



Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee

Minutes of Special Meeting

Date: March 28, 2025
Location: Electronic Meeting

Members Present: Laura Patrick, Chair
 Tobi Elliott, Trustee
 Susan Yates, Trustee

Staff Present: Narissa Chadwick, Island Planner
 Stephen Baugh, Island Planner
 Katherine Vogt, Recorder

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Patrick called the special meeting to order at 10:01 am. She announced that she had recently become the new Chair of the Gabriola Local Trust Committee (LTC), and introduced herself, trustees, staff, and recorder.

2. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Chair Patrick acknowledged that the meeting was held on the territory of the Coast Salish First Nations. She spoke on trustee commitment to long-term relationship building and reconciliation with First Nations.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By general consent the agenda was approved as presented.

4. BUSINESS ITEMS

4.1 Major Project: Gabriola Island Official Community Plan Review - Connectivity and Economy Discussion - Staff Report

Planner Chadwick presented the staff report, dated March 28, 2025, which reviews policy options regarding connectivity and economy for inclusion in the draft Official Community Plan (OCP), noting the following:

- Focused engagement groups of up to 12 invited participants have been held for the OCP topic areas of housing, connectivity, and economy.
- A survey on connectivity and economy is out right now, and its deadline has been extended to the middle of April to align with a recent invitation from the

Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) to coordinate with their send out of information on water budget work.

- Senior RDN Parks Planner Elaine McCulloch, who is currently working on the RDN Parks and Trails Plan for Gabriola, joined the connectivity focus group and has advised on policy language for the OCP to support RDN receiving funding for parks projects on Gabriola.
- A highlight of the connectivity focus group was their support for more sports playing fields to enhance health and wellness.
- The Gabriola Transportation Society has been invited to outline a plan of the critical community needs they have identified for inclusion in the OCP.
- The economy focus group highlighted that housing affordability has significantly restricted business opportunities on Gabriola.
- Many responses have been received by the planner regarding unsafe road conditions for pedestrians and cyclists traveling between hubs.

Trustees responded to the staff report and the following questions and comments were noted:

- Recommendations are still coming in for participants for the next 3 focus groups.
- Two open houses, at which participants could discuss any OCP topic, have been held.
- The RDN will have a meeting on Monday April 7, 2025 to review their final first draft on a recreation and parks plan.
- There has been extensive discussion on housing being closer to services and amenities which aligns to discussions on where to put increased housing densities. Commercial nodes and community hub nodes such as the Community Hall could be identified through public engagement for increased housing density possibilities.
- The groundwater availability in the Village Core and Silva Bay is limited, whereas the Whalebone Area has a lot more water and is a good possibility for a smaller commercial node.
- A bridge of engagement is needed between the focus groups and the wider community between now and June. Trustees have received some feedback that the focus groups are too small and that some people have felt excluded.
- A cycle path around the island is a key topic for wider public engagement.
- Articles in the Sounder on each topic area written by trustees could provide broader public outreach and engagement.
- Areas of competing interests are where targeted surveys would be valuable for precise analysis.
- It would be valuable to turn the big ideas and issues that emerged from the visioning process, such as vacant lots, not able to be addressed by the LTC, into advocacy statements; and to have a place where these ideas could be gathered.
- Can commercial chain stores be restricted on Gabriola?
 - Planner Chadwick advised that the LTC has legal jurisdiction over commercial land use but not the user; and that drive-throughs, which are a particular kind of land use, are prohibited.

- Regarding Tourist Accommodation Item c) In no case shall the maximum density for a tourist accommodation use exceed 13 tourist accommodation units per hectare or a maximum 30 tourist accommodation units in the development; how were these numbers arrived at?
 - Planner Baugh noted that these numbers had come from an existing policy; and suggested that precise prescriptions for accommodations could be better placed in the land use bylaw.
- OCP drop-ins with trustees have been very valuable and trustees are happy to continue with these.

GB-2025-015

It was Moved and Seconded,

that the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee request staff to prepare options for public engagement on the Official Community Plan Review for the Local Trust Committee meeting of April 17, 2025.

CARRIED

GB-2025-016

It was Moved and Seconded,

that the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee request staff prepare draft policy, as discussed at the March 28, 2025 Local Trust Committee meeting, for broader public review for the connectivity and economy related content of the Official Community Plan.

CARRIED

GB-2025-017

It was Moved and Seconded,

that the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee request staff to schedule a special meeting prior to the May Local Trust committee meeting to review policy language and the input of focus groups related to resource stewardship, freshwater, and environment.

CARRIED

There was some discussion on historical local rainwater records, and their being included in the upcoming water focus group.

5. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent the meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Laura Patrick, Chair

Certified Correct:

Katherine Vogt, Recorder