



Salt Spring Island Project Advisory Planning Commission Minutes of a Regular Meeting

Date of Meeting: Tuesday, July 21, 2026

Location: Islands Trust Ganges Office
4-121 McPhillips Avenue, Salt Spring Island

Members Present: Eric March, Chair
John Cade, Commissioner
Riley Donovan, Commissioner
Anne Gunn, Commissioner
Tim Hiltz, Commissioner
Maxine Leichter, Commissioner
Robert Steinbach, Commissioner

Staff Present: Peter Thicke, Island Planner
Jason Youmans, Regional Planning Manager
Carly Bilney, Recorder

Others Present: None

1. AGENDA

Chair March called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and acknowledged that the meeting was taking place on the traditional territory of the Hul'q'umi'num and SENĆOŦEN-speaking Coast Salish peoples.

1.1 Approval of Agenda

Requests were made to add the following items to Other Business:

- Salt Spring Seniors and the Official Community Plan, and
- Electronic Participation in Meetings

By general consent the agenda was adopted as amended.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

2.1 Draft Minutes of the May 26, 2026 Meeting – For Adoption

The following amendment to the minutes was proposed:

- In the last bullet under Item 3.2 (page 4 of the minutes) change “...for example, the B.C. government’s integrative housing strategy” to “...for example, the Local Community Commission’s Integrative Housing Strategy”

By general consent, the minutes of the May 26, 2026 Salt Spring Island Advisory Planning Commission meeting were adopted as amended.

CARRIED

3. BUSINESS ITEMS

3.1 Review of draft updated Project Charter

Planner Thicke reviewed the draft updated Project Charter and the following comments were made:

- The Local Trust Committee endorses the Project Charter in principle, but has asked for some minor revisions.
- These revisions do not substantially change the direction of the document but are intended to add clarity.
- As part of the Island Trust's Regional Planning Team's broader goal to update all Official Community Plans within the Trust Area, the Regional Planning Team has been assigned to support the project on Salt Spring
- Using in-house staff will provide greater flexibility in moving the project forward
- A major component of this project is working with First Nations whose interests are impacted
- Housing is tied to environment stewardship, Reconciliation and other key priorities
- While many aspects of the Official Community Plan remain effective, a more comprehensive overhaul is now planned with a continued focus on the core priorities outlined in the Project Charter

Discussion ensued and the following comments were made:

- A suggestion was made to provide a glossary before initiating public consultation to explain terms, especially the meaning of "attainable" housing as opposed to "affordable" housing
- A suggestion was made to clarify that achieving affordable housing is outside the scope of land use planning

Commissioner Leichter joined the meeting at 9:21am. Discussion continued and the following comments were made:

- The Planner noted the Official Community Plan and land use bylaw can include glossary sections, and explained there is occasional value in leaving terms vague so as to not be constrained
- A comment was made that there is no generally accepted term for attainable housing as it has different meanings to people in different places
- The Planner commented on the scope of the Advisory Planning Commission's referral and explained that the Project Charter is a document owned by the Local Trust Committee

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Advisory Planning Commission recommends that the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee include a glossary that is available to the public with technical terms defined, such as “attainable housing.”

CARRIED

Discussion continued and the following comments were made:

- A suggestion was made to remove “and growth” from the Project’s stated purpose
- A suggestion was made to clarify the current legislative requirements that are to be met by the updated Official Community Plan and land use bylaw
- A suggestion was made to include *existing Development Permit Areas* in the glossary so the public understands the meaning of *new Development Permit Area* mapping and guidelines

3.2 Review of updated Project Workplan

Planner Thicke reviewed the updated Project Workplan. He described the Project Advisory Planning Commission as a steering commission and flagged the items that will be coming forward for review. The following comments were made:

- The Planner noted a desire of the Islands Trust to see official community plans within the Trust Area have similar frameworks (e.g. tables of contents) although specific policies will differ in each community
- The Planner commented that the draft vision and guiding principles will help to inform the communication strategy
- A Commissioner asked if the Commission’s role will include specific work with First Nations and land use planning; the Planner described the Island Trust’s updated approach to engagement with First Nations and noted this will be primarily a Regional Planning Team responsibility
- The Planner commented that Commissioners can assist with explaining to community members that building healthy relationships with First Nations is a core principle of the project

3.3 Review of PAPC Terms of Reference

Planner Thicke reviewed the Terms of Reference and noted a desire to ensure everyone is on the same page regarding the Commission’s scope moving forward. Discussion ensued and the following comments were made:

- A Commissioner expressed a desire that their contribution to the decision-making process is meaningful despite the advisory role of the Commission
- A Commissioner expressed a need to ensure that diversity of opinion within the community is heard
- A Commissioner suggested that the Commission should review the draft OCP and LUB and reviews proposed policies and regulations
- A Commissioner emphasized a need for meaningful guidance within the Official Community Plan, such as the procedures for development permit areas that set specific limits

- A Commissioner commented that the Official Community Plan is a set of suggestions, not rules
- The Planner acknowledged the advisory role of the Commission and commented that only the elected officials have the legal authority to make decisions
- The Planner expressed a need to work within the process to achieve effective communication and public engagement

4. OTHER BUSINESS

4.1 Salt Spring Seniors and the Official Community Plan

A Commissioner commented on concerns raised by some senior members of the community with mobility issues, and questioned whether there was scope within the project for them to provide input. The Planner responded that the goal of the communications and engagement plan is to have opportunities for everyone to provide input. Discussion ensued and the following comments were made:

- A Commissioner commented on a high percentage of seniors who are living in houses that are too large for them, but have little opportunity to move; he emphasized the importance of considering affordable senior housing in the overall discussion
- A Commissioner commented on the need to address road infrastructure such as tripping hazards in Ganges Village
- The Planner noted that advocacy can be included within the Official Community Plan for partnering with the Capital Regional District to create an effective transportation/mobility plan

4.2 Electronic Participation in Meetings

A Commissioner explained that electronic participation is restricted for local advisory planning commission members. Brief discussion ensued.

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Advisory Planning Commission recommends that the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee advocate to the Province that electronic participation by committee members be permitted in meetings.

CARRIED

5. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent the meeting adjourned at 10:41 a.m.

Eric March, Chair

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Carly Bilney, Recorder