

Saturna Island Local Trust Committee

Minutes of Regular Meeting

Date: July 18, 2024
Location: Saturna Recreation and Cultural Centre
104 Harris Road, Saturna Island, BC

Members Present: David Maude, Chair
Lee Middleton, Local Trustee
Mairead Boland, Local Trustee

Staff Present: Brad Smith, Island Planner
Warren Dingman, Bylaw Compliance & Enforcement Manager (electronic)
Lisa Millard, Recorder (electronic)

Others Present: Paul Brent, Capital Regional District (CRD) Electoral Area Director for the Southern Gulf Islands
Rob Fenton, Alternate Director for the Southern Gulf Islands

There were approximately 14 members of the public present.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Maude called the meeting to order at 11:35 a.m. He acknowledged that the meeting was held on the territory of the Coast Salish First Nations.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The following amendments to the agenda were presented for consideration:

- 16.1 Bylaw Enforcement Protocols
- 16.2 Letter to Island Health
- 12.1 Add email correspondence from Janet Land

By general consent the agenda was adopted as amended.

3. TRUSTEE REPORT

Trustee Middleton reported the following:

- Working with Nature Trust of British Columbia to assist in securing the donation of the Myers property on Harris Road which entails dealing with Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure subdivision requirements and resulting complications

Trustee Boland reported the following:

- Noted recent road improvements

- Attended Committee of the Whole discussion on the draft Islands Trust Policy Statement which mainly consisted of a closed meeting to receive legal advice

4. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Maude reported the following:

- Attended Trust Council
- Noted draft Trust Policy Statement work continues and anticipates public engagement process to commence in the fall
- Acknowledged the retirement of Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Russ Hotsenpiller and welcomed Julia Mobbs who will act as interim CAO during the ongoing competition for permanent placement

5. ELECTORAL AREA DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Paul Brent, Capital Regional District (CRD) Electoral Area Director for the Southern Gulf Islands reported the following:

- CRD has purchased land on Galiano Island for a proposed twenty unit affordable housing initiative
- Rural housing strategy has been approved by the Board and will be funded in part by external financing coming in from the short-term vacation rental tax with additional internal funds being secured in 2025
- CRD will be paralleling the provincial program to fund secondary suites

6. TOWN HALL AND QUESTIONS

- A member of the public spoke to the re-establishment of the Advisory Planning Commission which would enable the public to have broader discussions about current topics such as the draft Trust Policy Statement. They also noted that education about what the Trust does, how land use bylaws affect residents, and language used by the Local Trust Committee would be helpful.
 - Island Planner Smith stated that an Advisory Planning Commission is referral driven and members can only consider information that is referred to them by the Local Trust Committee
 - Trustee Boland noted that the Advisory Planning Commission meetings have specific procedural requirements that might constrain community discussions while a Community Information Meeting can be held to provide information about a specific topic and is for the purpose of general discussion
- A speaker noted concerns about the Trust Council Policy Statement review process and referred to the open letter sent to Trust Council and signed by thirty-four past Trustees. They stated that Islands Trust is unique and Trustees have no clear model for their role and that the Trust is not a regional district, municipality, or non-profit environmental group therefore those models are not useful. They indicated concern that the Governance Committee did not rely on either the 1986 or 2021 reports which defined the responsibilities of the Trust and requested that the 2024 draft Trust Council Policy Statement be revisited.
 - The Chair and Trustees responded with the following comments:

- The Chair of Trust Council has committed to holding a session open to the public to discuss what was put forward as the condensed summary of the Policy Statement discussion has led to misunderstanding about intent
 - The discussion at Trust Council asks if Islands Trust was only concerned with the environment or if there are other factors for consideration and the question to be answered is if the Trust is a land use planning body with concern for environment or an environmental Trust that uses land use planning as a tool
 - The in-camera work has been seen as a non-transparent discussion but has generally been about legal concerns
 - The Policy Statement work is continuing and will be done in public venues
 - Trust Council will be requesting the Province do a governance review
 - The *Islands Trust Act* is ambiguous, 50 (fifty) years old, and leaves openings for questioning of the meaning of statements which causes division
- A member of the public asked why policy statement work was being done prior to a governance review
 - Trustees clarified that the work needs to continue as there is no guarantee when, or if, the Province will undertake a review
 - A speaker stated there should be a common area where a member of the public can review background information and other details related to the Trust Policy Statement work
 - Trustee Boland agreed that a web portal with an area for comments would be helpful and indicated she would bring it up at the next Trust Council meeting

7. COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING

7.1 Minor Housing Amendments Project

The Planner provided a presentation and highlighted the following:

- Intent of Community Information Meeting was to provide information to the community and answer questions to better inform the future decision making process
- Scope of the project was to review cistern requirements for water storage, update secondary suite mapping to include new provincial saltwater intrusion mapping, and look at Multiple Family Residential zoning
- A building permit cannot be issued within the East Point water management area unless the applicant has water storage capacity of 4800 gallons and the Local Trust Committee is considering extending the requirement for water storage cisterns for new dwelling construction to other, or all, areas of the island
- Secondary suites had not been permitted in areas of water vulnerability
- Map to be updated to reflect areas where secondary suites may be appropriate by looking at groundwater recharge mapping and the land suitability analysis
- Multiple Family Residential zoning currently applies to one area for the purpose of providing housing for seniors and the project will look at community interest in amending the Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw to expand housing opportunities

- An overview of Islands Trust housing initiatives and zoning policy options across the Trust area was provided

The following public comments and questions were noted:

- Speaker asked if it mattered if stored water is potable
 - Island Planner Smith clarified that the Local Trust Committee has a land use planning function which can put in place requirements for water storage while other agencies regulate water systems and requirements of potable water. Staff also noted that the Local Trust Committee has a standing resolution that supports rain water catchment
- Speaker noted that cistern requirements would add costs for anyone building a house
 - Island Planner Smith replied that it would be a requirement of the building permit application
- Speaker asked if a single plan for rainwater catchment can be developed so that an engineer does not have to be hired and paid every time a new application is made for multiple lots within one development
 - Capital Regional District (CRD) Director Brent replied that the Provincial regulatory requirement is an approved application for each lot
- Speaker asked if areas that use private water systems would be included on the secondary suite suitability map
 - Island Planner Smith indicated that would need to be determined
 - Trustee Boland noted that the existing map excluded areas using private water systems with the exception of the CRD zone as the systems were deemed unreliable however she feels systems should be considered and it be determined how many secondary suites a system is capable of supporting
- Speaker stated that private water systems are unregulated and this should be looked into
- Speaker asked if the assumption is that adding more wells to an area that is mapped as having saltwater intrusion would invite further intrusion and inquired if there was data to support the assumption
 - Island Planner Smith indicated the Province had provided a considerable amount of data
 - Trustees noted that rain water catchment and desalination can be considered when wells might not be ideal
- Speaker asked if the Local Trust Committee had requested an interpretation of the rule that requires an assessment for each individual lot in order to prove water as those that design the systems indicate they are repeatable and a template could be used. They asked the Local Trust Committee to support the template approach to minimize costs associated with multiple individual assessments

- Island Planner Smith replied that Islands Trust is not the regulatory decision maker to approve water systems at time of subdivision build out and suggested that property owners consider collaborating to find a shared template solution to reduce engineering costs
- Speaker asked if rain water diminishment will be assessed
 - Electoral Area Director Brent noted that the Capital Regional District (CRD) had recently undertaken a study of weather projections for the next 30 years and had also looked at climate modeling and rain and snow forecasting, and this data is available to the public
- Speaker asked if the commercial zone allows multiple residences
 - Island Planner Smith noted conflicts with current bylaw which dictates no rezoning is allowed for increased residential density
- Speakers spoke to possibility of density transfer or increasing densities
 - Island Planner Smith noted that the community would need to decide if density increases or transfers are something they are interested in
 - Trustee noted there might be community interest in the possibility of revisiting the 150 densities that were lost when land was transferred to Parks Canada
- Speaker noted that the Local Trust Committee seemed interested in increasing housing and asked if the intent of multiple family housing and secondary suites is to increase availability of lower cost housing versus market housing
 - Electoral Area Director indicated that secondary suites are the most environmentally appropriate way to increase density and that they can be economically viable and supported by rain water catchment
 - Island Planner Smith added that water is a constraint when considering a multi unit building due to regulations surrounding rain water catchment
- Speaker inquired about the Trustee's goals if secondary suites are not a viable way of providing lower cost housing
 - Chair Maude said they are trying to open up opportunities and flexibility in housing options to provide long term possibilities
- Speaker asked that if the options discussed were not successful models then why would the Local Trust Committee spend time on this work
 - Chair Maude noted the idea it to open up potential possibilities and remove existing barriers
- Speaker spoke to the need for balance between open land, land that supports the environment, and the biodiversity of the area versus the need for more housing and asked if there was a rate of development the Local Trust Committee is considering
 - The Trustees replied that the Official Community Plan allows for 2000 people and 875 building structures and that is what the community consensus for density points to, and the intent of the project is to open up

the community discussion to look at minor incremental steps for potential avenues toward housing options

General discussion ensued about potential overdevelopment, housing solutions seen in other areas, and uniqueness of each of the gulf islands.

8. PUBLIC HEARING - None

9. MINUTES

9.1 Local Trust Committee Minutes Dated May 23, 2024 (for Adoption)

By general consent the Saturna Island Local Trust Committee meeting minutes of May 23, 2024 were adopted.

9.2 Section 26 Resolutions-without-meeting Report Dated June 2024

Received for information.

10. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

10.1 Follow-up Action List Dated July 2024

Received for information.

11. DELEGATIONS - None

12. CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence received concerning current applications or projects is posted to the LTC webpage

12.1 Email correspondence from Janet Land.

Received for information.

13. APPLICATIONS AND REFERRALS - None

14. LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE PROJECTS - None

15. REPORTS

15.1 Work Program Reports

15.1.1 Active Projects Report Dated July 2024

Received for information.

15.1.2 Future Projects Report Dated July 2024

Received for information.

15.2 Applications Report - Verbal Update

Received for information.

15.3 Trustee and Local Expense Report Dated May 2024

Received for information.

15.4 Adopted Policies and Standing Resolutions

Received for information.

15.5 Local Trust Committee Webpage

No updates.

15.6 Islands Trust Conservancy Report Dated May 2024

Received for information.

16. NEW BUSINESS

16.1 Bylaw Enforcement Protocols

Trustee Middleton noted the following:

- Local Trust Committee had a standing resolution on notice period required before Bylaw Officers attend private property
- A miscommunication related to a recent investigation might have occurred
- The Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement Manager is working with Local Trust Committees on a bylaw policy review and bylaw enforcement guidelines
- The Saturna Island Local Trust Committee will begin this work in the fall

16.2 Letter to Island Health

Trustee Boland referenced a conversation with a member of the community who informed her that during their subdivision application process Island Health did not acknowledge water catchment as their chosen method of proof of water.

Discussion ensued.

SA-2024-033

It was Moved and Seconded,

that Saturna Island Local Trust Committee write a letter to Island Health stating full support for water catchment (in accordance with Provincial Guidelines) as proof of potable water in case of subdivision and development applications as per the Saturna Local Trust Committee standing resolution.

CARRIED

17. UPCOMING MEETINGS

Discussion ensued about potential for a special meeting to hold a Community Information Meeting (CIM) before the next regular meeting. Island Planner Smith indicated a CIM can be included within the next regular meeting and that if more are needed a date can be set by resolution without meeting.

17.1 Next Regular Meeting Scheduled for October 17, 2024 at the Saturna Recreation and Cultural Centre, Saturna Island

18. TOWN HALL

No comments from the public.

19. CLOSED MEETING - None

20. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent the meeting was adjourned at 2:36 p.m.

David Maude, Chair

Certified Correct:

Lisa Millard, Recorder