



Hornby Island Local Trust Committee

Minutes of Special Meeting

Date: August 21, 2025
Location: Electronic Meeting

Members Present: Timothy Peterson, Chair
Alex Allen, Local Trustee

Staff Present: Sonja Zupanec, Island Planner
Marlis McCargar, Island Planner
Narissa Chadwick, Island Planner
Katherine Vogt, Recorder
Emily Bryant, Meeting Administrator

Others Present: David Maude, Denman Island Local Trust Committee Chair
David Graham, Denman Island Local Trust Trustee
Sam Borthwick, Denman Island Local Trust Trustee

There were no members of the public in attendance.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. He explained that the special joint meeting of the Hornby and Denman Local Trust Committees was to address K'ómoks First Nations desire for cooperation with local governments regarding protection of agricultural and cultural heritage resources; shorelines and watercourses; and ecosystems and biodiversity on Denman and Hornby islands.

2. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Chair Peterson acknowledged that the meeting was held on the territory of the Coast Salish First Nations.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By general consent the agenda was approved as presented.

4. BUSINESS ITEMS

4.1 Joint Local Trust Committee Meeting to discuss housing and K'omoks First Nation Engagement Summary – Memorandum

The Planner explained that the meeting was to explore commonalities between Denman and Hornby Islands regarding housing crisis options, and for trustees to discuss the attached draft “Hornby Island and K’ómoks First Nation Engagement Summary” dated March 2025, in preparation for the upcoming October meeting with K’ómoks First Nation (KFN). She noted that KFN is interested to see if the Denman and Hornby Local Trust Committees are open to land use planning collaboration regarding reconciliation and cultural heritage protection; so that solutions have consistency across the geography, rather than a piecemeal approach for each political boundary.

The Planner presented a series of slides on Heritage Conservation Areas (HCAs), noting the following:

- Heritage Conservation Area (HCA) designation is a special zoning tool to protect Indigenous and settler heritage, and may include landscapes, buildings, trails, and shorelines. A KFN proposal to have a 200-meter low impact development buffer around the shoreline has been discussed on Denman Island; but not yet introduced on Hornby Island.
 - The Planner added that HCA areas would need to be identified and included in the Official Community Plan (OCP), and guidelines would need to be drafted regarding how development could proceed in these areas. HCA’s act like a development permit area; but are a unique tool that has not yet been used in British Columbia. Currently, if an area is not a recorded archaeological site, there is no means to protect it. For the First Nations, it is not just recorded Archaeological sites that are important, but also cultural heritage sites in between. It is a possibility for an HCA guideline to apply to both islands, with some adjustments.
 - The Planner added that an HCA provides First Nations with certainty that development guidelines will be followed.
 - The Planner added that an HCA designated property would require a Heritage Alteration Permit for activities such as excavation work, removal of vegetation, blasting, and septic field installation.
- Key areas of interest to KFN are acknowledgement and history of territory, recognition of other First Nations in the area, cooperation with local governments for protection of archaeological and cultural heritage sites, and prioritizing the protection of watercourses and shoreline areas, ecosystems, and biodiversity.
- An HCA also functions as an effective education tool for property owners who may be caught off guard if they find archaeological artifacts on their properties, though they are currently legally obliged to report these finds.
 - The chair asked how an HCA permit aligns with the current K’ómoks First Nation Cultural Heritage Investigation Permit (CHIP).
 - The Planner responded that an enforceable HCA could possibly eliminate the KFN’s need for the difficult to enforce CHIP process and could alleviate the volume of CHIP applications they receive.

The Planner emphasized that multiple First Nations have expressed that the 200-metre boundary area from freshwater courses and the natural boundary of the sea

contains the most significant numbers of archaeological artifacts and cultural heritage sites. These areas also coincide with high numbers of settler heritage sites and alterations. An HCA covering the entirety of the 200-metre boundary could ensure high quality low impact development in this zone, or the HCA could be island wide, or it could apply to individual properties.

- A trustee expressed some support for including the entirety of Denman in an HCA, to prevent social divisions and inequities, and over-bureaucratization.
 - A planner responded that a disadvantage of applying the HCA island-wide was to not have clear areas of exclusion for higher density housing.
- A trustee remarked that considering sea level rise possibilities, that 200 metres seems not to be enough.
- A trustee commented that the 200-metre buffer is an averaging dimension that doesn't include exceptions.
- The Planner noted that because over 90% of archaeological materials are within the 200-metre boundary; and that because First Nations do not want to publicly share their precise data on archaeological sites, that the 200-metre boundary is their preferred approach to archaeological protection.
- The Planner added that First Nations are also interested in how HCAs could contribute to the preservation and restoration of local ecosystems and landscapes.
 - A trustee asked if an HCA could control clearcuts on private land.
 - The planner responded that yes, an HCA could protect Coastal Douglas Fir and Gary Oak ecosystems if clearly articulated in the Official Community Plan such as maximum square footage allowed to be cut or certain tree sizes must be protected, while still allowing development.
 - The planner added that a Development Variance Permit does not apply to provincial or federal land, whereas an HCA would apply.
- A trustee noted the large amount of culturally modified trees encountered in the woods far outside of the 200-metre boundary.
- A trustee asked how the Agricultural Land Reserve would be affected by an HCA permit?
 - The planner responded that this has yet to be explored.

The Planner presented slides and information on the two years long Denman Housing Project, noting the following:

- Work has been done on mapping, watershed resilience, and suitable land analysis.
- Discussions with the public are now occurring regarding suitable areas for higher housing densities; and the 200-meter boundary possibility was introduced to the public at a recent event in the context of it being an excluded area for increased density.
- There is an upcoming community engagement session in September or October for public discussion on suitable areas and options for higher densities, including limiting subdivisions and rezoning to Special Needs, Affordable, and Attainable categories.

- Revision of First Nations history in the OCP is being done alongside the housing project.

Trustee Graham added that other ideas being discussed on Denman were that of limiting the percentage of lot coverage development; and of applying a maximum residential square footage.

Chair Peterson suggested that trustees could address the discussion options contained in the planner's memorandum. The following comments were noted:

- A trustee suggested that all recommendations were worth exploring.
- A trustee expressed hesitancy about doing housing together due to island differences, even though both islands and everywhere is suffering from a housing crisis.
- The chair suggested that the Hornby Local Trust Committee (LTC) would need to review Denman's housing project before being able to determine possible areas of collaboration.
- A trustee asked staff how Denman and Hornby's housing aligned.
 - A planner responded that the housing deficiency of rental and alternative tenures was similar on both islands; and both islands share a preponderance of single-family dwellings. Solutions are likely similar, but implementation may be different.
- A trustee noted that land sharing is a commonality between Denman and Hornby, that could be further explored; and that both islands are siting and use permit areas rather than building permit areas.
- A trustee noted that on Hornby, the LTC had already determined that every development application be referred to KFN; and, in a September 2024 report in the journal *Frontiers in Environmental Archaeology* titled "Indigenous cultural heritage policies as a pathway for Indigenous sovereignty and the role of local governments: an example with K'ómoks First Nation, British Columbia" it highlights the Islands Trust as a proactive local government working to protect Indigenous archaeological heritage.
- A trustee asked if staff could report back on the housing approaches of both islands.
 - A planner responded that a summary of key Denman housing approaches could be provided to Hornby's housing project.
- The chair expressed that while it may be too soon to collaborate on housing, some joint advocacy and action could be accomplished on the HCA.
- A trustee suggested a succinct preamble for the Denman OCP.
 - A planner noted the depth of the Denman preamble which was now in the archives online.
- A trustee asked about discussion with KFN on place names and signage.
 - A planner responded that place names and signage had not come up as a priority for KFN.
- The chair expressed that an island wide HCA had the advantage of treating all property owners equally; and that it better addresses preserve and protect mandates, and KFN concerns.

HO-2025-035

It was Moved and Seconded,

that the Hornby Island Local Trust Committee direct staff to prepare a report on possible options for advancing collaboration with the Denman Island Local Trust Committee and K'ómoks First Nations on the following topics: working group, timelines, project charter amendments, and budget requests.

CARRIED

Planner Zupanec left the meeting at 4:44 pm.

The Planner affirmed to a trustee that an HCA could be stratified into an HCA Zone #1 applied to the 200-metre buffer and an HCA Zone#2 to cover the rest of the island; and affirmed for the chair that staff would be researching how HCAs would affect lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Trustee Graham offered that the Hornby Island LTC would soon be receiving a referral from the Denman Island LTC once First Reading was given to the new Denman draft housing bylaws; and expressed that any Hornby comments would be welcome.

Trustees discussed the possibility of using a committee of the whole or Regional Planning Team model for having ongoing discussion enclaves of regional areas within the Trust area; the possibility for including into the Trust Council meetings some regional conversation time; and the possibility for a northern forum like the Southern Gulf Islands Forum.

4.2 K'ómoks First Nation Meeting October 9, 2025 - verbal discussion

The Planner had previously noted that the upcoming K'ómoks First Nation Chief and Council meeting with both Denman and Hornby Local Trust Committees will likely be in person, but will report back to trustees for confirmation.

Trustees discussed bringing a gift of food to the meeting and requested staff explore possibilities for an appropriate gift.

The chair requested that the upcoming staff report based on today's motion HO-2025-035 be shared with the Denman Island Local Trust Committee.

5. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent the meeting was adjourned at 5:13p.m.

Tim Peterson, Chair

Certified Correct:

Katherine Vogt, Recorder

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