

## No industry in Ookala

**Aug 22, 2006**

This letter is about the Aug. 10 article on Tradewinds Forest Products' intent to build a veneer mill and co-generation power plant at the old Ookala sugar mill site.

I serve as one of nine residents on the Protect Ookala Ad Hoc Steering Committee, which speaks on behalf of many Ookala homeowners. The homeowners have signed a petition opposing Tradewinds' plans to build an industrial facility in the middle of Ookala's residential community.

In the article, Tradewinds' CEO Don Bryan is quoted as saying he's "come to believe that there isn't much of a numeric way to (determine community support)." The steering committee strongly disputes this claim. We have exactly 89 homes in Ookala, most bordering the old mill site, and the owners of 63 of these homes have signed a petition stating their opposition due to unacceptable health, safety and welfare risks associated with industrial business. This is a pretty clear numeric way of judging community opinion.

It is important to note that Tradewinds does not have a contract to log the trees on Kamehameha Schools' Hamakua lands. For that matter, those trees were planted expressly for the quick rotation of a chip-quality product and less than 15 percent are of veneer quality. The only logging lease that Tradewinds holds is for the trees at the Waiakea Timber Management Area south of Hilo, a state asset Mr. Bryan has tied up for seven years due to lack of financing and performance.

Also, Mr. Bryan does not own the old Ookala mill site. He only holds an option to buy, which he is evidently unable to exercise due to lack of financing. In addition, Mr. Bryan does not have any of the required 17 permits in place to start construction.

These points beg the question: How is it possible that Mr. Bryan will start construction at Ookala, as he says, "at the end of the year"?

This is a very big island with lots of land, and we ask Mr. Bryan to find another site more suitable than our residential community for his industrial venture, perhaps on Kamehameha Schools' land or closer to his main source of trees in Waiakea.

Further, we again remind Mr. Bryan that he has publicly stated that if the Ookala community doesn't want the mill, Tradewinds will leave. On behalf of the majority of Ookala homeowners, I'm asking Mr. Bryan to honor his statement and please leave our community.

Susie Collins

Ookala

\*\*\*\*\*

*All rights reserved. Copyright © 2006 Hawaii Tribune Herald.*  
Content on this site may not be archived, retransmitted, saved in a database, or used for any commercial purpose without the express written permission of Hawaii Tribune Herald.

[Close Window \[x\]](#)