



Gambier Island Local Trust Committee Minutes of Special Meeting

Date:	February 2, 2017
Location:	John Braithwaite Community Centre 145 West 1st Street North Vancouver, BC
Members Present	Susan Morrison, Chair Dan Rogers, Local Trustee Kate-Louise Stamford, Local Trustee
Staff Present	Aleksandra Brzozowski, Island Planner Ann Kjerulf, Regional Planning Manager Diane Corbett, Recorder
Also Present	Richard Baker, Councillor, Squamish Nation Lisa Wilcox, Intergovernmental Relations, Natural Resources and Revenue, Squamish Nation Members of the Public – 27

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Morrison called the meeting to order at 1:31 pm. She acknowledged that the meeting was being held in the territory of the Coast Salish First Nations. Chair Morrison introduced Trustees and Staff and welcomed Richard Baker and Lisa Wilcox of the Squamish Nation.

Councillor Richard Baker welcomed everyone and thanked Islands Trust representatives for the invitation.

Lisa Wilcox, who works with Squamish Rights and Title Management Team, commented on the areas of work of her department. The geographic area of Squamish Nation territory stretches from Roberts Creek on the Sunshine Coast to the north arm of the Fraser River and Port Moody area and up to Whistler. The Squamish Land and Resources Management Plan (LRMP) informs policy of how the Squamish manage their territory.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By general consent the agenda was approved as presented.

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Presentation of Gambier OCP Review topics and First Nations collaboration

Island Planner Brzozowski remarked on how this was an opportunity to share information before starting the work on reviewing policies. Some of the things the Squamish Nation have said they want input on include:

- The Wilderness Conservation area (60% of Gambier Island);
- Shoreline and marine areas;
- Archaeological sites; and
- The New Brighton dock.

3.2 Presentation of Squamish Interests for Gambier Islands Trust

Ms. Wilcox described the regulatory process regarding Crown land and how it involves the Squamish Nation, as it is subject to Aboriginal Rights and Title, a level of jurisdiction over the Crown land that includes review of a range of activities such as trails, forestry, mining, and dock tenure. Ms. Wilcox discussed Squamish Nation's ways of working, areas of jurisdiction and points regarding financial arrangements and tax status. Revenue comes from projects on Crown land and goes to support Nation members' housing, education, social programs and sports. Squamish Nation is one of the most innovative nations in Canada and has successful negotiating teams. The Squamish Nation have looked at different policies regarding the foreshore, special sites and other aspirations.

She remarked that she would like to hear from those present about what they think and care about in regard to Gambier Island, so that her Nation will make sure it is addressing those thoughts and will work to align with them.

Councillor Baker commented on the historical formation of the Squamish Nation through the amalgamation of villages. Traditionally, members migrated with the food cycle. He stated that there are sixteen elected hereditary Chiefs. He invited public comments.

4. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ABOUT GAMBIER ISLAND WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE SQUAMISH NATION

4.1 Question and Answer Opportunity

- 4.1.1 Permitted Uses in the Wilderness Conservation zone
- 4.1.2 Shorelines
- 4.1.3 Archaeological and cultural sites
- 4.1.4 New Brighton dock

Trustees and members of the public queried the Squamish Nation representatives and shared information on Gambier Island:

- Gambier is a “Candidate Area” – please elaborate.
 - Ms. Wilcox explained that the Squamish Nation signed a land use agreement with the Province in 2007. The Land and Resources Management Plan (LRMP) is available on the BC Government website showing various maps and the different zones. The Squamish Nation defined and mapped different zones in its traditional territory and what could happen in those areas, with some being more conducive to development or forestry. Some areas are sacred and important to the Nation. The Province accepted some but not all of the areas. The areas that were accepted were cultural sites. “Candidate sites” are thought of similar to that; this means it has to have more meaningful consultation and that the Nation would look at it more closely. It comes from Squamish mythology and what the Nation knows about the island. The Squamish Nation has been in the area for over 8000 years. Places that have been identified have different degrees of importance. The highest site is Wild Spirit Places. She noted she could provide a map for the Gambier Community Centre.
- Is all of Howe Sound one LRMP or zones?
 - The whole of the Lower Mainland is under LRMP – see map on the website. The Nation has to come to agreement with adjacent Nations.
- What is the vision going forward? What is being considered, regarding Gambier in particular, for development?
 - There is not a particular vision for Gambier. What is important to the Squamish Nation community and elders includes sustaining the foreshore in its natural state. Retaining walls are destroying the natural habitat. The more docks, the less eelgrass. The more development that fills in the foreshore, the more you destroy natural systems and habitat.
- How are you involved in the fixed link decision?
 - It appears to be just a study at this time. The LRMP would come into effect with that. A cable from Gibsons to Keats to Bowen would cross through ten archaeological sites. It would be necessary to look at where the route is proposed to be in order to assess viability/feasibility.
 - Councillor Baker explained that when the Nation does any projects, there is a need to get service agreements and to conduct community engagement.
- Regarding some of the oral history and sacred places being kept internal so it protects those places: is there information available about Gambier Island, about where or how the land was used, where special places would have been? Is

there some public knowledge? As people understand those stories, it makes it easier to find different solutions to share.

- The Nation's staff could work with staff, to create posters or brochures. There is a lot of information that can be shared.
- There was extensive discussion of the finding of artefacts on the island. Some people are afraid to mention this in case "someone digs up their basement." A resident from West Bay offered her services to bring artefacts to a Squamish Nation Councillor. There is an interest on Gambier in helping protect sites.
 - The policy is that the cultural heritage of the Nation is confidential. There are middens on Gambier. The importance of the midden is that it gives some understanding of the history, such as what people ate or climate change and in many cases, there will be human remains. It doesn't mean people can't build their house or fence; it is a matter of following proper process. It is a matter of working together, talking to Ms. Wilcox's department or government representatives. There is a heritage permit, which is important if you live near a registered archaeological site. The Province of BC will help with that.
- A trustee commented on the trustees' interest in developing the relationship with the Squamish Nation and in facilitating an increased understanding of the Nation's history over thousands of years.
- Gambier Island Conservancy (GIC) is very active in working to try to protect natural environmental and ecological integrity, particularly of Crown land, and manages three nature reserves on the Island. There is a rough trail network through the island that GIC would like to improve and put signs on and would like to work with the Squamish Nation on this network, particularly on the signage and names of places. Thanks to the Squamish Nation in halting the logging in the designated wood lots. GIC is interested in the idea of establishing a land and marine national park on Gambier and it would be an opportunity for protection of Crown land. What are the Squamish Nation's ideas on this? What is their interest in establishing a national park on the island and the green areas off the island?
 - It is a double edged sword: in some ways parks or conservancies isolate the Nation. It is important that Nation members can come in to do what they want to do. It is something they are always conscious of. The marine area is very important, due to sponge reefs and areas the Squamish are identifying. It is a sensitive ecosystem. Regarding trails: a lot of times people go in and create trails on a wildlife corridor, pushing wildlife off the corridor. It is important to work together with the Nation to minimize impacts on animals. Naming and recognition is important; names help to create recognition. The Squamish are working with the David Suzuki Foundation and have looked at their analysis of the Sound.
- Regarding a national park: what concerns you?

- National parks create a level of protection over a location and are an opportunity to access funding. The Squamish have co-management with the different parks which could create access issues, however, it may protect against logging in watersheds. It was recommended that the people of Gambier identify as a community “what is important to you and what your values are”.
- The objective of the Future of Howe Sound Society is to try to have a dialogue around need for a comprehensive land and marine use plan for Howe Sound. Is the government looking at the Squamish Land Use Plan in the Cumulative Effects Assessment? What do you see as next steps for the Province regarding potentially reopening those wood lots? There was a tremendous amount of pushback by this community.
 - Every cut block is reviewed by the Intergovernmental Relations, Natural Resources and Revenue Department, which receives the cut block plan every year. If the community feels it is an important vision, it should work with its elected officials on that. The department would receive the cut block authorization, would review it and give comments on whether to move forward or not and provide direction to BC Timber Sales (BCTS). Regarding a marine and land use plan, the Squamish Nation are looking at their own marine plan. They have worked on a cumulative effects initiative with Environment Canada. The Squamish Nation has 10,000 years of understanding and looks at things as a whole, not project specific i.e. “does it fit?” Has to consider the economic component, including allowing projects to partner with the Nation. This creates revenue whereby the Nation is able to sustain its projects and services and sustain members.
 - Councillor Baker remarked on how the Squamish Nation look at taking care of their people and are also caretakers of the land. He emphasized that “we are here to support you; we want community engagement with you.”
- Thank you for the job you are doing working with New Brighton. That dock is essential to the community in the southwest part of the island. Do you have any thoughts about the future of the New Brighton dock?
 - Under agreement with the federal government, the dock would have to remain in the same condition for five years. What does the community think or need regarding the dock? Is there a need for expansion? Let your officials know, so that the Squamish Nation can work with them after the five years.

A trustee noted there had been some responses from people in the southwest peninsula area regarding inviting Squamish Nation representatives back to the Community Centre for another dialogue around visions for the New Brighton dock.

Ms. Wilcox noted her department deals with the disposition, not implementation. Once an asset is acquired, it switches over to Chief and Council for decision. Do we want a store, more dock, connections with other outposts? Those are the kinds of things Gambier Islanders should start thinking about.

- Interest in the experience in Squamish with Streamkeepers in getting herring coming back. Gambier Island Conservancy would like to work with the Squamish Nation regarding the New Brighton dock.
 - In relation to private docks, it is difficult for the Squamish Nation to say people cannot have their own private dock. It is hard for the Province not to allow an owner to have that private tenure. Community members should think about what they want to see in the OCP in terms of docks. Docks affect sunlight, herring spawn, regeneration of eelgrass. That is why Squamish Nation is a participant in the Howe Sound Community Forum. Bring those things up with your officials.
- In terms of logging, do you look at what is the most long-term benefit versus immediate benefit?
 - Squamish Nation logging management plans are asking for a 500 year plan, looking seven generations out. It might be decided to leave considerations on logging for future generations to decide.
- A member of the public described that in his area of the island at one time, was entirely barren of fish and shellfish. The area was cleaned up and private docks were put in. Within five years there were ecosystems under every dock; oysters, shellfish and herring. Because there is such a small footprint, the docks create a mini environment. Hope you examine specific circumstances in the environment when you consider dock activities.
 - Potential for people to come together, share knowledge, think in new ways to see what is of value and work together to see how to improve. The people on Gambier are the Squamish Nations' ears and eyes.
- There is a family that has six generations on Gambier. There are many people who would like to have their history forwarded.
- Camp Fircom dock is getting really busy as many lots have sold. There will be an event on April 22 concerning how people use the dock. As an island, we need to think about what we are doing with the different camping spaces; anything that has water access has been filling up. People show up in kayaks, or kids' camp group, or people partying. It is the same in Halkett Bay. It has been getting busier in the last six years.
 - The department deals with the Marine Trail and Sea to Sky Trail. She planned to discuss those kinds of things with the Province as the impacts are getting greater and greater. Part of the problem is people don't understand what it is

to go gently on the land. Let staff know what your concerns are so they can try to find solutions.

- There is an initiative working on the potential for Howe Sound to be recommended as a UNESCO Biosphere Region. Benefits: it would help create logistical support to create more dialogues around management of Howe Sound, so it is sustainable and well thought out. It would help and support research and education and help people understand and relate to their environment. This type of initiative cannot go forward unless it has the support of First Nations.
- Could not comment whether the Squamish Nation would be supporting that initiative. The Nation has jurisdiction over its traditional territory. How it is managed is based on the Nation's knowledge; the Squamish would manage its own territory.

5. CLOSING REMARKS

Trustee Stamford thanked the public for attending and providing input, and noted she would keep people informed about the process. Trustee Rogers emphasized the importance of engagement with the Squamish Nation as the OCP process moves forward.

Chair Morrison thanked Richard Baker, Lisa Wilcox and the public for attending.

Councillor Baker remarked on the value of the Squamish territory and stated to those present that they are caretakers. He thanked everyone for coming.

Ms. Wilcox noted the OCP process is a really important process. She expressed appreciation for the new relationship with Islands Trust staff and elected officials that has arisen in recent years.

6. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent the meeting was adjourned at 3:23 p.m.

Susan Morrison, Chair

Certified Correct:

Diane Corbett, Recorder