

Adopted



Galiano Island Local Trust Committee

Minutes of Special Meeting

Date: November 28, 2020
Location: Zoom Webinar (Zoom Webinar)

Members Present: Dan Rogers, Chair
Tahirih Rockafella, Local Trustee

Staff Present: Brad Smith, Island Planner
Carly Bilney, Recorder
Maple Hung, Planning Team Assistant (Host)

Public: There were approximately 53 members of the public.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rogers called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. He acknowledged that the meeting was being held in the traditional territories of the Coast Salish First Nations.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By general consent the agenda was approved as presented.

3. COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING RE: Proposed Rezoning for Affordable Housing in Community Forest - Galiano Island Galisle Affordable Rental Housing Society (GIGARHS)

3.1 Rezoning Process Overview and Presentation of Draft Bylaws 276 & 277 – Staff

Islands Trust staff reviewed rezoning application GL-RZ-2019.1 from the Gulf Islands Galisle Affordable Rental Housing Society (GIGARHS) including background information, a status update and next steps in rezoning.

3.2 Affordable Housing Proposal Summary and Current Status – GIGARHS

Representatives of GIGARHS provided an overview of the affordable housing proposal highlighting details of the step layout and design, operating agreement, housing agreement and amenities.

The following comments were made:

- There is a high need for affordable housing on Galiano;
- In 2018 the APC noted the need for purpose-built affordable rental housing on Galiano;
- BC Housing defines the income and rental criteria for the project;
- The housing agreement would authorize the owner to manage and define a list of qualified renters;
- Galiano residency will be a requirement of those living in the affordable housing units;

Al Kohut, senior hydrogeologist at Hy-Geo, summarized his report related to groundwater analysis in the application and noted:

- Based on water tests, the well is an exceptionally good potable well; and
- The well is more than capable of meeting the long-term demand of the proposed housing project.

Keith Erickson, Registered Professional Biologist, provided an ecological assessment of the proposed affordable housing zone and noted logistical and ecological considerations that led the applicants to choose the site, including:

- proximity to existing public roads;
- proximity to existing residential areas;
- desire to minimize forest fragmentation on the property;
- avoiding sensitive and rare ecological areas; and
- avoiding protected stand network reserved for nature.

3.3 Q&A (Questions & Answers) Session

Members of the community were invited to comment and the following questions and comments were made:

Note: “Q” is questions/comments from the members of the public. “A” means answers from the applicants, hired professionals or Islands Trust staff.

- Q. How many meters from the current gate at the end of Georgia View Rd would it be to the proposed new gate?
- A. A little more than 500 metres.
- Q. Why was the land near the end of Georgia View removed from possible locations for the affordable housing site as shown in the presentation given by Keith Erickson?
- A. The area under question contains an active eagle nest and richer habitat features including a riparian stream corridor.
- Q. How was the number of occupants (32) achieved for use in water tests?
- A. The applicants deemed 32 to be a reasonable number based on BC Housing’s parameters of number of residents per household type.

- Q. Is it possible to know if the wells at the proposed site are connected to neighbouring wells and may therefore impact the availability of water?
- A. The aquifer at the proposed site is a fractured bedrock aquifer system and the only way to understand how it connects with neighbouring wells is to increase monitoring in the area; the project well is far enough from the neighbouring community well that it is unlikely to have a major impact on the overall water supply for water system users.
- A. Why was the location for the affordable housing site selected?
- Q. Affordability; as part of the community forest, the land can be purchased by GIGARHS for \$10. It is also a site that is reasonably easy to build on.
- A. Why did the well in the neighbouring strata have such a slow recharge rate (three days) during the past two summers whereas previously it has recovered more quickly?
- Q. A low recovery rate is not unusual; groundwater wells can recharge differently in the winter as opposed to the summer; recharge rates depends on the nature and timing of the event.
- A. Why did a high rate of arsenic appear in the neighbouring well in April 2019?
- Q. A collapse of a bedrock well, or a ground tremor, could reduce the overall capacity of the well and change the water quality, sometimes liberating a small amount of arsenic that gradually moves through the system; the proposed affordable housing site had no arsenic in its well.
- Q. Why was well testing done in December and not in the driest part of the year?
- A. The lowest (driest) time of water for aquifers is late October or early November; December is the initial recharge time and the wettest groundwater time is February. The best time to test is in the late summer or early fall when wells are at their lowest.
- Q. How is GIGARHS addressing the lack of cell service and internet in the area?
- A. High speed internet is being introduced to the area by a new local company – Galiano Association for Internet Access (GAIA), though not all residents will necessarily be working from home; cell service is limited in areas all over Galiano.
- Q. What is the recommended well depth for a single family residential development and a multi-family development?
- A. Well-depth is site specific and depends on factors such as the elevation of the property; in a multi-housing development professional hydrogeologists have more tools, such as assessments prior to drilling and three dimensional modelling, to determine the impact of the development.
- Q. Will there be a wildlife assessment done on the site that specifically addresses sooty grouse populations?
- A. The environmental assessment that was undertaken includes an ecological mapping of the area and an inventory of vegetation communities and ecological value; it looks at habitat features that would support wildlife rather than observing wildlife and their patterns.

- Q. Is developing an emergency response plan part of the proposal?
- A. BC Housing mandates a strict outline of what needs to happen within the buildings for fire management, including sprinkler systems, building codes and fire drills with tenants; the cistern water supply would be an asset to the area; the CRD has a statutory right-of-way to an emergency access route through District Lot 37.
- Q. Why has water-related information gathered by the Capital Regional District (CRD) for the Sticks Allison community well not been included in the report?
- A. The application is currently under review by the provincial water licensing branch that has access to data across the province; additionally, staff will contact CRD water management to determine what kind of water information has been collected.

4. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent the meeting was adjourned at 3:48 p.m.

Dan Rogers, Chair

Certified Correct:

Carly Bilney, Recorder