



Salt Spring Island Board of Variance Minutes of a Regular Meeting

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, September 29, 2026

Location: United Church, Upper Hall Meeting Room
111 Hereford Avenue, Salt Spring Island

Members Present: Lisa Floritto, Member
Robert Rush, Member
George Ward, Member

Staff Present: Rob Pingle, Planning Technician
Kalyaan Selvakumar, Meeting Host (electronic)
Carly Bilney, Recorder (electronic)

Others Present: There were 8 members of the public in person, including Trustee Patrick, the applicants and their representative (Bradley Fossen of Aurora Professional Group); Trustee Peterson attended electronically as a member of the public

1. AGENDA

Planning Technician Rob Pingle called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

1.1 Approval of Agenda

By general consent the agenda was adopted as presented.

2. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

2.1 Election of the Chair

By acclamation, Lisa Floritto was elected to the position of Chair.

CARRIED

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 Draft Minutes of the Meeting – For Adoption

By general consent the Minutes of August 6, 2025 were adopted as presented.

4. HEARINGS

4.1 PLBOV20260029 - Clamshell Islet – B. Fossen

Planning Technician Pingle presented a staff report to the Board of Variance about the relaxations of setback requirements from the natural boundary of the sea to accommodate a sewage disposal field. Discussion ensued and the following comments were made:

- A member of the Board of Variance asked whether discussions related to the application had been held with First Nations; it was noted that archaeological sites have not been identified on the islet, and a building permit has been issued under which a structure is in the process of being built within the regulations of the land-use bylaw
- A member of the Board of Variance asked whether other waste management systems have been considered and Bradley Fossen, a representative of the applicants from Aurora Professional Group, outlined the reasoning behind why the proposed treatment system was chosen for the site
- Mr. Fossen noted the proposed engineered system incorporates safeguards in its design and explained why it is better than a pump out system for a composting toilet
- The Chair suggested that the application is not a minor variance, but a significant one; the other Board of Variance Members suggested it was minor
- It was noted that the water supply would come from rainwater collection
- The applicants described their intended plans to use the property in their retirement and explained they have chosen the proposed system
- The applicants explained that the geology of the zoned parcel demonstrates a hardship
- A question was raised as to why the parcel was ever zoned for a single-family dwelling
- A comment was made that the proponent has received approval to build from the Capital Regional District, and the hardship that exists is the land itself and what needs to be done to make it acceptable for a single-family dwelling
- The applicant commented that the 30-metre setback from the natural boundary of the sea was an objective policy decision that does not apply elsewhere in the Southern Gulf Islands
- A member suggested that the proponents apply for a variance permit, rather than seeking approval from the Board of Variance and the applicant noted the Islands Trust reviewed their application for a variance permit and recommended applying to the Board of Variance
- The process for inspecting the septic system by the Capital Regional District and the Vancouver Island Healthy Authority was outlined
- The Planning Technician commented that feedback received on the application has been shared with the applicants and the Board of Variance for consideration
- A member of the public compared Clamshell Islet to Grace Islet and questioned how construction on a sensitive ecosystem with archaeological concerns can move forward

A motion was made to approve the application subject to a completion report by the professional engineer upon completion of the project. Discussion on the motion ensued and the following comments were made:

- The Chair questioned whether it is Board of Variance members or elected officials that should be making the decision on this application, and suggested the Board of Variance is not to be making decisions on significant situations
- A member reiterated possible concerns about the environment and First Nations and noted the parcel has already been put into residential zoning
- In response to a question, the engineer noted no land would be dug up for the system

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that, having considered the matters set out in s.542 (1)(c) of the Local Government Act, and having found that undue hardship would be caused to the applicant if s.531 (1) of the Local Government Act is complied with, the Salt Spring Island Board of Variance approve application PLBOV20260029 as presented and shown on Schedule A of the Notice of Hearing, subject to a completion report by the Professional Engineer upon completion of the project.

CARRIED

Lisa Floritto Opposed

5. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent the meeting adjourned at 1:56 p.m.

Lisa Floritto, Chair

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Carly Bilney, Recorder