



Ganges Village Area Planning Task Force Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, October 21, 2021

Location: Baptist Church, Lower Hall
520 Lower Ganges Road

Members Present: Robin Jenkinson, Chair
David Dunnison
John Gauld
Jenny McClean
Sebastian Moffatt

Regrets: Bob MacKie
Mike Best, Vice-Chair

Absent: Jesse Brown

Staff Present: Daniela Murphy, Recorder
Geordie Gordon, Planner 2

Others Present: Peter Grove, Local Trustee
Gayle Baker, Chair, Capital Regional District Salt Spring Island
Transportation Commission

These minutes follow the order of the agenda although the sequence may have varied.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Jenkinson called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. and acknowledged the meeting is being held in Coast Salish First Nations treaty and traditional territory.

1.1 Member Roll Call

The members present were acknowledged.

1.2 Approval of the Agenda

The following amendments to the agenda was presented for consideration:

Trustee Grove and Planner Gordon arrived at 10:04 a.m.

3.5 Ganges Updates

And under “Other Business” – top bullet “Process moving forward”.

By general consent, the agenda was adopted, as amended.

Member Moffatt arrived at 10:06 a.m.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

2.1 Approval of Draft Minutes for October 6, 2021

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the minutes of the October 6, 2021 Ganges Village Area Task Force meeting be adopted.

CARRIED

3. BUSINESS ITEMS

3.1 Area Plan Elements Mapping Exercise

Planner Gordon presented the maps that showed the requested and suggested layers. A request will be made to the Mapping section in Victoria who will be producing full scale large maps, once those maps have been determined by the Task Force. The maps Planner Gordon presented depicted the following layers within Ganges: Zoning, Development Permit Areas, Contours, Land Use Designation and North Salt Spring Waterworks District connections.

Chair Jenkinson suggested the following criteria and comments for the maps:

1. History of place
2. Geographic location and its insights (wind, aspect, topography, large water bodies)
3. Built Environment (figure-ground) - perhaps a black and white contrasting map could be made.
4. Open spaces (parks) and vegetation
5. Waterways and Ecosystems
6. Character/Style/Village fabric (special features, building cluster/spread, general architecture) - e.g. the mermaid statue in Rotary Park, the market space, the gazebo in Centennial Park.
7. Connectivity to other places (nodes, public transit, in & out, ease) - including buses, water taxis, airplanes.

8. Mobility within the place (streets, pathways, accessibility, activity) - reviewing how accessible these are and how they are used.

9. Existing land uses and service centres - circling areas that offer certain services, such as education, housing, and medical.

10. Contours and level areas - highlight which areas are sloped vs. flat.

11. Utilities above and below ground, plus aquifers and well production - including sewage and underground hydro lines. A map of wells is a way to illustrate their productivity.

12. Climate change risk areas - identify areas of flooding risk and sea level rise.

Chair Jenkinson suggested starting with a site analysis and using checklists such as the one from "Healthy Communities". Elements would be reviewed and scored and results would show what is and is not working for the community. Next, individual projects would be proposed, such as the ones that were proposed in 2007. The Task Force would review the constraints in the community as well as identify strengths. This will lead to a document with excellent mapping, a recognized checklist and thorough reflection.

There was support expressed for the process and group of references. There was a suggestion to have a space with a reference wall, that can help orient people quickly, and to add things in a visual way. The drawing and mounting of these ideas builds capacity and sense of self and space for everybody. This is a project, and it needs an umbrella that legitimizes the Task Force to undertake a collaborative project. There was a concern that the Technical Working Group (TWG) members have not been introduced to the Task Force. There was a further suggestion about the use of a Middle School classroom.

There was a comment that the Middle School is unavailable at this time.

There was a support to find a space that would offer continuity with drawings that could be left in the space on an ongoing basis.

There was a comment that 11x17 maps are insufficient going forward as it is hard to sketch and draw on them. There was a suggestion to produce large scale maps as a working document as soon as possible.

There was a question whether one of the maps showed buildings. Planner Gordon replied yes, and that this layer is publicly available.

There was a questions about History of place, such as portage routes and First Nations traditional areas.

There was a question about BC Hydro data. Planner Gordon said we do not have that information.

There was a question about sensitive data, and how that can be shared. Planner Gordon said that First Nations data is not ours to share.

There was a question about mapping wells. Planner Gordon said that it is provincial data and is only as good as the data submitted.

A member suggested obtaining information from numbered aquifers.

There was a question about the creation of the maps as presented by Chair Jenkinson. Planner Gordon advised that some maps could be produced, however, others may not be something that Islands Trust can generate.

A member suggested the RCMP would have input on the trouble spots in Ganges.

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Ganges Village Area Plan Task Force request staff to provide large scale maps for the list of 12 maps, and provide 11x17 until the large maps are available.

CARRIED

Member Moffatt left the meeting at 10:41 a.m.

There was comment that staff help is needed to help generate the Local Area Plan.

There was a comment that as the elements are determined, that collaboration is needed and staff is to bring their expertise to the table.

Member Moffatt returned at 10:43 a.m.

There was a comment that staff support and presence is important.

There was a comment that for an action to come of this project, it needs to be legally sound and is very significant. Staff support is important to integrate this in the Official Community Plan and make policy.

There was a comment that this exercise is a fundamental first step. The weekend retreat suggestion with staff support is needed to delve into this project. There was a comment that the Local Trust Committee has not received this resolution despite it having been made in June.

The following motion was made but not seconded:

That the Ganges Village Area Plan Task Force be assisted by planners in a process directly.

There was a comment about the different decision making styles in the group. The retreat would have the layers and maps and information gathered and prepared. Planners would be in attendance and ready to assist and the Task Force would be able to make their best effort.

There was a question about the Housing Action Program Task Force their proposed solutions.

There was a comment that the Local Area Plan is not suggesting implementation – it is just a plan. The completion of the plan will be the document and the trustees can then allocate time and money to those individual plans.
There was a suggestion to ask staff to bring draft plans.

There was a comment about the suggested retreat. The retreat would help the Task Force see the outline of the plan and understand the real job. Most of the members are participating because of the love and passion of the certain elements and would help get those ideas on the table.

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Ganges Village Area Plan Task Force request staff be encouraged to take a more active role and assist the Task Force in moving forward.

CARRIED

There was a comment about the retreat and whether to repeat the resolution.

There was a comment about information gathering, drafting a plan and gathering more information. There was a suggestion that the retreat can also be a 2-day meeting.

There was support for the above comment. There was a suggestion to split the Task Force into 2 groups for the retreat and conduct exercises. There was a comment on honorariums for guests.

There was discussion on who is artistic of the group.

There was a suggestion that artistic Task Force members need to wear their Task Force member “hat”, not the artist “hat” during the process in order to participate fully in the process.

There was a suggestion to find a volunteer artist.

There was a comment that Gary Holman, Capital Regional District Salt Spring Island Electoral Area Director suggested that there are grants available for this type artistic work.

There was a reiteration of this not being a drawing exercise, but that it would be great to have workshop to brainstorm and draw bubbles of the land use.

There was a comment that most Local Area Plans have visions in their introduction.

There was a comment on the facilitation role, making note of the synthesis that happens, such as someone listening to the Task Force and putting it on the wall.

Member Moffatt left at 11:06 a.m.

3.2 Review Area Plan Elements List

Chair Jenkinson read a list of Proposed Area Plan Elements previously determined at a prior meeting. The list is including, but not limited to the following:

Land Use	Housing	Transportation	Environment
Ecosystems	Infrastructure Servicing	First Nations	Harbour
Climate Change Resiliency	Health, Safety, Fire, Community Service, Education	Economics/Sustainability – Tourism	Heritage over time, History & Culture
Community Events	Business Development	Water & Watersheds	Urban Design, Art, Culture
Recreation & Parks	Island(s)/Regional/Geographic Context	Futurism/Vision	

There was a comment that this is not a typical area plan. There was a suggestion to provide legislative context in the introduction.

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Ganges Village Area Plan Task Force in responding to staff’s Proposed Area Plan Elements, request staff incorporate the Task Force’s list in the draft outline.

CARRIED

There was a comment that despite the various levels of government, that it is possible to get things done. There was a comment about the Sunshine Coast, and how decisions also include First Nations.

3.3 Conversation on First Nations (November 18, 2021)

Planner Gordon advised that staff is trying to organize a guest to come to the November 18, 2021 meeting to discuss this topic.

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Ganges Village Area Plan Task Force appoint Member McClean to gather information on First Nations and report back to the Task Force.

CARRIED

3.4 Resolution to LTC on retreat request

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Ganges Village Area Plan Task Force request the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee allocate funding and staff time to a minimum 2 day workshop for the Task Force to develop a working draft of the Local Area Plan and include facilitation.

CARRIED

There was a question about inviting stakeholders to this workshop.

There was a comment to Planner Gordon about similar workshops. Planner Gordon did not know how similar workshops are resourced.

There was a suggestion to hear back from the consultant to get public feedback.

3.5 Ganges Update

There was a comment about densities, the Official Community Plan and developments. Any new developments ought to bring about public space. There was a comment about the fire hall referendum and the use of old fire hall.

There was comment about the Ganges Sewer referendum and the need to filter the waste properly. It was noted that there are significant water problems in Ganges due to the mishandling of what was once a wetland. An offer of treated effluent was proposed to SD64, which was turned down due to concern that the water would still contain heavy metals. There was a comment that density in Ganges is based on water sources. There was a suggestion to officially appoint Task Force members to stakeholder groups to reach out to those groups and report back.

Concern was expressed that liaising with stakeholders needs to be conducted through staff, and that a proposal such as this could confuse the situation.

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Ganges Village Area Plan Task Force appoint Member McClean to liaise with the Capital Regional District Transportation Commission.

CARRIED

Member Gauld OPPOSED

4. OTHER BUSINESS

4.1 General Discussion

- Process moving forward;
- Review of staff work;
- Topics over which Islands Trust has jurisdiction;
- Learning more about First Nations;
- Learning more from Jennifer Fix about the outreach and public engagement, with an updated stakeholder list;

- Potential changes to the project charter; and,
- Request staff to make a spreadsheet of Task Force recommendations and their end result.

Chair Jenkinson spoke to the above discussion items, noted who is not at the table, asked for staff support and maps, and spoke to a fresh start January 1, 2022. She suggested 2-3 more members be added to the group.

There was a comment that zoom was a challenge for the Task Force in the beginning.

There was a comment about Ganges issues.

There was a comment that subcommittees can be formed, and that members can meet outside of a meeting and discuss issues as long as it is not a decision making meeting.

There was a comment about the current number of members being sufficient.

Trustee Peter Grove was invited to comment. He suggested that if there are additional people who will be helpful and collaborative, to put those names forward to the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee.

There was a comment about different elements that the Task Force needs to be privy to, such as the state of the real estate market.

There was a comment on the complexities of land use.

Trustee Grove left the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

It was noted that a further review of list showed that some items had already been covered.

There was a comment that an updated list of stakeholders from the consultant would be welcome.

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Ganges Village Area Plan Task Force request a current stakeholder list be provided to the Task Force.

CARRIED

There was comment about understanding the role of the consultant and if the public engagement is out of the hands of the Task Force. There was a comment that Task Force members want to hear about people's comments about Ganges. It was noted that there is a certain amount of poverty in Ganges.

There was a question to Planner Gordon regarding the consultant's engagement plan and whether the Task Force will be provided a draft copy. Planner Gordon replied that the draft copy could be circulated even between Task Force meetings for consideration

Regarding the spreadsheet of Task Force resolutions, staff advised that the spreadsheet has been started.

Chair Jenkinson invited final comments.

A member suggested that the ultimate goal is improved quality of life in Ganges. Neighbourhoods are different on Salt Spring Island, but Ganges is a neighbourhood but also a hub. Ganges is meant to deal with so many people, travellers, visitors, shoppers, and schools. It was noted that the experience of living in Ganges can be fraught, and there was a question about how to change that. The population centre is based on beautiful natural features, and density and use has increased as a result. Over time, degraded. The member would like to see Ganges have a neighbourhood identity as a primary focus. There was a comment that Ganges wasn't a popular place to live, but has now shifted to a trendy area and real estate prices have increased. Hope was expressed to see families in Ganges, and additional low income housing.

There was a comment that one of the goals is to have a family and people oriented community that is friendly and welcoming. There was a reference to vision statement and it was noted that there is no mention about tourism or Ganges as a tourist destination. There was a comment that so many people rely on the market for income. There was a suggestion for a vision statement in a balanced way, including cultural tourism, art and culture and environment based on this plan. There was a question whether Ganges is a regional tourism destination?

There was a comment that Ganges is a global destination.

Gayle Baker was invited to speak. She commented that more people are needed at the table, and that staff need to be more involved in the process. She suggested that the TWG members need to be at the meeting.

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Ganges Village Area Plan Task Force receive a list of the Technical Working Group members and their affiliations.

CARRIED

There was a question about staff's role. Planner Gordon advised that staff is here to support the Task Force, but will not interject in discussion.

There was a comment that the next meeting is scheduled without staff.

There was a question about the TWG members, their role and their possible attendance at a Task Force meeting. Planner Gordon replied that the TWG is made of local and provincial agency representatives. The TWG address technical questions that arise from the Task Force's discussion on the Local Area Plan. He advised that it would be a challenge for these representatives to attend a Task Force meeting, however, any questions regarding roads, sewer, water etc. can be brought forward to the TWG.

There was a question about providing maps to the TWG. Planner Gordon suggested pedestrian paths.

There was a suggestion that Task Force members attend the TWG meeting.

A member commented that they did not know that the TWG existed for the first months of the Task Force project.

There was a comment that a member did have some technical questions for the TWG.

There was a request for more maps for the next meeting. Planner Gordon said he could certainly provide 11x17 maps. He advised that some maps could be easily produced, while others will have a gap in data.

There was a request to separate layers, i.e. topography without the roads. There was a suggestion to review maps at the next meeting.

There was a suggestion to invite Inga Michaelson as a delegation to next meeting. She is consulting with Ganges businesses.

There was a suggestion to determine the workshop specifics for the next meeting.

Member Gauld provided his regrets for next meeting.

There was a comment that the maps are great. Planner Gordon confirmed he can provide more copies as requested.

Chair Jenkinson invited the group to share something positive that happened while in Ganges.

- A member planted trees with grades 3-4 children. A Japanese maple and a white oak in front of the high school. Also, an acorn came from Louis 14th's castle.
- A member's child takes bus to school and met the parent later on in Ganges. The child learned about the names of the different parks in town.
- A member commented that the Fall vistas are spectacular in Ganges.
- A member recently went sailing in the harbour and a country dance club has resumed.
- A member played Disc golf in Mouat's park.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

Robin Jenkinson, Chair

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Daniela Murphy, Recorder