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The Buzz

Erika Engle

Planning for Hawaii's future, awarded

OK SO IT'S NOT the Oscars or Emmys or Grammys -- and there won't be any tabloid coverage of who was wearing what gown by which designer -- but it's still a big deal for the winners.

Wilson Okamoto & Associates Inc., Group 70 International and **PBR Hawaii** were the big winners of this year's American Planning Association -- Hawaii Chapter awards yesterday.

The award presentations came during the chapter's World Town Planning Day event in the University of Hawaii School of Architecture auditorium.

Honolulu-based Wilson Okamoto was presented the Outstanding Planning Award for its Aiea-Pearl City Livable Communities Plan. It incorporates improvements to transportation, community design and a plan for implementation, according to the city's Department of Planning and Permitting.

Group 70 International took home two awards, one in the Community-Based Planning category and another for the company's chief community planner and partner, George Atta. The outgoing president of the APA Hawaii chapter, Atta was given the group's distinguished leadership award.

Group 70's community award, presented for its Waialua Master Plan, involved the city planning department and the Friends of Waialua community organization. The two-part plan focused on redevelopment of a town center and on residential housing in a range of prices.

The boat builders, surfboard shapers, soap and candle makers, auto body repair businesses and other light-industrial activities already in the area have been worked into the plan, which uses the only industrial-zoned land from Wahiawa to Kahuku, said Jeff Overton, Group 70 partner and head of the project.

Honolulu-based PBR Hawaii was also a winner, in two categories, both for work on Maui. It won the Environment/Preservation Award for its work with the National Tropical Botanical Garden organization on the Kahanu Garden Master Plan. The company also won for Housing Choice & Affordability in the Current Topic Award category. "Pulelehua -- A New Traditional Community" was worked on by PBR, **Maui Land & Pineapple Co. Inc.** and Florida-based **Dover, Kohl & Partners**.

Tom Schnell, a PBR associate and Pulelehua project manager, describes the new community,

proposed for fallow pineapple land in West Maui, as being "more like a traditional neighborhood than a conventional subdivision."

It will be "walkable," with shops, a school and offices all in walking distance.

Maui Land & Pineapple "wants to build an affordable community for resort workers, police, firefighters and teachers so that these people are able to afford and live in West Maui," Schnell said.

The project is far from reality, however, as the proposal requires a change of the area's land-use designation from agricultural to urban and then county zoning changes must be made.

The Kahanu Gardens project in Hana includes a heiau that is bigger than three football fields, said associate Kimi Yuen.

"It's kind of been kept quiet because it's such a sacred place," she said.

The National Tropical Botanical Garden organization had compiled cultural, archaeological and scientific information about the site and its preservation and PBR helped assemble all the parts into a plan for the long-term care and preservation of the area and its endangered species.

None of the winners at yesterday's event were surprised. That is to say, they were told of their wins in advance of the presentations. Awardees' attendance at the ceremony was not left up to chance -- these are planners, after all.

On the Net:

» www.lava.net/~apahi

» [www.honoluluodpp.org/ Planning/SpecAreaNeighbor.asp](http://www.honoluluodpp.org/Planning/SpecAreaNeighbor.asp)

» www.ntbg.org

See the Columnists section for some past articles.

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