



ADOPTED

Local Trust Committee
Minutes Subject to Approval By
the Local Trust Committee

Galiano Island Local Trust Committee

Minutes of Special Meeting

Date: July 4, 2022
Location: Galiano South Community Hall
141 Sturdies Bay Road, Galiano Island, BC

Members Present: Dan Rogers, Chair
Tahirih Rockafella, Trustee

Staff Present: Brad Smith, Island Planner
William Shulba, Senior Freshwater Specialist
Carly Bilney, Recorder

Members of the Public: Approximately 40 members of the public were present.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Rogers called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. He acknowledged that the meeting was being held in traditional territory of the Coast Salish First Nations.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

By general consent the agenda was approved as presented.

3. COMMUNITY INFORMATION MEETING

3.1 GL-RZ-2019.1 (Gulf Islands Galisle Affordable Rental Housing Society) (GIGARHS) - Proposed Bylaw No. 276 and No. 277

Planner Smith summarized the status of GL-RZ-2019.1 (GIGARHS) and outlined the remaining steps to be taken to complete the rezoning application. The applicants provided a project overview, and consultants spoke to the water supply, the water management plan and the ecological assessment for the project. The following comments were made:

- Rental units will be prioritized to Galiano residents, Indigenous Peoples and First Nations with claims to Galiano;
- On average, rents will be set at or below 30% of the before-tax income of median-income earners in the Southern Gulf Islands Electoral Area;
- Additional layers of affordability may be required by the final project funder (eg. BC Housing or the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC));

- The well is capable of meeting the demand of the housing development with a very large safety factor;
- The location of the project was ecologically well sited within the larger zone previously identified for affordable housing; and
- The next steps beyond rezoning will include subdivision, completing a detailed design, obtaining a building permit, and an estimated 18 months of construction.

Members of the community were invited to comment on proposed Bylaws No. 276 and No. 277 and the following questions and comments were raised: (Note: “Q” represents questions/comments from members of the public; “A” are answers from the applicants, professionals or Islands Trust staff.)

Q: Can GIGARHS guarantee that the proposed housing agreement will produce deep subsidy units in the project – deep subsidy meaning the ones classified by BC Housing, for people with a fixed income like seniors, those with disabilities and social assistance?

A: If BC Housing is the organization that funds the project, then yes; if it is a different funder, then deep subsidy would be defined by them. It is the intent of GIGARHS to provide subsidized units.

Q: How can we ensure that the proposed housing will be rented to people with low incomes in accordance with the housing agreement?

A: The housing agreement provides one layer of assurance of affordability and GIGARHS will also have an operational plan for tenant selection; BC Housing carries out income testing at the time of application and sets a maximum income that a household could be eligible to earn based on its definition of ‘low to moderate income.’

Q: Please elaborate on who will be prioritized as renters in the proposed development.

A: Galiano residents and Indigenous Peoples will be prioritized applicants in the proposed development; there will also be a housing management committee that will be tasked solely with selecting tenants and orienting them to the living arrangements.

Q: Will a road need to be built?

A: The current road will need to be extended to the housing development; when the heritage forest was created, that whole corridor was a designated provincial highway, but it has not yet been fully developed to highway standards.

Q: What is the estimated cost to develop the road and bring in Hydro and telecommunications?

A: GIGARHS business information is proprietary information that is not available for public consumption, though the numbers have been shared with potential funders like CMHC and VanCity.

Q: On what are the estimates for water usage per person based?

A: Water demand in the original report uses figures based on per capita residence; the water management plan that has since been developed is based on an assumed population.

Q: Why wasn't the Sticks Allison Capital Regional District (CRD) water system used to inform water demand for the proposed development?

A: The Sticks Allison water system includes single family homes on acreages; the water management plan for the proposed development is based on CRD values, rural residential values and empirical data from an equivalent scenario on Mayne Island.

Q: Were water problems that have been recorded in the area been considered in any of the assessments related to water? Was anticipated demand (build-out) considered?

A: When the provincial groundwater license was adjudicated all existing groundwater licenses in the area were addressed. When the Province was doing its own internal analysis, they likely went through a well-water balance and anticipated license use (as opposed to anticipated build-out, or subdivision potential); as this development received a groundwater license, it would be first-in-time compared to new domestic uses to come into the area. In accordance with the list of Trust Policy Statement Directives, the applicants have been asked to undertake measures (e.g. water management plan, flow meters, ongoing water level monitoring) to ensure that the change in intensity and density in the area will not have a significant impact on the operation of the particular water source.

Q: Where have already occurring water problems been taken into account?

A: There has been a lot of investigation including a assessment by professional hydrogeologist Al Kohut and third party review of that assessment by Waterline Resources Inc. The source well has been shown to not have adverse impacts.

Q: If existing water problems in the area increase, how will we be able to prove that the problem has increased due to a new well?

A: The problem must be addressed holistically. Existing water issues in the region do not necessarily mean that a groundwater well for this application will add to those water problems; the project well will not likely have a major effect. Existing water issues in the area could be due to the mismanagement of the water source and interference problems between existing well owners – they will likely be impacted by a change in climate rather than a new neighbour.

Q: Will there be more water monitoring or will that end when this project comes to conclusion?

A: To understand water resources across the island, more monitoring is needed; in this project, the applicants have agreed to have ongoing, long-term monitoring for the life of the project.

Q: Could this proposal provide an opportunity to address inequities to access for things like broadband, water, and fire prevention?

A: There is momentum right now for jurisdictions across the Southern Gulf Islands to learn from each other and help pave the way for future projects, though the various levels of government create challenges; the CRD is working on a broadband connectivity project.

Q: Has the organization called *Reaching Home* been on the applicant's list of contacts?

A: *Reaching Home* is a funding program that is channelled through various organizations and targets people experiencing homelessness and has more of an urban focus.

Q: If BC Housing is not part of this project, has there been thought about asking BC Housing for subsidies?

A: Any opportunity to work with BC Housing would be pursued, whether it is through a partnership or through subsidies. BC Housing is moving away from a subsidy model for affordable housing and instead prioritizing projects that can be sustainable without ongoing input.

Q: Why is there no definition of 'affordable rental housing unit' in this housing agreement?

A: GIGARHS is trying to make the housing agreement as broad and flexible as possible so it will fit into various funder's programs. Given the rent structure required in the housing agreement, there is no risk of these units being rented at exorbitant rates.

Q: What might the scenario be for paying back a mortgage?

A: The amount to be applied for could be reduced significantly if funding for the project went really well. The more cash you can put in up front to reduce the mortgage, the better for the project as it would result in lower rents in the long-term.

Q: What mechanisms are in place to ensure the project is completed?

A: Most funders (e.g. BC Housing and CMHC) will not give a first draw on funding until evidence has been provided that demonstrates the funding covers project plans; the project would not start construction until GIGARHS and the funders are sure that it can be completed.

Q: What is the status of the legal review of the proposed amending of the third party covenant governing the Heritage Forest?

A: The legal opinion of the covenant holders is that they have the right to amend the covenant to ensure compliance with rezoning. The LTC is not a party to this covenant.

4. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent the meeting was adjourned at 8:02 pm.

Dan Rogers, Chair

Certified Correct:

Carly Bilney, Recorder