



# ADOPTED

## Minutes of the Galiano Island Advisory Planning Commission

**Date:** May 19, 2026  
**Location:** Galiano Island Community Library

**Members Present:** Gilian Dusting, Chair  
Art Moses, Vice-Chair  
Danica Berginc, Member  
Karen Harris, Member  
Jann Helssen, Member  
Gerald Longson, Member  
Jennifer Margison, Member

**Staff Present:** Carly Bilney, APC Secretary (electronic)

**Members of the Public:** There was one member of the public present: Duncan Reid

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dusting called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. She 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. GALIANO MAY 5, 2026 APC MINUTES (FOR ADOPTION)

**By general consent** the Galiano Advisory Planning Commission meeting minutes of May 5, 2026 were adopted as presented.

Duncan Reid introduced himself as a representative of the Wise Island Community Association. Chair Dusting noted that a folder has been created on the Project Page online for the referral.

The Chair read the following clarification that Planner Stockdill emailed in response to a question from Commissioners about why the word “may” is used on Page 3 of the minutes (Item 6):

*The minutes are correct below; the property owner/applicant may still require a Development Permit. Any structure or land alteration in the Development Permit Area (DPA) triggers the requirement for review. When reviewing a DPA in relation to a structure/land alteration, a planner reviews the DPA exemptions to determine if one of the exemptions may apply. If an exemption applies to that scenario, then a Development Permit is not*

*required. If the scenario does not meet any of the DPA exemptions, then the applicant must apply for a Development Permit.*

Brief discussion was held about when the Development Permit Area process might be triggered.

#### **4. DISCUSSION OF REFERRAL – ASSOCIATED ISLANDS REGULATIONS REVIEW PROJECT**

Discussion ensued about the referral and the following comments were made:

- Comments were made that the goal of residents on Wise Island is to make existing structures lawful
- A suggestion was made to add “existing wooden platforms” to the exemption list in the proposed bylaw
- A comment was made about the importance of definitions for terms such as: patio, landing, platform, pier, deck

Duncan Reid distinguished between three periods of time: first, before the 1999 Galiano bylaw was passed, second after the 1999 bylaw was in place and before there was enforcement on Wise Island, and third, in the future which is the focus of the proposed bylaw. He explained that residents of Wise Island are seeking to address the nonconforming structures that were built during the second period of time. Discussion ensued and the following comments were made:

- A comment was made that many structures in the second category were built decades ago and provide access to properties for emergency measures (e.g. fire, egress, etc.)
- It is unclear how many properties have structures that were built during the second period
- A comment was made that the proposed bylaw, as it is currently written, would leave a number of properties needing variance approvals
- Support was expressed for framing the bylaw so that fewer properties in the second category will need to seek variance approval while establishing a stricter standard for future development
- A suggestion was made to allow the structures that have been in place for decades to remain
- A question was raised about how to grandfather existing structures and ensure the bylaw only applies to future structures
- A comment was made about how every island is distinct in topography and rules
- A suggestion was made to add “Existing wooden platforms with an area of up to 30 m<sup>2</sup> to offload materials” as Section 2.1.4A.5 to the proposed bylaw (30 squared meters was chosen to mirror regulations used by Mayne Island)
- A comment was made that while Wise Island has two community docks, they could not necessarily be used to evacuate someone in an emergency

Discussion continued about whether the proposed provisions should be extended to other associated islands and Phillimore Point. The following comments were made:

- A question was raised about why solar array panels should be allowed within the sea setback on an island that is connected BC Hydro
- It was suggested that Wise Island is unique in having small lots, boat-access only and no connection to BC Hydro
- It was suggested that it was a mistake historically to create such high density on Wise Island
- A comment was made that staff implied a need to include other locations in the bylaw while the project is open and the topic is being addressed (i.e. a need to “get it right the first time”)
- Commissioners were encouraged to consider the potential cumulative impact of extending the bylaw to all proposed areas
- A comment was made that docks and stairs are analogous to driveways and are necessary for boat-access only locations
- A comment was made that it is difficult to apply the criteria to other islands

A Commissioner described comments received from members of the public prior to the meeting and noted some was expressed for the proposed use of solar panels in the bylaw, and opposition was expressed for the proposal due to impacts on the shoreline. Discussion ensued and the following comments were made:

- A comment was made that the proposed bylaw is not a request from Wise Islanders to develop beyond what is already in place
- A comment was made that the 1999 Galiano bylaw was designed for Galiano Island properties and has left Wise Islanders in a situation that does not make sense
- A comment was made that someone has tried to weaponize a bylaw that was designed for a different reason and bylaw enforcement has had to take action
- A Commissioner noted correspondence was submitted that suggests Phillimore Point should not be included in the proposed zoning because it might be connected by a formal road in the future
- It was noted that the middens on Wise Island are within park land
- A comment was made that a property owner on Wise Island received a variance for a structure on the basis that it would cause greater erosion to the shoreline to remove it than to leave it in place
- A Commissioner noted the prohibition restricting the submission of private moorage applications in the Southern Gulf Islands expired

Discussion continued about the specifics of solar panels, and the following comments were made:

- Comments were made about how a property’s orientation and contour, as well as house design, impact how solar panels may be used, and this varies widely across properties on Wise Island
- A suggestion was made to increase the size allowance of solar panels in the proposal to 10 squared meters
- It was suggested that the impact of generators (using fossil fuels) be considered when assessing the impact of siting solar panels within the setback of the sea

A suggestion was made to limit structures to within a third of the total area of a property’s marine lot line, and leave two thirds of the waterfront undeveloped. Questions were raised about the applicability of such a limitation on Wise Island and varying opinions were expressed.

Chair Dusting recapped the discussion and noted the following questions would be put to the Planner for clarification:

1. There are a number of structures on Wise Island built sometime after 1999 and before 2011 that are non-compliant. To remove those or put them through the variance process would have consequences (e.g. costly, labour-intensive, possible environmental issues). Is it possible to make these legally non-compliant or grandfather them, and if so, what would be involved?
2. Is it possible for the proposed draft bylaw to apply only to Wise Island and not, at this time, to the other associated islands and boat access-only properties? What would be the downside of restricting these changes to Wise only? Could application of the proposed new zoning and bylaw be tested on Wise?
3. Because there may at some point be road access to Phillimore Point, would it no longer be considered a boat-access only zone?
4. How much input from First Nations has been received on the proposal?
5. We are interested in a suggestion inspired by the Heritage Forest as follows: *"create a Development Permit area designation (instead of an all-out removal of the existing set-backs) that applies to structures and that the combined areas that intrude into the sea set back never to be more than 1/3 of the total area of the lot that fronts the sea.* Do you think this suggestion would balance the access needs of the owners with the preserve and protect mandate for the shoreline? What might the implications be?

Discussion continued and the following comments were made:

- A suggestion was made to amend Section 2.14A to permit one solar panel array, one set of stairs, one walkway, and one anchor pad, rather than allowing multiple accesses
- Caution was expressed in adding limitations (comments were made about a property on Wise Island that has had two sets of stairs for decades – one on each side of the shoreline – and one of which is unusable at low tide)
- Comments were made about how applying the draft bylaw to the various islands is challenging
- Comments were made that the subject is particularly acute on Wise Island because of how the island was developed alongside Galiano bylaws, and how a series of enforcement issues exacerbated the situation
- Comments were made that it would be most efficient to address issues only on Wise Island

## 5. NEXT MEETING

May 26, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at the Galiano library

## 6. ADJOURNMENT

**By general consent** the meeting was adjourned at 12:12 p.m.

Gilian Disting, Chair

Certified Correct:

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Carly Bilney, Recorder