



**North Pender Island Advisory Planning Commission
MINUTES**

Date: October 18, 2024
Location: Fireside Room, St. Peter's Church

Members Present: Peter Pare, Chair
Mary Beth Rondeau, Vice-Chair
Gregory Nicholls, Member
Julia Nicholls, Member
Lisa Baile, Member

Staff Present: Brad Smith, Island Planner
Carly Bilney, APC Secretary (electronic)

There were no members of the public present.

1. Call to Order

Chair Pare called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Approval of Agenda

By general consent, the agenda was approved as presented.

3. North Pender September 13, 2024 APC Minutes (for Adoption)

By general consent, the North Pender Advisory Planning Commission Minutes of September 13, 2024 were adopted.

4. Discussion of Referral NP-2024-36

4.1 Review of draft recommendations document

Chair Pare invited members to discuss the draft recommendations document that had circulated electronically. The following comments were made:

- It was recommended that density be increased on lots within a 2.5km radius of the Driftwood Centre; it was noted that this radius was arbitrarily chosen; a suggestion was made to instead put the actual roads where flexible housing zoning could be achieved, or to consider an appropriate corridor which may include the village centre (the Driftwood) and surrounding properties
- The Suitable Land Analysis is comprehensive and should be reviewed as part of Advisory Planning Committee input
- Smart planning puts residential dwellings close to the village centre
- Support and opposition were expressed for flexible housing zoning

- Magic Lake is already zoned for secondary suites and the Magic Lake Property Owners Society wants to expand that to allow for accessory dwelling suites (e.g. a unit above a garage or a cottage); zoning could be changed to allow that
- Increasing density gives property owners more income opportunity; it is important that increasing density ensures housing is affordable for people who need it
- Providing affordable housing for five years at below market rate (as outlined in the provincial Secondary Suite Incentive Program) is too short of a time. What happens after 5 years
- The province's program is very restrictive; the Capital Regional District is looking to provide funding for housing and we should work with them to make their program suit us
- All we can do is make recommendations that enable the development of affordable housing that are within the purview of the LTS: ie bylaws and the Official Community Plan
- Studies have not proven that short-term vacation rentals (STVR) are a problem for housing; we need to embrace a certain amount of tourism as it brings money in and we cannot assume that extra units will become STVR
- Increasing housing supply in specific areas is the foundation of solving any housing crisis
- Support was expressed for developing co-op housing; there are lots of different kinds of co-op housing each with different rules
- We should advocate to the Local Trust Committee to improve the likelihood of co-op housing, perhaps by advocating to senior levels of government

Planner Smith joined the meeting at 9:33 a.m. Discussion continued and the following comments were made:

- The Suitable Land Analysis is still a work in progress; it would be a useful tool to narrow down where appropriate places would be for higher density particularly with respect to water; the Advisory Planning Commission could recommend that the Local Trust Committee use the Suitable Land Analysis to determine where areas of higher density might be appropriate. Planner Smith noted he would make it clear that the Advisory Planning Commission sees value in seeing the draft Suitable Land Analysis as it contemplates recommendations
- The Advisory Planning Commission members could collate their recommendations and reach a consensus, could vote on recommendations or could include minority positions.
- The Local Trust Committee could direct staff to advocate for support from the non-profit sector, similar to what Planner Chadwick has done with Habitat for Humanity on Mayne Island. However, there is land on Mayne Island that is already zoned and earmarked for subsidized housing; on North Pender, it would be more reasonable for the Advisory Planning Committee to suggest that the Local Trust Committee analyze which lots would be appropriate for subsidized housing via organizations like Habitat for Humanity or through society-built co-op housing

4.2 Discussion of potential groups to meet with, and meeting dates

Comments were made that North Pender Island does not seem to have designated land to develop for housing, or a society that is actively looking at suitable housing for families and workers. Discussion ensued about which groups the members of the Advisory Planning Commission should meet with to assess housing opportunities on North Pender – specifically, to ask what their capacity is to take on more housing if there was a viable project and land could be identified. Members suggested meeting with the following:

- The Board of Plum Tree Court
- The Capital Regional District (Paul Brent, Justine Starke, Rob Fenton)
- Magic Lake Property Owners Society

- Housing NOW (a program of the Community Resource Centre)
- Susan Mark (St. Peter’s Church) – The Church has expressed interest in providing land for housing

Staff agreed to take responsibility in setting up the meetings which, it was noted, can be a formal part of the Advisory Planning Commission meetings or more informally (the Advisory Planning Commission may not have a quorum at informal meetings). Members agreed to set up informal meetings with Plum Tree Court and the Church, and to invite representatives of the Capital Regional District to join the next meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission.

Planner Smith agreed to contact the Plum Tree Court Board to explore a possible meeting opportunity and to contact representatives of the Capital Regional District to ask if they would present at the next meeting. Julia will contact Susan Mark from St. Peter’s Church to explore possible meeting opportunities.

4.3 Discussion of the timeline for our report

Comments were made that the Local Trust Committee meets on November 29. Planner Smith expressed gratitude for the work of the Advisory Planning Commission and noted more time may be taken if needed to complete a report.

4.4 Oct 26 Community Information Meeting presentation planning

Planner Smith reviewed the plan for the Community Information Meeting on October 26 and noted the Advisory Planning Commission will speak for about ten minutes followed by a Q&A period.

- Chair Pare agreed to create a draft power point to share with Commission members
- Planner Smith will also share his power point with the Commission prior to the meeting
- Mary Beth agreed to send the housing survey to the Magic Lake membership (survey deadline is November 11, but can be extended)

A question was raised about whether there are data that show initiatives to increase housing have worked. The following comments were made:

- The data has not been measured and, anecdotally, the uptake has so far been low
- The tools the Local Trust Committee has are through zoning; if the zoning is there it can enable people to create more housing, and if it is not it is an obstacle
- The best way to get secure long-term housing is through multi-unit developments with housing agreements in place as they have a smaller footprint, tight restrictions and build community
- Work is ongoing at the Islands Trust to address how a housing agreement can be managed with an individual property owner renting out a secondary suite

5. Next Meeting

Next meeting is Friday, November 1 at 9am in the Fireside Room at St. Peter’s Church.

6. Adjournment

By general consent the meeting was adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Peter Pare, Chair

Certified Correct:

Carly Bilney, Recorder