



News Release

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SALT SPRING ISLAND ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION CHANGES COMING

SALT SPRING ISLAND – This year will see changes to improve and update the terms of reference for advisory groups appointed by Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee (SSILTC). Following a six-month review, at its January 10 meeting, the SSILTC considered advice about current practices and methodologies from four separate committees that provide it with recommendations on land use planning decisions. As a result, the four groups will be amalgamated into one advisory planning commission.

“What is important is that we achieve efficiencies while not losing specialized experience and expertise, which have been of value to development proponents and the community as a whole, said local trustee Peter Grove.

“We have benefitted from the words of advice of many committee members” added George Grams, also a local trustee. “It is time to implement changes that have been on our agenda now for a full year. Having an amalgamated committee will be more efficient for applicants and staff and it will allow members of the public a better opportunity to attend and hear the full range of perspectives that the advisory planning commission considers when providing advice to the local trust committee.”

Early in 2012, the SSILTC initiated a review of all committee terms of reference and operating bylaws, primarily intended to ensure appropriate resources for the work of advisory committees and to bring about improvements recommended by committee members. The committees currently include an environmental advisory committee, an advisory design panel, an agricultural advisory committee and an advisory planning commission, all comprised of volunteer members of the Salt Spring community. During the review, Salt Spring local trustees met with the committees and then discussed a detailed set of recommendations with committee chairpersons at a special SSILTC meeting in December. The review process included an invitation for public input, publicized in the Gulf Islands Driftwood and the Salt Spring Community Exchange.

At its January 10 meeting, the SSILTC deliberated on two courses of action: to continue with four separate committees or to amalgamate them into one advisory planning commission. The amalgamation option enables individual committee members to consider a broader range of planning matters and to meet on a more regular basis. Committee chairs noted when the four advisory committees met together recently, there was a benefit from the exchange of discussion across several areas of expertise.

The SSILTC has now directed staff to draft a new advisory planning commission bylaw and new operating guidelines. That work will be carried out over several months in order not to disrupt processing of current applications and to enable committee members and the public to comment on proposals for the new commission that will be part of future SSILTC meeting packages.

Meetings of the SSILTC are held on Thursdays, every three or four weeks. Meeting notices and all staff reports are available by visiting the SSILTC on line at: [Salt Spring](#)

The Islands Trust is a federation of local government bodies representing some 25,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area. The Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the unique amenities and environment of the Islands Trust Area through planning and regulating land use, development management, education, cooperation with other agencies, and land conservation. The area covers the islands and waters between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island including Howe Sound and as far north as Comox (excluding Texada Island). The area is approximately 5200 square kilometres in size and includes 13 major islands and over 450 smaller islands.

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