

## **Sustainable Gabriola Meeting Notes – June 28, 2020**

**Facilitator:** Nancy Hetherington-Peirce **Note-taker:** Dyan Dunsmoor-Farley

### **Attendance:**

Greg Blanchette  
Steve Earle  
John Peirce  
Nancy Hetherington-Peirce  
David Boehm  
Tom Cameron  
Charlotte  
Bob McKechnie  
Fay Weller  
Suzi H.  
Ivan Bulic  
Cameron Murray  
Ted McGillvray  
George Wu

### **1. Ferry Hill Path (Ivan Bulic)**

See attached discussion paper.

At the March 8 Gabriola Talks event a committee was struck to explore transportation issues that could address impacts of climate change on Gabriola. An outcome of the initial meeting was to propose a pedestrian and bicycle pathway linking the ferry terminal to the Village. This pathway would like with the RDN's approved Village Way Trail connecting the north road terminus to Tin Can Alley. And it would complement the work proposed by BC Ferries in their ferry terminal redevelopment plans (currently on hold due to COVID-19). This would require a trail of .45 km from the north/south road junction to the ferry terminal. This highly congested stretch of road presents significant risks to pedestrians and cyclists and contravenes existing BC Motor Vehicle Act (RSBC 1996) Chapter 318 which requires that "if there is no sidewalk, a pedestrian walking along or on a highway must walk only on the extreme left side of the roadway or the shoulder of the highway, facing traffic approaching from the opposite direction". Doing so on Ferry Hill puts pedestrians at risk due to the absence of shoulder and the volume of traffic coming off the ferry. In addition, OCP Bylaw 166 – calls for "supporting alternate transportation initiatives . . . [and], ensur(ing) island roads are able to accommodate cycling safely. . ."

The RDN will be proceeding with the Village Way Trail but has no plans to address the .45 km to the ferry terminal. How do we advance planning for this critical infrastructure need?

Suggestions included:

- Asking RDN Director Vanessa Craig to request that staff be directed to undertake an assessment of the cost of the additional 450 m.
- engage a traffic engineer/planner on walking safety report;

- get letters from local 1<sup>st</sup> responders as to the public safety risks;
- launch a BC Supreme Court action;
- set up a meeting with all decision-makers to develop a comprehensive plan building on the elements currently underway that prioritize public safety.

## **2. Biking and Driving on Gabriola (Greg Blanchette)**

Proposed a two-sided pamphlet to encourage people to adopt cycling and road sharing etiquette (see addendum on web site). It would include basic info for off-island and new cyclists about the conditions and road safety considerations on Gabriola. David Boehm noted that E-bike protocols would need to be different. It was suggested that the brochure could be provided as part of the Welcome Wagon, made available on the Nanaimo side via the ticket booth and on vessel bulletin boards. It was suggested that Greg refer to the CyclePath map on SG website which identifies all the hazardous road locations on the island [http://sustainablegabriola.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/cyclepaths\\_of\\_gabriola\\_report.pdf](http://sustainablegabriola.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/cyclepaths_of_gabriola_report.pdf)

## **3. Housing Society Update**

At the most recent Local Trust Committee meeting, the Gabriola Housing Society submitted a request to speed up the review process to enable the society to access the 2021 funding window (mid-January). The Society received 70 letters of support with 2-3 not supporting. Concerns included: water, noise, who it will serve, and environmental conservation. People are encouraged to write with any concerns they might have regarding the project.

In order to meet the funding window, most of the rezoning process must be complete in time for submission to funders for mid-January.

The LTC made a motion to hold community info meeting in late August, and, to hold public hearing no later than first week in October. As well, the LTC passed First Reading (of three) for the draft bylaws to amend the OCP and LUB.

## **4. Beyond Recovery - Steve**

A task group from the Gabriola Emergency Response and Recovery Committee (GERRC) was established to examine the positive and negative implications of moving beyond recovery. The intention is to build on and maintain positive behaviours and activities coming out of COVID-19. GERRC had applied for a Michael Smith Foundation research grant to examine the impacts of COVID on vulnerable populations and essential service workers but were unsuccessful. Fay and Dyan (the designated researchers in the MSF proposal) will design a survey to capture the effects of COVID on different parts of the population, and the impacts both positive and negative.

## **5. Cell Tower and Antenna Consultation – Bob McKechnie**

Bob noted the huge move to expanded wireless technology despite evidence of health risks and a lack of safety testing. He also noted that current safety standards are inadequate re: EMR exposure. There is increased pressure for more cell-towers. The original LTC protocol (2010) required applications through LTC and public process. The Federal government is encouraging increased cell access and established a national standard for consultation which opens door to 5-G. This protocol was sent to IT and other local governments and was recommended for adoption.

Initially the LTC adopted the fed's recommended protocol which allows antennae less than 15 metres high anywhere without consultation. Complained to Trustees and they reconsidered at Feb. meeting, noted it needs to be reconsidered and turned it over to APC. However it was not on the last agenda.

## **6. GHWC**

Update on absorption of the GERRC into Gabriola Health and Wellness Collaborative. A suggestion to see if the covered outdoor area at Camp Miriam could be used for large meetings.

## **7. Other**

Lunatics hike around the island on August 4<sup>th</sup> by moonlight.

**Next Facilitator:** Dyan potentially end of August 23<sup>rd</sup> = 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday, or September 27<sup>th</sup>.