

Sustainable Gabriola meeting notes

Sunday, January 25th, 2026



Attending: Arlene C, Betty K, John P, Nancy HP (facilitator), Steven E, Fay W, Bob A, Kes A, Greg B, Joan J, Dyan DF (notetaker)

Introductions

Reconciliation Moment – Bob A

Reflecting on changes from the 70s to now and in some respects not a lot has changed.

Outstanding from last meeting:

Golf Course land for sale – Steve asked is this something we should pursue, by starting with a community meeting? It is a big undertaking. Start with fact sheet, what it is, what would be the potential for the community. Look at all possible properties on the island. GILSS is involved and would be open to working on this. Is this group supportive – yes! **SG is supportive of Gabriola Talks hosting a community conversation.**

Nanaimo Data Centre – Bob/Greg

Located on Wellington Road west of the highway. It is a “colocation” centre, to store and transmit company data, not for AI or crypto-mining. RDN put out a statement on its expected water use ([viewable here](#)) — about as much as a 35-unit apartment building, which is significantly less than what AI or crypto-mining would take. One red flag: closed loop cooling systems must do regular flushing, which involves potential release of undesirable effluent.

SSI Regional end-to-end trail – Greg

In 2025 Salt Spring Island (SSI) did a feasibility study for an active transportation (walking/biking) corridor linking Fulford, Ganges and Vesuvius. CRD Parks is enthusiastic to proceed, needs the community to push for it. Projected cost is \$63 million. Noted that Gabriola has a significant amount of trail already, and could more easily complete a similar project on Gabriola. GaLTT could be approached to spearhead this. **Greg will send this info to GaLTT**, in case they want to take on a Gabriola cross-island trail project.

Article on the trail: <https://saltspringexchange.com/2025/12/03/cross-island-trail-2025-feasibility-study-says-yes-now-its-our-turn/>

SG website revamp – Greg and Fay

Updated site includes sidebar with a search-this-site box, list of active projects and coming events to draw people’s attention, and an e-list sign-up link. Also added a “Resources” page that will soon list every relevant report and document ever uploaded to the site, with it all sorted by topic.

Site needs more good island images — please send any photographs to Greg. **Greg to reach out to Photography Club for photos.**

Reps to GHWC – Dyan

Kes has been unable to attend Collaborative meetings for the past few months, so Dyan updated on the activities, specifically:

- articulating its governance model (i.e., hybrid network),
- hosting an in-person event at the end of November that focused on learning more about network member organizations and building relationships,
- agreeing to a request from the Rural and Remote Division of Family Practice to establish a Community Action Group. A Community Action Group (CAG) is a formal group of patients, caregivers, and community members who work alongside PCN leadership. Their role is to ensure that the design and delivery of new primary care services are directly informed by the lived experience and needs of the people who will use them.

Gabriola Land Stewards Society – John

Several properties are under consideration. GILSS is a vehicle for responding to opportunities. Currently has \$300,000.

Climate News – Notes from Deb Ferens

See Appendix below

Nanaimo Climate Action Hub AGM – Greg

We in Canada are blinkered by our oil & gas industry (and our media), and not getting the full world picture. Energy journalist Markham Hislop (energi.media) and others maintain the energy transition is underway and is unstoppable, driven by economics.

Trust Policy Statement and Survey

Steve noted two gaps – nothing about no bridges/tunnels, and not enough climate crisis context, truly pathetic. We need something more concrete (e.g., preserving tree coverage, doing zoning of residential to favour walking distance to the Village).

Here's the Islands Trust page with info on the Policy Statement, and a link to the survey (deadline is Feb. 2nd): <https://islandstrust.bc.ca/programs/islands-2050/>

Jan 22 LTC Meeting –

Meeting was packed and at times quite fraught. Main issues for public comment seemed to be alarm over the Cowichan decision's effect on property rights, and angst over the proposed 200-metre buffer zone and its effect on property owners.

Staff said the OCP is not completed for the end of this term. Trying to get first draft before the end of this term. Tobi brought forward a motion that tried to take the tone down, instructing staff to remove reference to a 200-metre buffer zone.

Greg's impression is that after the public comment section quite a few people left. Joan emphasized the need to get accurate information out, and for a community discussion.

A group seems to be coalescing around “you are taking away our property rights.” When ancestral remains or other pertinent cultural evidence is found on private property, the property owner is liable for the costs of remediation. **Action: approach MLA around compensation for property owner; require realtors by law to disclose when there are archaeological considerations.**

The agenda and a recording of the meeting are available (eventually) on this page: <https://islandstrust.bc.ca/event/gabriola-ltc-regular-meeting-4-9-1-2-2-2/>

SSI Speaker Series – Fay

Fay suggested that SG explore linking with SSI to see if there’s a possibility we could piggyback on their speakers series — coming speaker is Catherine McKenna, former Minister of Environment and Climate Change. **Fay will look into it.**

Zoom meeting with MLA – Betty

Local organizer Julia R has set up a constituents’ Zoom meeting with our MLA, Sheila Malcolmson, to encourage her to advocate to Premier Eby for a Citizen’s Assembly on Electoral Reform (to create a plan for proportional representation). Happens Thursday, Feb. 5th, 3:00 to 3:30. The roster of attendees is full, but for info on the campaign visit [Fair Vote Canada](#).

Climate Cafe – Steve

Steve has condensed his Blue Heron Learning Society course on local weather into a one-hour session for a Climate Cafe, planned for Thursday, Feb. 26, 6:30 at Ground Up. There will be drinks and goodies (no dinners). **Get info out to Shelagh Huston’s course list.**

Next meeting — Sunday Feb. 22nd, 3:00 – 4:30, Gabriola Commons upstairs, main room

Facilitator: Susan S

Notes: Bob McK

Reconciliation moment:

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Appendix: Climate News

Notes from Deb F

The Conversation: [Climate misinformation is becoming a national security threat. Canada isn’t ready for it.](#)

Canada is entering an era where climate misinformation is becoming a public safety threat. As wildfires, floods and droughts grow more frequent, emergency systems rely on one fragile assumption: that people believe the information they receive.

Canada still approaches misinformation as a secondary rather than a key component of climate-risk management. Research on misinformation dynamics show how platforms systematically amplify sensational claims and how false claims travel farther and faster than verified updates. Canada needs to shift from reactive correction to proactive preparedness. With wildfire season only months ahead, this is the window when preparation matters most. Climate resilience is not

only about physical systems, it is about whether people believe the warning meant to protect them.

The climate insurance gap is widening leaving marginalized Canadians behind. Every year extreme weather events wreak havoc across Canada. Financial losses from these events have surged, surpassing \$7 billion in 2024, due in part to climate change, asset accumulation and more people living in high-risk areas. The people hit hardest are those with the fewest resources to cope. Lower income and marginalized populations face greater exposure, have fewer resources to recover and incur a higher proportion of losses not covered by insurance.

A critical step in reducing the unequal impacts of weather-related hazards is closing Canada's insurance protection gap.

We can work together on Gabriola to prevent extreme weather from worsening inequality . . . such as:

- a) community level mitigation: land use planning that steers development away from high-risk areas
- b) programs like FireSmart which can reduce wildfire losses
- c) making housing more resilient for those living in older or poorly maintained homes (maybe it's time to create a climate change resiliency non-profit community group)
- d) making hazard information easier to find and understand can help ensure that no one is left behind when climate disasters strike
- e) closing Canada's insurance protection gap, such as:
 - i. micro insurance
 - ii. embedded tenant insurance
 - iii. digital tools such as mobile friendly sign-up platforms and plain language policy explanations reduce barriers
 - iv. community based catastrophe insurance where local government or community groups arrange coverage on behalf of residents.

Politico: [Betting on climate failure, investors could earn billions](#)

- investment firms have put over \$100 million into developing risky technologies that could cool the planet with unknown side effects
- emerging companies aim to eliminate the amount of sunshine reaching the earth – while also potentially destabilizing weather patterns, food supplies and global politics.
- More than 50 financial firms, wealthy individuals, and government agencies have collectively provided more than \$115 million to nine start-ups whose technology could be used to limit sunlight.
- Unknown side effects of planet cooling technologies could expose the planet to what scientists call “termination shock”, a scenario in which global temperatures soar if cooling technologies fail or are abandoned.
- Some start-ups pursuing space-based solar engineering:
 - Large sunlight deflectors positioned between the earth and the sun – some 900,000 miles from Earth
 - Massive solar sails used as planetary sunshade
 - Plans to industrialize the moon (a private company)
 - Developing a network of satellite mirrors that would direct sunlight down to Earth at night for lighting industrial sites.

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