



Salt Spring Island Housing Action Program Task Force Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, October 20, 2021

Location: Baptist Church, Lower Hall
520 Lower Ganges Road, Salt Spring Island

Members Present: Rhonan Heitzmann, Chair
Bryce Chapman
Yvonne Saunders
Stanley Shapiro
Daniel Wood
Jessica Terezakis
Nejmah Guermoudi

Regrets: Kerrie Proulx, Vice Chair
Maïkan Bordeleau

Resignation: Meror Krayenhoff

Staff Present: Rob Pingle, Planning Team Assistant and Recorder

Others Present: Laura Patrick, Local Trustee

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

The meeting was called to order at 5:06 p.m. Chair Heitzmann welcomed the 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. It was noted Meror Krayenhoff has resigned from the Task Force.

1. CALL TO ORDER

1.1 Approval of Agenda

The following item was presented for inclusion in the agenda:
Meeting Place

By general consent, the agenda was adopted as amended.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

2.1 Approval of Draft Minutes for October 7, 2021

ADOPTED

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It was suggested the 4.2 housing density discussion should include the following point: “There was discussion about the possibility of a first come first served quota access to increased densities.”

By general consent, the minutes of the October 7, 2021 Housing Action Program Task Force meeting were adopted.

3. BUSINESS ITEMS - None

4. OTHER BUSINESS

4.1 General Discussion

1. Meeting Place

Staff spoke to the need to ensure meeting places are accessible and fairly priced to meet budget constraints. Staff said further information could be provided but a clearer description of neutral would be required.

The Chair will share that information with all members for a decision at a later meeting.

Member Guer mou di arrived at the meeting at 5:17 p.m.

2. Task for delegation to LTC in support of Aug 19th resolutions

The Chair spoke to the need to provide additional feedback to the LTC regarding the resolutions the Task Force made at or before the next LTC meeting on Nov 9th.

3. “Densities” in light of M. Leichter’s presentation to LTC Oct 5th

The Chair spoke to the need to further discuss the rationale behind increasing densities not having a negative impact on the environment. It was suggested that using online forums to have the discussion could be helpful.

The parts of the OCP that were shared in the agenda packaged were referenced to support the increase of density for affordable housing.

It was discussed if densities even matter in the overall debate and that a change of language should be to buildings.

It was suggested that capping density would impact costs due to supply and demand become static. The information decided in 2008 are not the end of the conversation as new information is revealed with the passage of time.

It was discussed that the conservation myths on housing are fears that need to be addressed and balanced.

There was a question about if a study happened in 2008 to establish the carrying capacity of the island. It was suggested that the progress towards the currently established number is so slow that it's not necessary to research it but to find a way to get there faster.

It was suggested that the current regulations don't allow for current buildings to be lived in and they are becoming derelict due to lack of use.

It was suggested that the changing of work and advancement of technology are going to have an impact on the population especially if there isn't an allowance for growth to meet a minimum threshold of a health community.

The Housing Needs Assessment of 2016 was referenced for ways to create a target for the population on the island. It was suggested that densities could be further defined as primary, secondary and micro.

It was suggested that the eco-village model needs to be further investigated to ensure that vehicles don't increase and that community interaction increases.

There was discussion that moving away from the language of single-family-dwelling might be helpful to create more flexibility in housing options.

It was discussed that an increase to the ability to have secondary suites or full time rental cottages with proof of water and septic capacity was a first step to meeting the needs. That may allow the creation of hamlets around the island as high production wells are further identified. The current need is to make housing more accessible to the people already living here.

With proof of water and increase to density on current lots there would be less impact on the roads and trees and an increase to the tax roll to pay for the current infrastructure.

The discussion of water need brought up the current research released by SSIWPA. There was discussion about the NSSWW moratorium on increased dwellings. It was suggested that the densities could be used in Channel Ridge if water from another source could be injected into the water system. The current issues of the NSSWW was discussed.

There was discussion about the need for a housing authority to assist with the sourcing of grants to create more housing.

The ways to create new dwellings in current buildings was discussed. It was suggested that changes to allow four story dwellings would be helpful. Multi-family dwellings were discussed as something that the current people looking for housing would embrace.

It was suggested that there can be an appropriate level of building that won't impact the trees or water issues being discussed by others. It was suggested that accepting the theoretical build out is a good step to address the issues others are concerned about. The ability to meet demands in the future could be discussed when the build out is reached.

The housing survey was discussed as needing a question asking people if they would add suites or a cottage to their property to address the current housing issues.

It was discussed how a housing authority could do the promotion of the housing options available on the island and could include creating a trust fund investment group. It was suggested that Transition Salt Spring could expand to address some of these needs.

It was suggested that RPM Cermak be invited to a future meeting to share thoughts on the resolutions that the Task Force have passed. It was suggested that ideas on more collaboration with the community need to be explored so that this isn't a divisive idea.

Trustee Patrick spoke of a recent Union of BC Municipalities presentation that discussed housing that is being lost on top of housing that isn't being built. She spoke about the need to encourage current islanders to support current islanders that have inadequate housing.

Conversation returned to the issue that working within the theoretical build out and allowing more densities on established properties may result in undeveloped properties from being developed. This may result in those land owners being against the proposed changes.

There was discussion about the need to address the short term housing issues for places such as the hospital while also working towards the need to creating future sustainable housing issues.

There was a question about the vacancy tax on the island and Trustee Patrick spoke to the discussion herself, Capital Regional District Salt Spring Island Electoral Area Director Holman and MLA Olsen had with Minister Robinson about it. The ability to avoid the vacancy tax for property owners that have a caretaker suite was discussed.

4. Public Engagement Plan

There will be further discussion at the next meeting with Mairi Wellman being invited to speak about the current plan. It was felt that the plan needs to be slowed down and the survey needs to be discussed fully to allow for a real discussion. There was discussion about how to interact with the population that has insecure housing or are homeless.

5. Short-Term Vacation Rentals (STVRs).

The item was deferred to the next meeting due to a lack of time.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.

Rhonan Heitzmann, Chair

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Rob Pingle, Recorder