



HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS TRUST
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS

**HONOMŪ SUBSISTENCE AGRICULTURAL HOMESTEAD COMMUNITY
BENEFICIARY MEETING #1
KEAUKAHA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CAFETERIA
OCTOBER 24, 2017, 7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.**

Attendance: 114 (signed in)

DHHL: Julie Cachola (Planning Office and Project Manager), Andrew Choy (Planning Office), Sherri Hiraoka (Townscape, Inc., Consultant Project Manager), and Angela Fa'anunu (Townscape, Inc., Consultant)

Handouts:

1. Project Fact Sheet
2. Project Comment Sheet
3. Slideshow Presentation

Presentation:

Julie Cachola opened the meeting and reviewed the purpose of and agenda for the meeting, provided background on the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act and the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL), provided an overview of DHHL's land use planning system, the Honomū Subsistence Agricultural Homestead Community project, the need for agricultural homesteads, why Honomū was selected, and the planning process for this project. A question and comment discussion followed. **This project is early in the planning process and is not yet designed. The planning team is seeking input and guidance from the applicants on the Hawai'i Island agricultural waiting list on the issues, concerns, desires, and needs that should be considered when developing the plan.** Sherri Hiraoka facilitated the question and comment discussion.

Discussion:

Questions and comments raised at the meeting are presented below and are identified as a question or comment (Q/C) or a *response (R)*. Comments are grouped by topic, rather than by the order in which they were raised.

Additional questions and comments received after the meeting, either through one-on-one discussions, the blue comment sheets, email, or phone call, are recorded in the last section and reflect comments received as of October 31, 2017.

**DHHL HONOMŪ SUBSISTENCE AGRICULTURAL HOMESTEAD COMMUNITY
BENEFICIARY MEETING #1
Keaukaha Elementary School Cafeteria
October 24, 2017, 7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.**

Q/C: What is subsistence farming? There are many good models to look at, such as permaculture.

R: Subsistence farming is growing food for you, your family, and your community. Cultivation of the lot is required.

Q/C: We need to define subsistence agriculture! How does this affect where people live? Maku'u lots are 2-1/2 acres and are on water catchment – is it subsistence ag? We need clearer rules that are more specific.

R: Maku'u is a different type of project. Honomū will be the first subsistence agriculture homestead, with new rules that do not apply to Maku'u. The Administrative Rules state that lessees may choose to build a house on a subsistence agriculture lot, but it is not required. A lessee cannot have both a residential lease and a house on their agricultural lot.

Q/C: Can we raise animals, such as chickens and cows?

R: Yes, lessees will be allowed to raise either or both crops and farm animals. With such different types of agriculture, we may need to develop guidelines for living together. Please help us to develop a community solution.

Q/C: Will we be able to develop cottage industries, such as growing herbs to sell? Does that fall under “subsistence agriculture?”

R: Subsistence agriculture lessees will be allowed to sell their crops.

Q/C: Can we sell what we grow? If we sell, we need potable water, per the food safety act.

R: Clarification: water needs to be “microbially clean,” not necessarily potable, but if it is not potable, then the water needs to be tested. Small growers are not regulated as heavily as large farmers, but good practices are always encouraged.

R: The University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources has food safety information on their website:

<http://manoa.hawaii.edu/ctahr/farmfoodsafety/>

Q/C: If I have a family of five and want to have kalo on my table every day, how much land do I need? Help us to figure this out.

Q/C: Do people in Honomū use the streams?

R: Yes, the community uses the streams and they are concerned about potential impacts to them from runoff.

**DHHL HONOMŪ SUBSISTENCE AGRICULTURAL HOMESTEAD COMMUNITY
BENEFICIARY MEETING #1
Keaukaha Elementary School Cafeteria
October 24, 2017, 7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.**

Q/C: Who is contaminating the streams?

R: There have been some problems with increased runoff and sediments from recent land use changes. The Honomū community is also concerned about future runoff and pesticides, as well as waste from farm animals.

Q/C: Will every lot be accessible?

R: Yes, although access may be via a gravel road.

Q/C: I am concerned about the cost of the infrastructure that each lessee will be responsible for.

Q/C: Will DHHL assist with infrastructure?

R: We can look into what kind of assistance can be made available.

Q/C: A majority of the commercial lease income comes from Hawai'i Island. Can we set some (maybe 1%) aside to help with infrastructure? Some of this income goes toward infrastructure on other islands.

R: This is something that we can look into.

Q/C: U.S. Department of Agriculture offers help with fencing. Because this project is through DHHL, are we eligible for this kind of federal assistance? Will DHHL support a partnership with USDA?

R: We can ask the Natural Resources Conservation Service, which administers this type of assistance, what the restrictions are, but in general would support partnerships that provide assistance to lessees.

R: Fencing would probably occur on an individual basis.

Q/C: Consider becoming a cooperator with the NRCS. A lot of different crops can be grown in Honomū, but rules need to be adopted to provide guidelines.

Q/C: Access is important!

Q/C: Gravel roads will probably be damaged from the high rainfall and may be difficult for older lessees to use. Roads need to be safe and allow for emergency vehicles. The existing dirt roads are in need of repair.

Q/C: Who will maintain the roads?

R: If roads meet County standards, then they will be transferred to the County for maintenance. If they do not meet County standards, DHHL will be responsible for maintenance.

Q/C: Will the lots be graded? If we build a house, it will cost \$10,000 just to grade.

R: We have not yet determined if the lots will be graded.

**DHHL HONOMŪ SUBSISTENCE AGRICULTURAL HOMESTEAD COMMUNITY
BENEFICIARY MEETING #1
Keaukaha Elementary School Cafeteria
October 24, 2017, 7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.**

Q/C: Will infrastructure be in place in time for award?

R: *It will depend on what type of infrastructure is ultimately required.*

Q/C: Bring cost estimates for infrastructure to the next meeting.

Q/C: If we decide to build a house, are we subject to County building codes?

R: *Yes, houses must meet County Building codes or be certified (“stamped”) by a licensed engineer as being safe. See the Hawai’i Administrative Rules on subsistence agriculture [HAR §10-3-26 (b)(1), effective March 31, 2017].*

Q/C: What will the requirements be for storage sheds or worker’s quarters?

R: *The Administrative Rules state that worker’s quarters are not allowed on subsistence agriculture lots.*

Q/C: Will we know where we are on the wait list before leases are awarded?

R: *The DHHL District office has the wait lists for applicants to review.*

Q/C: How many lots will be awarded?

R: *The number of lots has not been determined yet. The project team is in the process of reviewing the environmental studies to identify developable lands. We are also asking for feedback tonight on what size lots would be appropriate. Once we determine these two items, we will have a better idea as to the number of lots that will be awarded.*

R: *The Honomū community is concerned that smaller lots will mean more impact to their town.*

Q/C: Will all lots be the same size or based on each family’s need?

Q/C: We need to know the lotting. This is a waste of time. Be clear on the financial commitments for the project.

Q/C: What if you already own a house that is not a DHHL residential lease?

R: *Ownership of a house does not affect your ability to get a lot.*

Q/C: Will awards be made after the lots are defined?

R: *Yes, the lots will be created before award.*

Q/C: If I have an existing lease, how do I get a better lot?

Q/C: How long will the lease be for? How much will a lease cost?

R: *Leases will be for 99 years at \$1 per year.*

**DHHL HONOMŪ SUBSISTENCE AGRICULTURAL HOMESTEAD COMMUNITY
BENEFICIARY MEETING #1
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October 24, 2017, 7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.**

Q/C: Is there a maximum amount DHHL will allow for agricultural and residential loans? We have three years to start cultivating the land, but if we have a home loan, it will be hard to purchase agricultural equipment and spend time cultivating.

Q/C: If a beneficiary on the wait list passes away, can the spot be given to a successor?

R: Yes, it may be passed to a spouse, child, or grandchild.

Q/C: At award, can we transfer the lease to family members or anyone else? Create a graphic showing the transfer scenarios.

R: An existing lease may be transferred to a spouse, child, or grandchild who has at least 25% blood quantum. Or to a parent, sibling, nephew, or niece with at least 50% blood quantum.

Q/C: How do we reasonably combine houses, agriculture, and farm animals into one homestead community?

Q/C: What about traditional land uses? Our kupuna never applied the same template from one place to all places. Let's look at traditional 'ili and mo'olelo.

Q/C: Each 'ohana should get together and decide what they need.

Q/C: Is this the template for the future? What about Pi'ihonua and Humu'ula?

R: There may be guidelines specific to Honomū, but some could be applied to other subsistence agriculture homesteads.

R: Pi'ihonua and Humu'ula are pastoral homesteads and have different rules and guidelines.

Q/C: Will an Environmental Assessment (EA) be sufficient, as opposed to an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)? If everyone builds a house, the Honomū population could double or triple, especially if the lots are small.

R: After we have developed a conceptual plan, we will be able to consider potential impacts and make a determination as to whether an EA or EIS is appropriate.

Q/C: Is there a cut-off date for providing comments?

R: We will continue to accept comments, but we will not hold up the process for comments, so please send them in sooner, rather than later, so we have time to address them.

Q/C: We need more than two weeks' notice for a meeting.

**DHHL HONOMŪ SUBSISTENCE AGRICULTURAL HOMESTEAD COMMUNITY
BENEFICIARY MEETING #1
Keaukaha Elementary School Cafeteria
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Blue Comment Sheets:

- Q/C: Do I need to be qualified for my lot, or do I just need to be qualified for a building, if I build a home?
- Q/C: If I live on another island, do I need to be a resident to have a lot?
- Q/C: One to 1-1/2 acres should be given out to families, no matter what size 'ohana so at least everyone gets something.
- Q/C: Yes, we need a community center for cooking (kitchen) and clean, potable water.
- Q/C: Please let us know (about meetings) ahead of time so I can fly back and make sure I can get back, too!
- Q/C: At the very least, one acre for cultivation, two is ideal. If people want to build, their lots should be smaller.
- Q/C: Those who want to cultivate only, is a dwelling allowed to be built without permits?
- Q/C: Beneficiaries that want to only build should be grouped together lower on the hill.
- Q/C: Beneficiaries that want to raise animals may need bigger lots: a poll should be taken.
- Q/C: We should not allow livestock for fear of contamination.
- Q/C: I have lived in Honomū as a child and we need to be mindful of the streams and drinking water.
- Q/C: Septic tanks should be used for homes being built.
- Q/C: Incorporate use or cropping of koa trees along community land to naturally build up the fertility of the soil and help prevent soil erosion or heavy runoff from affecting the lower community.
- Q/C: People considering farm animal raising should be grouped into controlled areas or designated areas to mitigate farm animal noise pollution (chickens crowing, animal noise).
- Q/C: Possible consideration for utilizing Earth Ship home concepts, low carbon, composting toilets, recycled wastewater.
- Q/C: Encourage community-based cooperation.
- Q/C: Community center which will double as an emergency shelter for the community.

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BENEFICIARY MEETING #1
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October 24, 2017, 7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.**

Q/C: Use the ahupua'a method.

Q/C: What do we need to be successful? Help with crops when diseases happen. Workshops about different types of growing methods (aquaponics, hydroponics, etc.). Water safety. Health center (senior center). Day care.

Q/C: Is DHHL creating a Honomū Association?

Q/C: MOU is for DHHL and the County?

Q/C: Don't DHHL beneficiaries have water rights according to State law? Catchment is cheap, but why forfeit our access to fresh water when there is existing infrastructure current serving the State Park?

Q/C: Is NAHASDA applicable to build a house on this type of award?

Q/C: Is the Department in a dispute with the federal government over UNDER-spending allocated funds? How will this affect the developing project?

Q/C: Perhaps the environmental assessment should be drafted and mapped and defined. Very vague meeting.

Q/C: All lots should be one acre so everyone gets a lot. One acre is enough, if you know what you are doing.

Q/C: You can't graze cattle or horses on three acres or less.

Q/C: Please clarify the building requirements for a house on subsistence agriculture zoning.

Q/C: People who receive lots on a river or stream should have a plan for that resource. A water source is like winning the lottery and should not be wasted.

Q/C: People who are awarded an ag lease should be capable and have a plan for Ag. To get residential, you need a mortgage. Same, same.

Comments Received After the Meeting (as of October 31, 2017):

Q/C: You would like us to decide on 1 acre to 3 acres as options for ag use. 1 acre is plenty. Especially if we can't commercial grow and sell.

Q/C: How important are water lines, or is catchment a viable option? Catchment is a no-brainer. But are river water rights even an option?

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BENEFICIARY MEETING #1
Keaukaha Elementary School Cafeteria
October 24, 2017, 7:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.**

- Q/C: Road access: gravel vs paved. Paved road will not allow farm vehicles or heavy trucks for long term use. Also, if you want the county to maintain it, they will want to make it and that's not within their immediate scope of work. Gravel roads make sense for ag land and is more cost effective. Yet there are engineered gravel road solutions, we just need to explore them.
- Q/C: Should we divide up properties by usage. Living, livestock, plant based, or other? Land usage should be determined right off the bat. Animal farming should be designated to certain areas, plant based, and possibly primarily residential. I feel animal-based should have 3 acres, plant-based 2 acres, residential 1 acre. 3-acre lots should be 15-20% of land allotment.
- Q/C: Topography plays a huge role in what's available and if we build roads how will that affect each lot. Next meeting I'd hope to have some kind of topography map and an idea of how much property is useable.
- Q/C: If we are to allow 1-acre ag lots, will that change how ag lots are given out in future developments. If we give into the 1-acre ag lot, will that change how ag land is given out for future DHHL ag lots? Or should we name this type of project differently, so it is its own entity?
- Q/C: Will the number of lessees given properties have a negative effect on landowners or farmers below? I believe we as humans will never be able to always do the right thing. But with the right community leaders and individuals, such as Moloka'i members who are still rooted in the old ways, our future has hope.
- Q/C: Bottom line: what can we give up to get something before it's too late? As our past endeavors have proven to bite us in our behinds, we are now more afraid than ever to make basic choices that seem simple, yet choices almost ominous for our future.
- Q/C: How am I able to make a difference? I want and am willing to do what is necessary for my fellow Hawaiians to gain much needed lands in the pursuit of claims and confidence, much needed in their individual lives, even if I myself am not awarded anything at all.