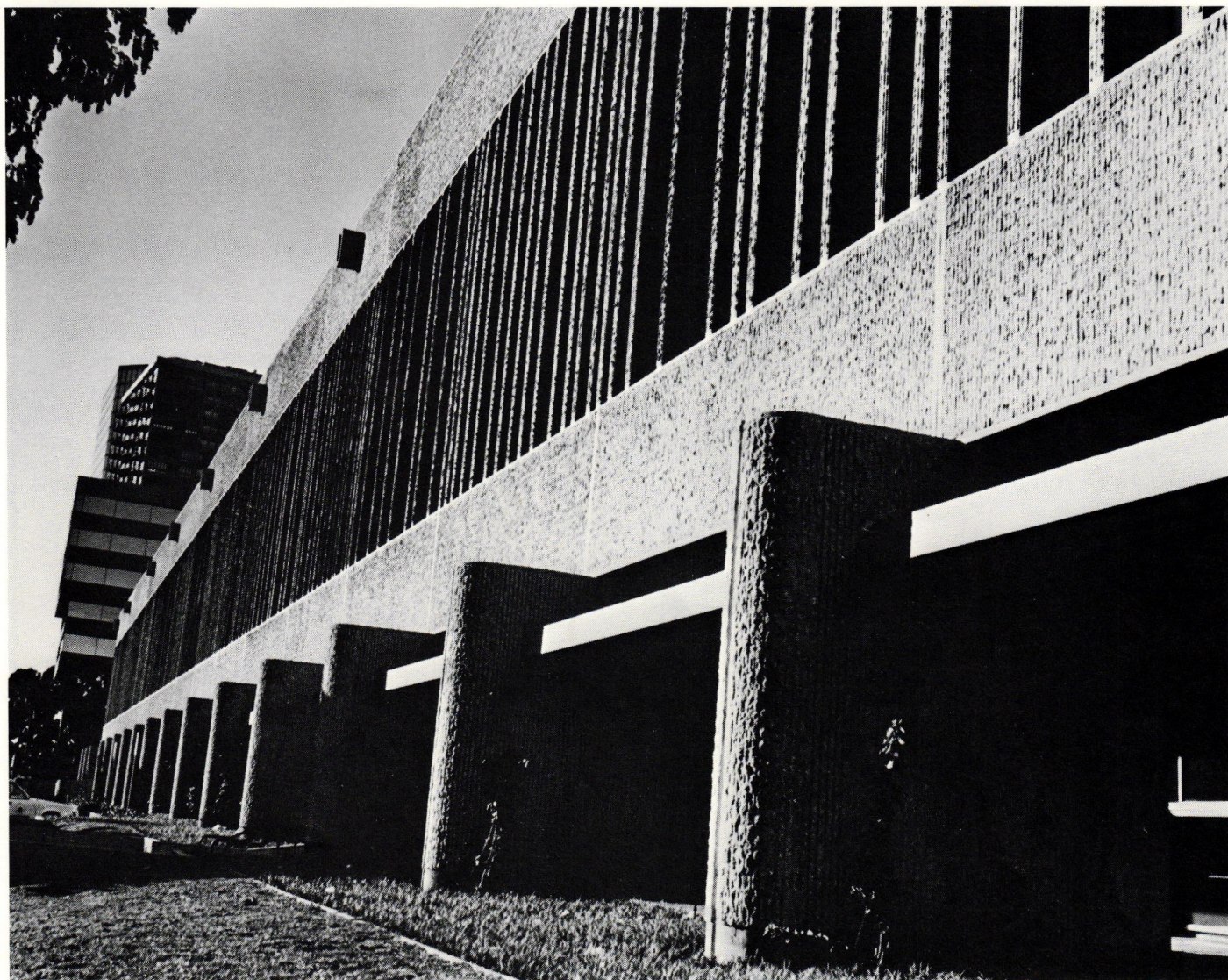
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Architectural Review: Keelikolani Hale State Office Building II



by Alfred Preis, FAIA/ME

Client: State of Hawaii,
Department of
Accounting and
General Services,
Division of Public
Works

Architect: Architects Hawaii,
Ltd.
Joseph Farrell, AIA,
Principal-in-Charge
and Project Designer
Lawrence Ueki, AIA,
Project Architect

Landscape Architect: Walters, Kimura &
Associates, Inc.

General Contractor, Phase 1: Bert S. Mitsunaga,
Inc.



Photographs by Michael S. Chu

The quality and success of structures depend almost entirely on their architects and their clients; their clients even more because they select the architect. Good clients tell their architect what and how much they want and leave the "how" to the architect. Better clients, however, participate actively with interest and with inquisitive minds.

In this respect, Keelikolani Hale was especially fortunate. Its client, the Department of Accounting and General Services, is headed at this time by a gifted and experienced architect aided by a dedicated staff. He leads and listens to an advisory committee composed of qualified professional and community representatives. Keelikolani Hale's architect is the designer of the neighboring Prince Kuhio Federal Office and Court Building, with which Keelikolani Hale must be "comfortable," as the architect puts it.

The architects were charged with the task of devising a minimum of 90,000 additional square feet of net flexible office space to augment the existing building for the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations and Department of Personnel Service; to locate the new building or buildings on the site bordered by Punchbowl, Halekiau, Mililani, and Queen streets—an entire city block; to seek appropriate architectural relationships with the existing Tax Office Building (the Bureau of Conveyance Building is to be razed), the Federal Building, and with the other buildings of the Hawaii Capital District—the Honolulu Civic Center; and to enhance and further the "great park" concept of the civic center master plan. The new building or complex of buildings is to contain the expanded departments before-mentioned, and also portions of the Department of Taxation.

In a series of meetings, the Comptroller, his staff and advisory committee, and the architects investigated, analyzed, and discarded a great number of alternate studies until they arrived at the striking idea to wrap the additional building space around the existing building, with its exterior walls removed. This yielded not only more than 137,000 square feet of additional net office space and the op-



portunity to upgrade the existing offices, but by fitting all required spaces into a rectangular edifice with the smallest "footprint" (the area covered by the outside supports of the ground floor), generated the largest possible contiguous open space for landscaping.

Responsive to the guidelines of the Warnecke Civic Center Masterplan, the architects subordinated the height and visual assertiveness of Keelikolani Hale to the Federal Building. Following the comments and recommendations of the advisory committee, they reduced the visual mass of the building by inserting an arcaded walkway on all sides of the ground floor, by recessing the fourth floor well inside of the building line, and by rounding the corners of the building.

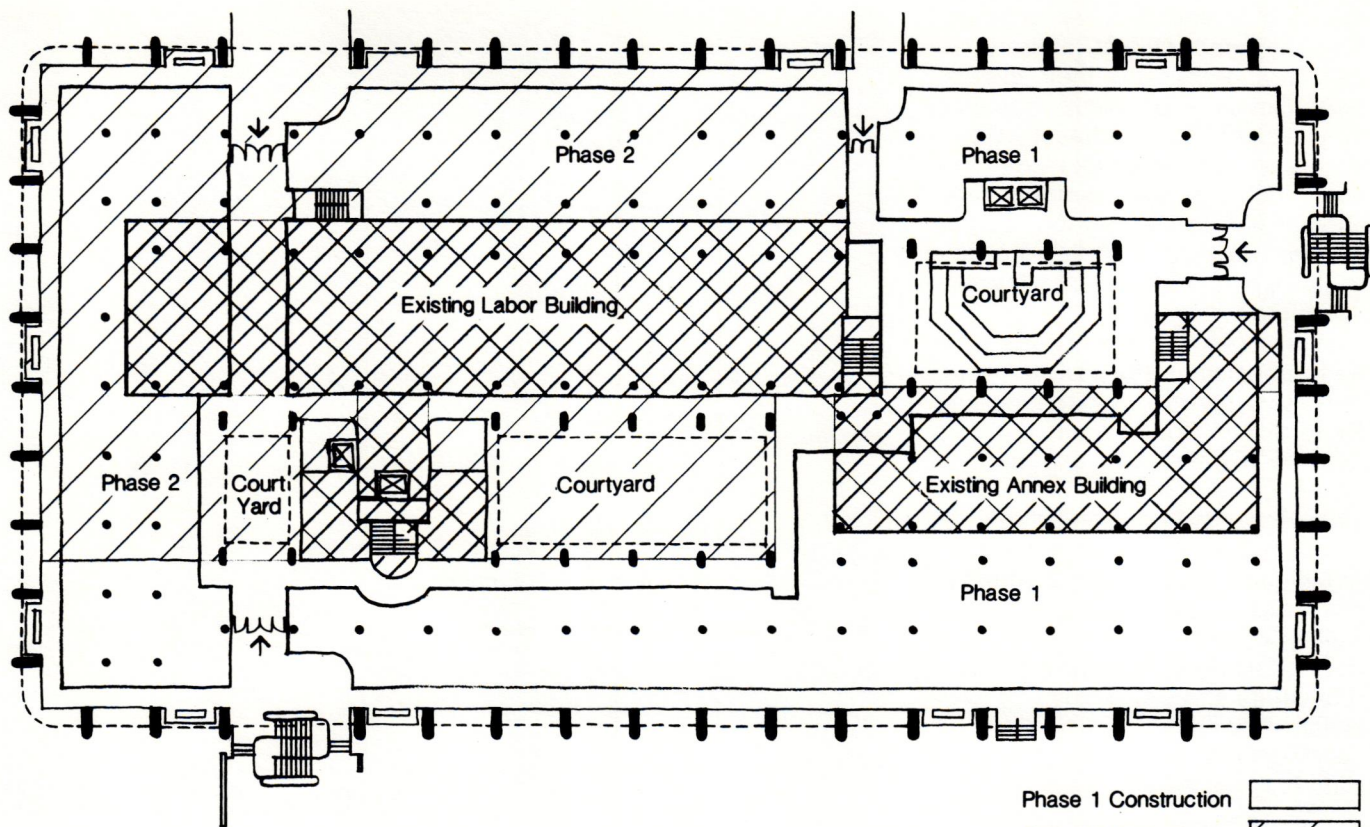
The building reveals its affinity with the Federal Building by the complementary scale of its horizontal wall surfaces; by a similar color—deeper in tone but alike in hue and in warmth; by the relatedness of the texture of its concrete, where the ribs of the crenelated

concrete were boldly cut off by power chisels exposing the split aggregate surfaces with the concave insides of the original ribs, which look like the mortar joints of the concrete tile work of the Federal Building; and by the similarity of the concrete rain scuppers, here U-shaped, there like O's.

Similar to the role and relationship of the Kalanimoku Building with the State Capitol, Keelikolani Hale forms an oblong, lower, simpler but serene and dignified, unifying backdrop and foil for the more dynamic and articulate masses of the Federal Building.

Although it cannot be seen together with the State Capitol, Keelikolani Hale recalls the similar design, similar color and similar, but not equal, rhythmic spacing of the vertical concrete fins shading the windows of the second and third floors.

The structure offers amenities like the open, landscaped courts bringing daylight and visual relief to the inside rooms, and cool, open-air spaces with facilities for sitting and with plantings and



Ground Floor Schematic Plan



- Phase 1 Construction 
- Phase 2 Construction 
- Existing Construction 



Sketch by Gary Marshall
Photographs by Michael S. Chu

works of art, where people visiting the building enter, wait, or pass from office to office and where employees may spend their lunch time.

It uses a number of original details, such as the already mentioned cut-off rib concrete texture of the walls. More surprising, even stunning, is the unusual handling of the arcade, where the cylindric ends of the concrete piers protrude outside of the building line and the arches are halved in mid-air, only to be visually completed by their mirror images reflected in the continuous sheet glass windows and wall spandrels.

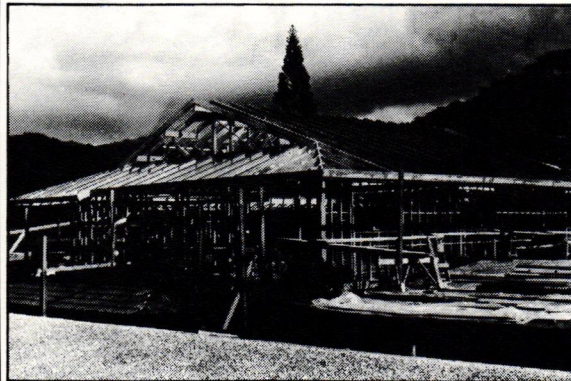
Concrete benches placed between the arcade piers, will be shaded by variegated, pink bougainvillea vines, supported on well-proportioned concrete trellises.

Of course, all of these linkings and interjoinings of new buildings with old were not accomplished without some soul searching, some compromising, some trading-off of one value for another. The corridors surrounding the courts were made of what were previously indoor concrete floors. Being now exposed to the weather, and to allow space for the slip-resisting ceramic tile floorings, they had to be sloped three inches up to the door thresholds, and then down at the entrances to the existing office floors. Work to limit these uneven entrances will be undertaken during Phase 2 of the project. Alternatives, such as giving up the outdoor courts and outdoor passages, or removing the existing floor and replacing it with a higher concrete floor were considered but found not worth the sacrifice of human satisfaction or the substantially greater costs.

We feel that the superb workmanship in Phase 1 should also be mentioned and recognized, and hope that this can be maintained under the bidding procedures mandated for public works.

Phase 2, completing the enclosing of the entire rectangle of the building, will include the building wing along Mililani Street and the one parallel to Queen Street, the demolition and removal of the Bureau of Conveyance Building, and the remaining landscape treatment and art works. It will commence in March 1984 and will be concluded in September 1985. HA

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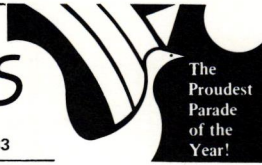
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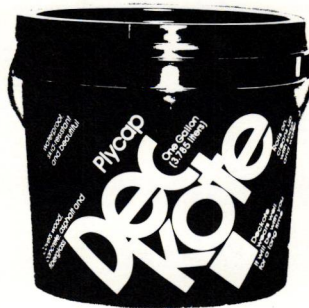
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CZC, Continued from page 10

knowledge the need for certain "quasi-public" uses, such as care facilities for the elderly and disabled.

- Creating five districts for mixed uses.

Another issue is cluster housing, touted as a valuable urban infill technique, a flexible and efficient way to achieve both housing and open space objectives. Perhaps cluster has been overrated, but local experience has shown two things: (1) that it can result in a better living environment and more efficient use of land; and (2) that it is definitely not the preferred alternative among developers here.

Our objective in revising cluster provisions, then, was to seek a balance in making them more attractive to the developer and in continuing to ensure that community objectives, i.e., compatibility and neighborhood design, are met. We proposed to accomplish this by: adding a legislative intent section, tightening design review criteria and relating criteria to intent, deleting the public hearing requirement, shortening processing time, and creating a "conceptual review" process in which developer and staff can be reasonably assured of the project's feasibility before large commitments in time and money are made.

This particular revision proposal may be characterized as a "streamlining" measure. It also illustrates well the need for balancing specific objectives of the building industry with broader community objectives.

None of our traditional zoning districts has provoked more concern for "balance" than our apartment districts, and for good reason. It is here that any inefficiencies in regulatory intent—for example, heights, setbacks, open space, densities, parking, or more subjective concerns about site and building design—show most glaringly. As the intensity of land use increases, so do regulatory difficulties.

Our recommendations for apartment districts include: establishing a minimum percent open space requirement for A-1, A-2, and A-3 Apartment Districts; rewriting legislative intent sections for clarity; adding provisions for mixed use;

clarifying the complex sliding scale for floor area ratio (FAR); reducing height exemptions; and clarifying the FAR definition.

We have considered at length different density control methods in apartment districts, and we are still willing to consider and discuss options to our existing FAR approach, taking into account the effects of development plan height limits and other restraints. We will not, however, participate in any attempts to polarize various interest groups on this subject, something which has occurred in the past and has proved nonproductive. If we can find a middle ground, some degree of consensus which also implements adopted land use policy, then we will strongly support it.

There will no doubt be other revision issues which will provoke debate as we proceed; for example, our proposals for regulating agricultural lands, and for the limited "commercial" use of historic structures, among others.

What lies ahead? The first working draft will be staffed through the people who helped us put it together: (1) the DLU staff, for technical advice; (2) city agency liaisons for enforcement and legal consultation; and (3) our Citizen Advisory Committee—a group who has invested a great deal of their time so far—for a broader perspective.

We expect to make some refinements to the draft and will then aim for a wider distribution and input process. We will depend on both written and verbal reaction from two basic groups, those in the building trades and community-civic organizations. We will be preparing presentation material to assist in their review and we will make ourselves available for formal and informal dialogue with both.

Timetables are now tentative, since they depend on how much input we receive and, ultimately, on the schedule of the Planning Commission and City Council. We hope to spend the bulk of our time in communication with various interest groups before formal public hearings.

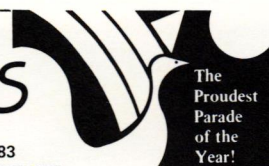
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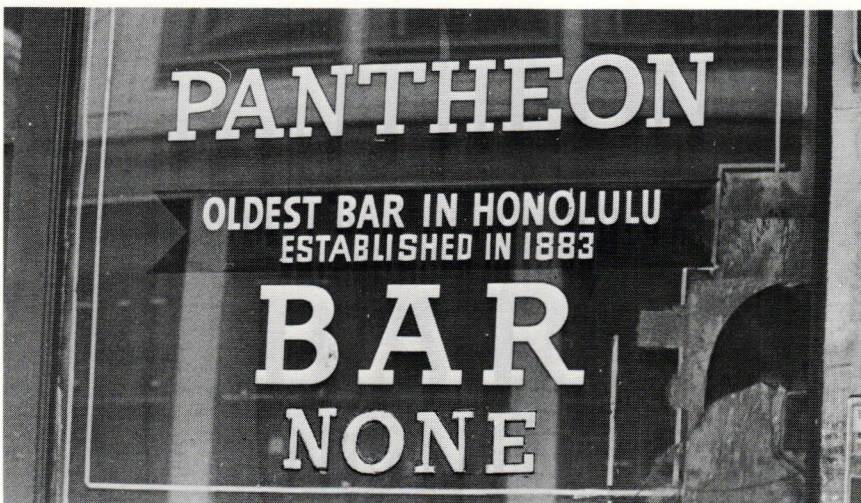
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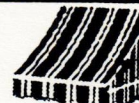
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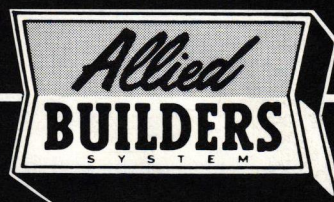


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The Team: Rick Conroy—Director of Development of Burger King, Charles Serikawa—V.P. of Production of Allied Builders, Milton Sher—Architect of Milton Sher & Associates.



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