



News Release

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STAGE SET FOR NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING ON SALT SPRING ISLAND

VICTORIA — A housing agreement for 10 affordable dwelling units at 584 Rainbow Road has received bylaw approval by the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee, paving the way for the project to proceed. The joint housing agreement involves the Capital Regional District, the Salt Spring Island Land Bank Society and the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee.

The housing agreement is the culmination of the efforts of the Capital Regional District and Local Trust Committee to support the Land Bank Society, a nonprofit organization that holds land for community benefits such as affordable housing.

“I want to acknowledge and commend the determination of the Land Bank Society in reaching this agreement,” said George Ehring, Local Trustee. “This housing agreement responds to the regional fluctuations in market rents and provides good security to Salt Spring residents.”

“This was an example of the kind of cooperation that is necessary between all parties who participate in the process of rezoning, financing, and arranging the legal agreements to ensure affordable housing,” added Christine Torgrimson, also a Local Trustee.

Electoral Area Director Garth Hendren expressed his enthusiastic support for the housing agreement. “The lack of affordable housing on Salt Spring is our major problem,” said Director Hendren. “Many of the people who work on the island can no longer afford to live here. The nature of commuting to work raises the levels of green house gas emissions. The cooperation of agencies will help our community support the development of affordable housing and attract back to Salt Spring those people who have been obliged to leave.”

Trustees Torgrimson and Ehring suggested that housing advocates, the Islands Trust, Capital Regional District and other agencies involved in affordable housing projects assess how future proposals may proceed through negotiations with greater certainty about requirements and the outcomes.

“The Community Housing Task Force identified the need for a housing agreement to ensure affordability for residents in 2005,” said Neddy Harris, on behalf of the Salt Spring Island Land Bank Society. “It is great that a template for the Salt Spring agreement and the administrative structures to support it have been determined. This is a step closer to supporting local tenants and building a stronger and more diverse community. I’d also like to thank all the locals who have supported us and this project over the last few years. It has been a challenge to pull all the pieces together and your ability to work with us at short notice, when we needed it, is appreciated a lot.”

Six dwellings are expected to be occupied within the next year, with an additional four units to be completed within four years after that.

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The Land Bank Society has signed a covenant on the property which includes a number of resource conservation features, such as energy efficient building standards, a future rainwater catchment system, buffering of adjacent lands, and protection of trees and the riparian features.

The Local Trust Committee is hopeful that the housing agreement will serve as a model for future agreements prepared in partnership with the Capital Regional District. Ideally, the agreement will inspire other regional districts and local trust committees within the Islands Trust Area to adopt similar agreements to support the provision of affordable housing on island communities. For further information go to www.islandstrust.bc.ca/communityhousingpublic/communityhousingpublichome.cfm

The Islands Trust Council is a federation of independent local governments that represents some 25,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area. The Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the unique 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. It includes 13 major and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5200 square kilometres.

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