



September 2011

*The Islands Trust is the local government responsible for land-use planning and the zoning of land, with a legislated mandate for protecting and preserving the Gulf Islands. Together with Chair **Louise Bell** from Denman Island, locally-elected Island Trustees are responsible for land use decisions in the **Gabriola Local Trust Area**.*

Contact Local Island Trustees

Deborah Ferens, 247-8335
dferens@islandstrust.bc.ca

Sheila Malcolmson, 247-8078
smalcolmson@islandstrust.bc.ca

The **Local Trust Committee** depends on broad public involvement, both responding to development applications and identifying priorities. We can only reflect the input that we receive, so please take the time to write us, and help us shape the future of Gabriola, Mudge and the surrounding islands. Many thanks to all who participate; it helps our work a lot.

Village Planning and Vision Workshop Wednesday October 5

You are invited to share your vision of the Village at a workshop next week. We want to hear what ideas are out there, for example how to encourage local business, make the area more pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, and have more housing above commercial buildings. It will be up to the next Local Trust Committee to consider new policies and regulations, as part of the Gabriola Island Official Community Plan Review in the new term. The Workshop will be in a World Café format, with opportunities for in-depth discussion in small groups around topics of transportation, design, public spaces, mix of uses, Village Core densities and boundaries. Please bring your ideas and visions! Light refreshments will be available, and everyone is welcome to attend **Wednesday, October 5th, 7pm at the Community Hall** (we know, far from the Village! But more spacious....)

Advisory Planning Commissions For More Public Input

The Local Trust Committee has been busy lately with Advisory Planning Commission appointments and the pending establishment of two more advisory committees. Advisory planning commissions play an important role in advising the Local Trust Committee on matters respecting land use, community planning, or proposed bylaws and permits. Community members that serve are volunteers lending their expertise and knowledge on a wide range of issues and the trustees welcome the diversity of voices and opinions around the table.

Five community members from Mudge Island have recently been appointed to a two year term to the Mudge Advisory Planning Commission, and will soon be at work, as the Local Trust Committee has forwarded a rezoning application for their review. Thank you Jes Andersen, Bob Bollinger, Stephen Cooper, Verna Gregson and David Laidlaw for serving your community. At its September meeting, the Local Trust Committee reviewed draft Terms of References for an Agricultural Advisory Commission and a Transportation Advisory Commission. We are delighted at the prospect of establishing both of these advisory bodies to assist the next Local Trust Committee.

Farming is an important traditional value on the island and supporting food security is a growing topic of interest in our communities.

During the Official Community Plan Review, transportation issues received a good deal of attention and comment. While the Local Trust Committee concentrated on expanding cycle path policies and objectives in Phase I of the Official Community Plan review, community members demonstrated enthusiasm for tackling a number of other transportation topics that largely fall within advocacy actions that the Trust can pursue with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Watch for notices this fall inviting applications to the Agricultural Advisory Commission and the Transportation Advisory Commission.

If you have technical planning questions, make an appointment or drop into the Islands Trust office Monday to Friday 8:30–4:30, 700 North Road. Every other Wednesday morning, Regional District of Nanaimo building permit staff are there too.

Printed on Recycled Paper

Please pass this newsletter on to others, thanks.

Celebrating Gabriola's Achievements

Island residents, organizations, and governments achieved a lot of wins for the community since the last Official Community Plan was adopted in 1997. During this term's OCP review, it was a great pleasure to delete a number of advocacy statements that are no longer necessary. Congratulations, islanders, for achieving these goals that the OCP specifically asked for:

- Almost 10% land protected (vs less than 1% protected in '97)
- Permanent library
- New RDN parks: "a regionally significant waterfront site and an upland woodland site of substantial size" (ie Descanso Bay and the 707 Park)
- UREP Crown parcel is now the Elder Cedar nature reserve
- Expansion of parking at El Verano boat launch for travel to Mudge Island
- Public transit feasibility study
- Emergency wharf at Descanso

Next LTC Meetings

October 5, Village Plan Vision workshop, 7pm Community Hall

October 27, LTC business meeting, 10:15 WI Hall

For agendas, details, or new meetings, contact Gabriola Islands Trust office (700 North Road, 250-247-2063) or on the Gabriola page at <http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca>



Islands Trust

preserving **Island** communities,
culture and environment

Gabriola Official Community Plan Review

For over two years, the community has been involved in a targeted review of the Official Community Plan. It began with a community survey and included two community workshops, over a dozen Volunteer Review Committee meetings, two special cohort meetings, a major study on hazard lands, as well as community information meetings and public hearings. Local trustees received an incredible amount of input on a wide spectrum of issues from community members and groups, ranging from small lot manure management, protection for wildlife habitat, low cost housing, reducing car use, to spelling corrections and missing words. We can't begin to tell you how both satisfying and challenging it's been to absorb all the information and listen to all the stories.

At the September LTC meeting, the bylaw to amend the Official Community Plan was adopted, so Phase I of the OCP review has come to a close.

If you've got feedback on the process, we'd like to hear more from you.

Please drop off a note at the Trust Office, send us an email, or give us a call if you have ideas on things like: Was it easy to share your ideas, comments, suggestions? Did you encounter any barriers to participating? Were any of your issues or concerns addressed in the Review? What could have been better? How could we have communicated better?

Development Permit Areas Factsheet

What exactly are Development Permit Areas? We're glad you asked! The Local Trust Committee is developing a Development Permit Area (DPA) factsheet that will be posted on the Gabriola section of the Trust website and will be available to answer all questions that an applicant might have on the process. Your feedback and questions are invited.

A Development Permit can be used to protect the natural environment, to protect development from steep slopes, and achieve a number of other land use goals, while still allowing development to proceed. Gabriola's 1997 Official Community Plan includes nine DPAs, two of which already provide guidelines for setbacks from watercourses and environmental protection requirements for landowners planning to develop or alter their property. With a lot of public input to come, the Local Trust Committee might consider the amendment and expansion of the Hoggan Lake and Lock Bay DPAs next term, in order to protect potential fish habitat as required under the provincially mandated Riparian Areas Regulation (RAR). The Province requires that local governments become compliant with RAR by enacting land use regulations for all watersheds designated as containing or supporting fish habitat, and to consider all "unverified" watersheds as containing fish habitat until proven otherwise. The Ministry of Environment also supports riparian buffers on all watercourses to help protect other environmentally valuable resources such as birds and wildlife.

Mapping conducted by the Province and UBC has identified two potentially fish-supporting watersheds on Gabriola. Two additional watersheds may require further assessment and have been classified as "unverified". More mapping is underway this fall and winter.

We'd love to hear from you about the factsheet, RAR, and if you have information about watercourses on your property or in your neighbourhood that may help with mapping the watershed areas.