

Pender Post Report for January 2014

The North Pender Local Trust Committee (LTC) did not meet in December but held its regular monthly meeting on November 28th and a special Community Information Meeting on November 23rd. The Islands Trust Council, however, did meet December 3-5 in Victoria and all three meetings are covered below.

Regular November LTC Meeting

The November 28th meeting was held at the Community Hall starting at 9:45 AM. Chair Peter Luckham from Thetis Island, Local Trustees Ken Hancock and Gary Steeves, and Islands Trust staff were in attendance.

Community information Meeting

The first item of business was to conduct a Community Information Meeting (CIM) regarding an application made by the Pender Island Golf & Country Club to the BC Liquor Control and Licencing Branch (LCLB) to consolidate the Golf Club's two existing licences into one. Provincial regulations require the local government, in this case the Islands Trust, to conduct a community consultation, advertise the opportunities available to the public to express their views and make a recommendation to the LCLB. Two members of the public, representing the Golf Club, were in attendance. At the conclusion of the CIM, the LTC passed resolutions in support of the application. Planning staff has submitted the resolutions to the LCLB who will make a decision on consolidating the two licences.

Applications and Referrals

The LTC had one application and two referrals on the meeting agenda.

The two referrals were from the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Community. One dealt with proposed amendments to the Salt Spring OCP Bylaw concerning Temporary Use Permits. The North Pender LTC passed a motion that North Pender's interests were unaffected.

The second referral was on a Salt Spring Island Land Use Bylaw amendment that would change zoning on a waterfront parcel of land. The re-zoning would permit the construction of a dock. The North Pender LTC passed a resolution that said approval was not recommended due to the fact that the siting of the dock in relation to the sensitive eel grass beds may adversely impact the health of marine ecosystems in proximity to the North Pender Local Trust Area.

An application to re-zone a large split zoned farm property was the last business item to be considered at the meeting. The applicant proposes to eliminate agro-tourism zoning; establish an Eco-zone with a full conservation covenant in a portion of the rurally zoned land; and convert agro-tourism accommodation to farm worker accommodation. A host of complicated site and ecological issues were discussed. Planning staff and the applicant's representative have a number of issues to address before the application comes back to the LTC for further consideration.

Local Trust Committee Projects

The LTC has two projects underway. One is called the Shoreline Review where the LTC is having an information package prepared for waterfront property owners. The educational package is being designed to provide a wide range of information on topics including marine and shoreline biology, geology, hydrology and land use.

The other project, the Conservation Subdivision review, was the subject of a special LTC Community Information Meeting held on November 23rd at the Anglican Church Hall. The meeting was well attended and featured guest speakers Ann Mortifee and Doug Makaroff. They spoke of their involvement and experience with subdivisions on Cortes Island and Shawnigan Lake namely the Everwoods and Elkington Forest projects respectively.

As the Staff Reports and documents on the North Pender page of the Islands Trust website explain, the approach to conservation subdivisions as opposed to traditional subdivisions is about protecting ecologically sensitive areas and special features while minimizing the amount of land devoted to road and services. At the same time, the number of lots is maintained, development costs are reduced and more green space is maintained to protect rural ambiance, privacy and habitat.

Feedback at and after the meeting was overwhelmingly positive and the LTC made a commitment to continue the project and involve members of the public who expressed a wish to be involved. Consideration of the three decades old subdivision regulations will be part of this project.

Trust Council

The Island Trust Council convened a discussion on sustainable economic development. It included the 26 Island Trustees from the 13 Trust Areas of the Islands Trust and a variety of invited guests. Two MLA's (Gary Holman, Saanich Gulf Islands and Nicholas Simons, Sunshine Coast) attended. Chambers of Commerce from the Trust Area were invited and representatives from Gabriola and Salt Spring chambers attended. Electoral Area Directors from the seven Regional Districts in the Trust Area were invited with the CRD's Wayne MacIntyre from Salt Spring and five northern Directors attending. A variety of non-profit and business organizations from various communities including the San Juan County Economic Development Council also attended.

Council's largest and most time consuming task was discussion of a draft budget. The Financial Planning Committee had adopted a resolution at its November meeting to not increase property taxes in the 2014-15 budget. A resolution calling for a draft budget with up to 1.6% property tax increase was rejected by the Council and it was left to the Financial Planning Committee to consider Council input and develop a final draft for Council adoption in March 2014. By provincial law, Trust Council must adopt a budget at its March meeting.

Trust Council discussed a host of matters including consideration of a marine protection campaign in the face of oil tanker traffic, industrial aquaculture, shipping issues and climate change. Resolutions were adopted supporting Islands Trust participation in NEB

hearings (on Kinder Morgan's plans to triple oil tanker traffic) and writing the Minister of Agriculture stating council's objection to any potential weakening the Agricultural Land Commission. Potential ways to strengthen our relationship with First Nations were also considered.

A list of Council decisions will be posted on the Islands Trust web page in the next few weeks.

So it was a very busy November-December period. We hope your holiday season will be restful, joyful and peaceful and we will see you at the January 30th 2014 LTC meeting.

Best Wishes To All

Local Trustees

Ken Hancock and Gary Steeves