

Saturna Island Local Trust Committee

Minutes of Regular Meeting

Date: November 7, 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)
Carly Bilney, Recorder (electronic)

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

There were 4 members of the public present.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Maude called the meeting to order at 11:32 a.m. He acknowledged that the meeting was being held on the territory of the Coast Salish First Nations.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By general consent the agenda was approved as presented.

3. TRUSTEE REPORT

Trustee Middleton's report included the following comments:

- Slow movement with conservation projects including Judy Myers' property that has been referred back to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure as a regular subdivision request
- It is unclear if a conservation project at a wetland at East Point is advancing at this time as the landowner has not come forward with a proposal

Trustee Boland's report included the following comments:

- At the Trust Council meeting in September there was almost unanimous consent for drafting a letter to the Province asking for a review of the *Islands Trust Act*; the letter has since been sent
- A new Chief Administrative Officer has been hired for the Islands Trust

4. CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Maude made the following comments in his report:

- The new Chief Administrative Officer Rueben Bronee starts on December 1, 2024
 - Rueben Bronee comes from the provincial government with a management background and expressed enthusiasm about joining the Trust
- The Policy Statement review continues and there is relative confidence that the document has addressed previous concerns ; once it reaches First Reading, the public will have greater opportunity to provide input

Trustee Boland commented that it was the job of local Trustees to engage with their communities about the Policy Statement review; she added that the updated draft of the Policy Statement is now much more readable and easier to understand, and can be found in agendas of recent Committee of the Whole meetings

5. ELECTORAL AREA DIRECTOR'S REPORT

In his report, Paul Brent, Capital Regional District Electoral Area Director for the Southern Gulf Islands, made the following comments:

- His focus has primarily been on housing initiatives and slow progress is being made
- Justine Stark has been working to address the secondary suite issue
- Islands Trust incoming Chief Administrative Officer Rueben Bronee was with the Ministry of Communications, Learning and Engagement, and should be good fit for working on the Trust Policy Statement
- The Capital Regional District is in budget time, and costs are increasing everywhere
- A lot of what the Capital Regional District does has to do with infrastructure and infrastructure costs are way higher than the consumer price index
- The financial costs of reconciliation, including engagement, are considerable

6. TOWN HALL AND QUESTIONS

Island Planner Smith commented that because this is not an electronic meeting the public is only able to view the proceedings online rather than actively participate. Trustee Boland suggested electronic participation be considered for Community Information Meetings.

Town hall was held and the following comments were made:

- Support was expressed for referring the Minor Amendment Housing Project to the Saturna Island Advisory Planning Commission (APC) to provide opportunity for discussion to unfold in a casual setting – Island Planner Smith clarified this would need to be referred to the APC from the LTC
- Frustration was expressed for the lack of participation at meetings and the public was invited to provide input about meeting times that might work better
- A lot of islanders are concerned about housing issues and want to participate

- The Islands Trust process can accommodate discussions about housing; additionally, discussions can be organized by other groups who could then bring the material to Local Trust Committee meetings

7. COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING – None

8. PUBLIC HEARING – None

9. MINUTES

9.1 Local Trust Committee Minutes Dated July 18, 2024 (for Adoption)

The following amendments to the minutes were presented for consideration:

- On page 6 of agenda (Page 3 of the Minutes), in the third bullet under Item 7.1, change: “A building permit can not been” to “A building permit cannot be”

By general consent the Saturna Island Local Trust Committee meeting minutes of July 18, 2024 were adopted as amended.

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

Received for information.

10. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

10.1 Follow-up Action List Dated Oct 2024

Received for information.

11. DELEGATIONS

12. CORRESPONDENCE

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

12.1 Janet Land re LTC Housing Amendments Review

Trustee Boland responded to correspondence from Janet Land and noted that:

- The salt water intrusion information maps are from the Province which has updated its analysis
- A letter went to fifteen First Nations to draw their attention to the start of the Minor Amendments Project, as is standard practice of engagement at the beginning of a project

12.2 Fisheries and Oceans Canada re Southern Resident Killer Whale Proposed Management Measures

Received for information.

13. APPLICATIONS AND REFERRALS

13.1 PLDP20240229 (Anielski) – Staff Report

On behalf of Planner Testemale, Island Planner Smith presented the staff report. Discussion ensued and the following comments were made:

- The applicants were asking to be able to build a deck that encroaches into the bluffs development permit area
- They plan to apply for a development permit variance for exceeding lot coverage after they complete their lot consolidation and Trustees can discuss this further at that time
- Applicants have suggested they would be willing to donate their density to the Community Amenity Density Reserve after lot consolidation
- Acquiring another density into the density bank would be advantageous given there may be opportunities to create affordable housing options in the future
- Support was expressed for the application because the proposed deck would extend into the Bluffs Development Permit Area which is hard rock

SA-2024-034

It was Moved and Seconded,

that Saturna Island Local Trust Committee approve issuance of Development Permit application SA-PLDP20240229 (Anielski).

CARRIED

14. LOCAL TRUST COMMITTEE PROJECTS

14.1 Minor Housing Amendments Project – Staff Report

Island Planner Smith provided an update on progress to date in the Minor Housing Amendments Project and made the following comments:

- The proposed bylaw would bring changes regarding cisterns and secondary suite mapping and could be achieved as a land use amendment rather than as an amendment to the Official Community Plan
- The Province provided updated data and staff has been directed to review Schedule E to determine which properties could enable a secondary suite
- As drafted, a cistern would be applicable to all new builds on the island (it is currently only applicable at East Point)

Discussion ensued and the following comments were made:

- The risk of salt water intrusion should be specified when appropriate rather than referring to it as “aquifer vulnerability”
- Preference was expressed for proceeding in a layered, step-by-step approach that assesses salt water intrusion maps, private water provider systems and other aspects of water vulnerability
- We should engage with private water providers explicitly and explain the proposal so they can make their own decision about how they want to proceed

- It would be helpful to have list of development applications over the last few decades to see data on new wells and to assess observation wells; this would allow for more engaged discussion at the Community Information Meeting
- We should consider the cost of water collection tanks before imposing them as a requirement across the island
- Caution was expressed in increasing the demand on wells that secondary suites would create
- The Province has indicated a willingness to communicate with the Local Trust Committee and they will be involved throughout the process
- The Local Trust Committee should dictate a standard for quality and quantity for water as part of increasing sustainable options for housing – this is the foundational piece we should work on as a first step
- Evaluating potable water standards in development regulations is a much bigger and different conversation than requiring a cistern to apply for a building permit
- The Province would respect local standards about the provision of water catchment as a legitimate source for the purposes of subdivision or secondary suites
- Concern was expressed that the cost of installing tanks might make or break a proposal that includes a secondary suite
- The reason for the Minor Housing Amendments Project is to increase the possibility for secondary suites where appropriate – water would be the basis for developing a secondary suite or cottage
- Trailers might be able to fulfill the need for housing
- There is a need for increased affordable housing to some degree and we need to address all options, including secondary suites
- The Capital Regional District has approved funding for housing incentives in a program that can be stacked with the Province's Secondary Suite Incentive Program
- One or two secondary suites on Saturna Island – tiny increments – would be great
- Trustees should look at existing additional accommodation that is currently for private use and could potentially be rented
- A housing survey would be helpful and the Local Trust Committee should consider one for Saturna
- A recent housing survey on North Pender that seeks input on demographics, housing solutions and need has so far received 375 responses
- Habitat for Humanity is collaborating with the Mayne Island Local Trust Committee to seek land for housing young families
- One limitation to increasing the number of people on a lot is water supply
- We are looking into changing mapping for secondary suites, but should also look at access to water for other types of housing (accessory dwelling units) that are less expensive to build (e.g. trailers, workshops)
- About five years ago the Local Trust Committee on Mayne allowed secondary suites on most of the island, but there has been little uptake due to regulations and construction costs

- A number of groups have discussed housing issues on Saturna over the years and they may be willing to initiate a new project

Discussion continued about the recommendations in the staff report. Comments were made that the Local Trust Committee could consider the updated maps as well as land suitability analysis data and groundwater recharge mapping.

SA-2024-035

It was Moved and Seconded,

that Saturna Island Local Trust Committee directs staff to prepare a draft bylaw that would amend the Saturna Island Land Use Bylaw No 119, 2018 by:

- Revising the associated Schedule "E" Secondary Suites map in consideration of updated 2022 provincial saltwater intrusion mapping;
- Changing all references of 'rainwater' to 'freshwater' to be consistent with other recent amendments and the advice of the Islands Trust Senior Freshwater Specialist;
- Removing Schedule "C" East Point Water Management Area, and updating water storage requirements in Section 2.18 Water Storage, for any new residential building, visitor accommodation unit, or addition to a residential building or visitor accommodation unit to apply across the entire Saturna Island Local Trust Area; and
- Simplifying secondary suite provision 2.18.5 by deleting the reference to areas having moderate to high aquifer vulnerability to salt water intrusion.

CARRIED

SA-2024-036

It was Moved and Seconded,

that Saturna Island Local Trust Committee directs staff to schedule a Community Information Meeting on the Minor Amendments Housing Project at the January 2025 regular business meeting, and to advertise the meeting in the Saturna Scribbler.

CARRIED

Discussion ensued and support was expressed for waiting until after the Community Information Meeting to advertise for additional members for the Advisory Planning Commission. It was noted that a draft bylaw is still very malleable and after the Community Information Meeting the Local Trust Committee could direct staff to make changes.

15. REPORTS

15.1 Work Program Reports

15.1.1 Active Projects Report Dated Oct 2024

Received for information.

15.1.2 Future Projects Report Dated Oct 2024

Received for information.

15.2 Applications Report – Verbal Update

15.3 Trustee and Local Expense Report Dated July 2024

Received for information.

15.4 Adopted Policies and Standing Resolutions

15.5 Local Trust Committee Webpage

15.6 Islands Trust Conservancy Report Dated July 2024

Received for information.

16. NEW BUSINESS

16.1 Dark Sky Principles Adoption Advocacy Briefing

Discussion was held and support was expressed for waiting to see how the topic proceeds at Trust Council.

16.2 Phase 4 Community Engagement Options – Policy Statement Amendment Project (PSAP) - Staff Report

Discussion was held about the best way to engage the community on Saturna Island.

SA-2024-037

It was Moved and Seconded,

that Saturna Island Local Trust select Engagement Option 3 for Phase 4 community engagement about the new draft Islands Trust Policy Statement.

CARRIED

16.3 Local Trust Committee Compliance and Enforcement Policy – Staff Report

Bylaw Enforcement Manager Dingman reviewed the report and described the goal to provide a comprehensive compliance and enforcement policy that incorporates previous standing resolutions.

Discussion ensued and the following comments were made:

- Gratitude was expressed for the presence of bylaw enforcement when issues have arisen on Saturna
- Support was expressed for engaging the community about how to update the reference to short-term vacation rentals
- Support was expressed for drafting policy language related to short-term vacation rentals that could be presented following the Community Information Meeting in January
- A request was made for feedback in January about the degree to which other Local Trust Committees have made changes to the policy

- Generally, the reason a file has not been closed is because there is has not been compliance
- Responsiveness to respondents that are subject to complaint is rapid
- Part of the policy contains a provision for regular reporting to the Local Trust Committee on the status of complaints
- The Local Trust Committee establishes discretion by policy to give direction to bylaw officers to provide a minimum of 30 days notice prior to an investigation; the notice period is shorter in some cases that are outlined in the proposed Bylaw Compliance & Enforcement Policy
- Temporary Use Permit violations are investigated in a different manner which is stated within the proposed Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement policy to maintain consistency
- The proposed policy does not override a bylaw
- Support was expressed for including stronger language to explain that although the bylaw allows for a 24-hour notification period prior to an investigation, the policy instructs that notification should be at least 30 days (ie. "...and provide minimum of 30 days notice despite Saturna Island Land Use Bylaw 119 Section 1.4.2")

Consideration was raised about changing the Temporary Use Permit policy to a 24-hour notification period, and to drafting a land use bylaw and an enabling bylaw to enshrine the 30-day notification period. Staff agreed to present at the Community Information Meeting on options for bylaw enforcement regarding short term vacation rentals.

17. UPCOMING MEETINGS

17.1 Draft 2025-2026 LTC Meeting Schedule (for Adoption)

SA-2024-038

It was Moved and Seconded,

that Saturna Island Local Trust Committee adopt the 2025-2026 regular meeting schedule for the next fiscal year as proposed by staff.

CARRIED

18. TOWN HALL

Town hall was held and the following comments were made:

- The Community Information Meeting should be scheduled for a weekend so more people can attend; however, not many people came to a special meeting scheduled on a Saturday on Pender Island
- The Community Information Meeting should be electronic so people can join via Zoom
- The Community Information Meeting could be in person one day and via a Zoom a few days later

19. CLOSED MEETING (Distributed Under Separate Cover)

19.1 Motion to Close Meeting

SA-2024-039

It was Moved and Seconded,

that the meeting be closed to the public in accordance with the Community Charter, Part 4, Division 3, s. 90(1)(f) for the purpose of considering:

(f) law enforcement, if the council considers that disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm the conduct of an investigation under or enforcement of an enactment;

AND that the recorder and staff attend the meeting.

CARRIED

19.2 Recall to Order

The meeting was recalled to order at 3:39 p.m.

19.3 Rise and Report – None

20. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent the meeting was adjourned at 3:39 p.m.

David Maude, Chair

Certified Correct:

Carly Bilney, Recorder