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Turning up the heat at Turtle Bay

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Wearing red shirts for solidarity and chanting as they marched, about 150 Native Hawaiians, North Shore residents and environmentalists made their way from the highway entrance of the Turtle Bay Resort to the ocean yesterday to protest a plan to build five more hotels along the rural coastline.

"The next time we come, I hope it's not in front of bulldozers," Vicky Holt-Takamine, march organizer and president of the 'Ilio'ulaokalani Coalition, told attendees — and a few curious tourists — as they gathered in a big circle on the beach adjacent to the Turtle Bay Resort.

The protesters say the planned expansion of the resort would disturb Native Hawaiian burial grounds, alter the rural character of Kahuku and overwhelm existing infrastructure, including roads and sewers. The plan is based on a 1986 agreement reached with the city and state, but critics say it is outdated and should require a new environmental impact statement.

"While the plans haven't changed, this community has changed a lot," Holt-Takamine said.

Turtle Bay officials maintain the plan is still valid, and so far, they have prevailed in the courts and before city boards.

In October, the Department of Planning and Permitting gave tentative approval to the expansion. A month later, Circuit Judge Sabrina McKenna dismissed a lawsuit in which several North Shore and environmental groups had asked for an additional environmental impact statement on the plan.

Bob Boyle, vice president and general manager of the hotel, declined comment yesterday.

The rally started about noon yesterday, with Holt-Takamine leading a procession across Kamehameha Highway, and down the entrance road to the resort and the beach.

The hotel initially put up ropes to keep protesters off the far ends of the beach, near hotel rooms and an eatery. But the ropes, and signs that read "public" and "private," were subsequently taken down.

As the march made its way to the beach, a few tourists took pictures and some even asked participants what they were rallying against — and that is just what organizers wanted.

"We want their support, too," said Mahina Chillingworth, vice president of Hui o He'e Nalu, which has taken a lead against the Turtle Bay expansion. "We don't need any more hotels here on the North Shore."

The expansion would add some 2,500 rooms to the resort, which now has one hotel with about 500 units. It would also add several public parks, and more access routes to the water.

Native Hawaiians who attended yesterday's rally say there are believed to be significant numbers of iwi, or burial remains, in the areas planned for the new hotels. They say more cultural studies should be done to determine where the remains are and how best to preserve them in place.

"I think this project will do a lot more harm than good," said protester Jessie Cohen, who, along with many others, wore a red shirt bearing the words "Ku I Ka Pono, Justice for Hawaiians."

Cohen came all the way from Downtown Honolulu to participate in the march, and says she is upset that a 20-year-old plan is being given new



Nine-year-old Pili'alo'ha Anderson, draped with the Hawaiian flag, attended the rally with her father. Many of the some 150 participants wore matching red protest T-shirts.

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Demonstrators started their walk at Kamehameha Highway, making their way along Kuilima Drive to the public beach access at Kuilima Cove yesterday. Among the concerns they voiced were the effects new hotels might have on traffic, country lifestyle and old burial sites.



Demonstrators making their way to the beach drew the attention of tourists and others on the grounds yesterday. But the hotel's expansion plans — which include new parks as well as new hotels — already have preliminary permit approval.

life without any new studies or public comment.

"It's just not right," she said.

Hale'iwa resident Carol Green also participated in the rally, carrying a sign that read "Keep Country Country."

She said her biggest concern about the expansion is infrastructure: How will so many new workers and tourists affect the roads, sewer and water lines and schools? "The money goes into development, but it doesn't go into infrastructure," she said. "That's the wrong message."

The rally was the first to be held at the resort, but some say it probably won't be the last. Holt-Takamine suggested holding rallies or picnics on the beach monthly, starting as early as April.

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