

Saturna Island Local Trust Committee
Trustee Report
October 2014

As you may have heard or read, the Saturna Island Local Trust Committee cancelled the Public Hearing portion of the meeting scheduled for September 18th. The Local Trust Committee meeting was still held, leaving lots of time for the continuation of the Community Information Meeting that had been adjourned when time ran out at the August 6th meeting.

Why did we cancel the Public Hearing? Three reasons:

First, at the Islands Trust Council Meeting on Keats Island, we had an "Elections Best Practices" presentation, which said it is best to avoid public hearings during the election period (September 30th -November 15th). Had we gone ahead with the Public Hearing, and not finished it on the 18th, it would have carried over to our next meeting, which was schedule for October 23rd, right in the middle of the election.

Second, if we did finish the public hearing, either on September 18th or October 23rd, the rules state that once a public hearing is closed, the trustees cannot receive any further information on that topic. This would have meant that we would be unable to discuss these bylaws at any all-candidates meetings and given that they are the main issues before us, it seemed counterproductive to take those conversations off the table.

Third, we'd heard that the Minister responsible for approving Islands Trust bylaws and OCP amendments had not approved any for some months. Apparently this delay pertained to some legal challenges relating to the First Nations and things might be held up for quite some time.

As far as our proposed bylaws go, we have taken some of the issues off the table; those of you who were there on August 6th may remember that after Planner Richardson read the comments by Pat Lapcevic, an employee of the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO). She did not support short term vacation rental or secondary suite bylaw changes at East Point due to groundwater concerns, even though the bylaws specified groundwater use would be prohibited. Trustee Brent commented FLNRO's rejection is a "showstopper" i.e. no STVRs or secondary suites at East Point right now.

I agreed, and for that and other reasons, I have come to believe that STVRs and secondary suites are a no go at East Point. For whatever reason, be it the fear of ground water being used (even though the bylaw states it cannot be); or because of the suspected strain on septic systems (even though this is the CRD's jurisdiction and in the case of secondary suites this would enter into their calculations when an application is made for a building permit); or the belief that there are way too many people (or at least houses) there already; the bottom line is I doubt that legal secondary suites or STVRs will be coming to East Point anytime soon.

Unless, of course, you have a house and a cottage, in which case STVRs are already an allowed use for the cottage anywhere on Saturna as a home occupation. And right now anyone

can apply for a TUP for an STVR, no matter where they live (please see the end of this article for acronym assistance).

Then on September 18th, at the end of the Community Information Meeting, your Trustees voted to table all of the proposed bylaws. It was clear that some members of the public wanted more time to discuss the proposed bylaws. Rather than choosing to push them forward, we chose to table them and after the election the trustees of the day can make the choice to lift them from the table and make any amendments they care to or let them lie dormant.

We also chose to cancel the last scheduled meeting of our term, which was to be held on October 23rd. Trustee Brent will be unavailable that day, we had just tabled the active items on our work program and as it is election time we shouldn't really do any substantive business anyway. It is unlikely, but if something minor does arise, we can handle it with a RWM if necessary. And cancelling the meeting saves money. No need for our planner to spend a long day away from the office, no need to engage our official minute taker, and no need for our chair to travel to and from Saturna via water taxi.

So one vote and all of the sudden we were essentially no longer a LTC. It was a bitter sweet moment, ending three years of working together so quickly. We made a good team, even though we were not always in agreement. It's been a pretty good ride. We finished up the work items that we inherited from the previous LTC: amended our OCP by passing Bylaw No. 107 and our LUB by passing Bylaw 108 to rezone our two CRD Community Parks to parkland; amended the LUB by passing Bylaw No. 110 to allow Ocean Loop Geo-exchange heating and cooling for residential use; and amended our OCP by passing Bylaw No. 109 to make it comply with the provincial government's Riparian Areas Regulations requirements. That caused a lot of problems in many a Trust area; some are still struggling with it. We had a relatively easy time thanks to our topography and some very astute planning advice from our planner and his boss, the planning director for the south islands. And last but not least, thanks to some very co-operative landowners who were more than willing to do their part to protect Lyall Creek.

We also dealt with applications, variances and a temporary use permit, held 19 meetings, which included nine community information meetings and three public hearings. We had three Community Stewardship Awards earned on Saturna during our term, wrote a lot of Scribbler articles and we even squirmed the Governor General around the island. We also hosted Trust Council here on Saturna, bringing in over \$11,200 to the local economy.

At the Trust Council level, we attended Trust Council meetings 4 times a year, each for three days; I served as Trust Council's rep to the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve Advisory Board Committee and sat on Trust Council's Local Planning Committee, Trustee Brent chaired Trust Council's Trust Programs Committee and sat on Trust Council's Financial Planning Committee.

And along the way we learned a lot, sharing the experiences from other islands – 24 other trustees to bounce ideas off of and to assess what worked and what didn't work in their communities. We also learned a whole pile of acronyms, a small bit of which I will share with

you here in case you need it to interpret this article: OCP - Official Community Plan, LUB - Land Use Bylaw; STVR - Short Term Vacation Rental; LTC - Local Trust Committee; TUP - Temporary Use Permit; RWM - Resolution Without Meeting; CIM - Community Information Meeting and many, many more.

And last but not least, I'm sure I can speak for Trustee Brent as well as myself when I say that although sometimes it's been tough, for the most part it has been a real pleasure to serve as your Trustees.