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Trust likely to sell farms

By **Suzanne Roig**

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Kamehameha Schools plans to honor its deal with a developer who wants to turn Kamilonui Valley farms into house lots as long as the developer meets certain benchmarks written into the contract, a representative of the land trust told a community meeting Tuesday night that drew more than 100 people.

At issue are farm lots leased to the Kamilonui Farmers Cooperative, a group of mostly elderly farmers who were located at the back of Hawai'i Kai on leased land some 30 years ago by Henry J Kaiser, the original developer of Hawai'i Kai. Some of these farmers want to retire, but only have a few years of fixed lease rent left on their farms and cannot sell them.

The land trust says the land is not making enough revenue from farming and will most likely be sold because it does not meet the five mandates of the trust over its land holdings: cultural, economic, environmental, educational or community capacity for Native Hawaiians.

Another meeting is planned in mid-October that will include Kamehameha Schools and city officials who will discuss land and zoning options for the 87 acres of farm land that will have to be rezoned to residential before any homes are placed there.

"We thought that it's important that the lessees came to us first; no developer came to us," said Neil Hannahs, director of Kamehameha Schools land assets division. "We're always challenged and scrutinized over how we dispense with land."

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