



Salt Spring Island Housing Action Program Task Force Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, August 19, 2021

Location: Baptist Church, Lower Level Meeting Room
520 Lower Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island

Members Present: Rhonan Heitzmann, Chair
Kerrie Proulx, Vice Chair
Nejmah Guermoudi
Meror Krayenhoff
Yvonne Saunders
Stanley Shapiro
Jessica Terezakis
Daniel Wood

Regrets: Maïkan Bordeleau

Absent: James Back
Bryce Chapman

Staff Present: Louisa Garbo, Island Planner (via web conferencing)
Geordie Gordon, Planner 2
Rob Pingle, Planning Team Assistant (via web conferencing)
Sarah Shugar, Recorder

Others Present: One member of the public

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

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. Chair Heitzmann welcomed staff and Task Force members and acknowledged the meeting is being held in Coast Salish First Nations treaty and traditional territory. Chair Heitzmann proceeded with a roll call.

1. CALL TO ORDER

1.1 Approval of Agenda

By general consent, the agenda was adopted.

ADOPTED

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1.2 Approval of Draft Minutes for July 15, 2021

By general consent, the minutes of the July 15, 2021 Housing Action Programs Task Force meeting were adopted.

1.3 Approval of Draft Special Minutes for August 6, 2021

By general consent, the minutes of the August 6, 2021 Housing Action Programs Task Force meeting were adopted.

2. NEW MEETING SCHEDULE, LOCATION

Planner Garbo reported staff conducted a survey and the majority of task force members expressed support for two meetings per month. Staff and a minute taker would attend one meeting each month and a minute taker would attend a second meeting each month.

There was discussion regarding the additional time commitment to attend two meetings per month and there was general support to hold two meetings per month on an as needed basis.

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Housing Action Program Task Force request staff to schedule meetings as follows: The next regular meeting will be held on September 16, 2021. The following regular meetings will be held on the first Thursday of each month at 10:00 a.m. (beginning in October 2021.) A second monthly meeting will be scheduled on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:00 p.m. (beginning October 20, 2021).

CARRIED

Chair Heitzmann reported Maxine Leichter requested to make a short presentation to the task force and welcomed Maxine Leichter to make her presentation. Maxine Leichter expressed support to consider what has worked and what has not worked concerning housing solutions prior to making recommendations including the survey. Ms. Leichter suggested inviting CRD Director Holman, Kisa Petersen (Croftonbrook) and Fernando and Tami Dos Santos (Dragonfly Commons) to meet with the task force. A task force member asked Ms. Leichter to comment on what has worked and what has not worked regarding housing solutions in the past. Ms. Leichter advised the affordable housing projects that are underway have been successful and the suites and cottages project did not result in any substantial increase to housing stock.

It was noted the Housing Action Program Task Force would like to invite affordable housing proponents, specifically the Croftonbrook project and the Dragonfly Commons project, to a future meeting.

3. STRATEGIC PRIORITY MATRIX

The draft Housing Action Program: Strategic Priorities Matrix was presented. Chair Heitzmann suggested that the matrix could be a living document and asked if two members could volunteer to update and maintain the document.

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Housing Action Program Task Force accept the volunteer role of Member Guermoudi and Member Terezakis to be the keepers of the Strategic Priorities Matrix document, to integrate ideas and keep the document up to date.

CARRIED

4. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Chair Heitzmann spoke to the community need for immediate actions to help with the housing crisis.

Chair Heitzmann read the immediate actions as noted in the Strategic Priorities Matrix document.

In discussion the following comments and questions were noted:

- There are many property owners housing people on their properties and risking bylaw enforcement action.
- There was a question regarding the definition of short-term use. Planner Gordon reported the definition of short-term is less than 30-days.
- There was a question regarding why the Islands Trust cannot implement incentive programs such as an incentive for property owners to rent out a basement suite on a long-term basis. Chair Heitzmann reported it is not within the jurisdiction of the Islands Trust to provide incentives although the Islands Trust can advocate for incentive programs.
- There was a comment that advocating for Salt Spring Island to be included in the BC Speculation and Vacancy tax could provide an incentive for property owners to rent out caretaker cottages etc.
- There was a suggestion to have an article in the Driftwood to provide information to the community.
- There was a question regarding whether the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee could pass a standing resolution regarding bylaw enforcement of seasonal cottages being used for long-term use. Planner Gordon reported there is a standing resolution to defer enforcement on seasonal cottages being used as long-term accommodation.
- Planner Gordon presented the following standing resolution adopted at the June 29, 2021 Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee meeting:
 - That the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee adopt the following enforcement policy: Enforcement activities will be deferred for all unlawful dwellings being used for residential purposes except in the following circumstances: a. there are concerns regarding health and safety; b. there are concerns that sewage is not being disposed of in an approved septic or sewage disposal system; c. there are concerns that septic or sewage disposal systems are being used in excess of capacity or ability as a result of unlawful dwellings; d. there are concerns of possible contamination of wells or other drinking water sources; e. unlawful dwellings are in environmentally sensitive areas; f. there are non-permitted campgrounds; and that the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee may change this policy at any time and may give direction to resume enforcement activities at any time.
- There was discussion regarding non-permitted campgrounds and it was noted it may be useful to have more clarification regarding non-permitted campgrounds.

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Housing Action Program Task Force recommend the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee defer enforcement on long term use of commercial and seasonal accommodation.

CARRIED

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Housing Action Program Task Force recommend the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee update the existing standing resolution regarding unlawful dwellings to include *until sustainable housing solutions are implemented*.

CARRIED

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Housing Action Program Task Force recommend the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee update the existing standing resolution regarding unlawful dwellings (items a, b, c and d) to be more specific as follows:

- a. does not meet health and safety regulations;
- b. sewage is not being disposed of in an approved septic or sewage disposal system;
- c. septic or sewage disposals are being used in excess of capacity or ability as a result of unlawful dwellings
- d. there is contamination of wells or other drinking water sources;

CARRIED

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Housing Action Program Task Force recommend the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee to direct staff to develop procedures to expedite affordable housing, supportive housing and social housing projects in support of the Salt Spring Island Official Community Plan policy that prioritizes affordable housing rezoning applications.

CARRIED

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

That the Housing Action Program Task Force recommend the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee update Secondary Suites Bylaw No 461 as follows:

- permit secondary suites in all zoning districts or districts chosen by the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee;
- allow secondary suites in accessory buildings;
- protect water for secondary suites and mandate that an alternative supply must be used where water concerns exist;
- update water requirements to align with Island Health regulations for multi family dwellings; and
- require a Housing Agreement to specify that the secondary suite is to be used for long-term use.

CARRIED

It was noted that short-term vacation rentals would be considered at a future meeting.

5. SURVEY & WEBPAGE

Planner Garbo presented a draft Housing Action Program Survey. The survey will be done in two phases. The first phase will be a postcard style that will introduce the survey with a few select questions and links to further information regarding the project. Staff will send the survey to task force members to complete.

There was a question regarding how to reach a broad section of the community and there was a suggestion to provide printed copies to Salt Spring Community Services and the Wagon Wheel Society to distribute to clients. Planner Garbo reported the survey would be available on the Housing Action Program project web page, emailed to Islands Trust newsletter subscribers and at events such as the Fall Fair and Saturday Market.

There was a suggestion to add background information to some of the survey questions to provide context.

Planner Garbo reported the project webpage has been updated.

A document entitled “Housing Action Program Public Engagement Plan” was circulated at the meeting.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Rhonan Heitzmann, Chair

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Sarah Shugar, Recorder