

REPORT TO SALT SPRING ISLAND LOCAL COMMUNITY COMMISSION MEETING OF Thursday, February 20, 2025

SUBJECT 163 Drake Road – Phoenix Elementary School Property and Selection of Future Tenants

ISSUE SUMMARY

To review permitted uses and opportunities for 163 Drake Road and determine a method of selecting a future tenant(s).

BACKGROUND

The Capital Regional District (CRD) assumed responsibility for the operation and maintenance for the buildings and land located at 163 Drake Road effective December 1, 2024, for a five-year term.

The property is a 2.82 ha / 6.97-acre lot consisting of a two-story house, portable classroom, playground, small garden and basketball court. The west end of the property is forested with an informal connection to the Drake Road Trail.

The portable building onsite is currently being used by the Chuan Society effective Dec 2, 2024 to March 31, 2025. The lower floor of the main building and portable are planned to be used as a temporary maintenance facility effective April 1, 2025 for 12-24 months, assuming a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) is approved by the Islands Trust.

The Salt Spring Island (SSI) Local Community Commission (LCC) has requested that staff look at opportunities for short term rentals to occupy the upper floor of the main building and put out a Request for Proposals (RFP). Prior to determining potential longer-term opportunities for the site and posting an RFP, staff have completed a further evaluation of the service holding the land, building code and zoning to determine the current permitted uses of the building and land.

The lease and facility are funded through the parks and recreation service. Any longer-term use would need to be related to community programs, events or recreation. Depending on long term use requests, another LCC service may need to be considered as the funding source.

The current zoning allows for a variety of principle uses including medical offices, recreation and a community hall. The current building code is more restrictive as it is considered an assembly building. If the building were to change to office use it would need to be assessed for code compliance and fire separation would likely be required if there were multiple occupants.

Public use of the playground, picnic shelter and community garden would not have the same restrictions and could be made available ahead of any building code assessments or potential renovations.

To best determine potential zoning or building code implications an Expression of Interest (EOI) could be posted ahead of a full RFP to promote awareness, gather interest from the general public and prepare a technical report with any implications for LCC consideration. An RFP is considered optional and will be determined following an evaluation of the responses to the EOI.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

That the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission authorize staff to post an Expression of Interest for the buildings and land located at 163 Drake Road (PID 004-607-295) for consideration.

Alternative 2

That the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission refer the report back to staff for additional information.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

The LCC has assumed \$8,000 in revenue will be generated by the property in 2025. The portable is currently rented for three months in 2025 totalling \$1,336. Building code implications may impact the amount of revenue that can be generated in 2025.

Zoning Implications

The property is zoned R9 allowing for the following principle uses, buildings and structures: single-family dwellings, dental and medical office services, elementary schools, pre-schools, day care centres, hospitals, public health care facilities, community halls, non-commercial outdoor active recreation, churches, agricultural and *public service uses*.

Building Code Implications

The Phoenix building is currently considered, a Part 3, A2 Assembly Building. If the use of the building were to change to office use it would need to be assessed for Code compliance as a D business and personal services building. If the building were to have more than 1 tenant, or both assembly and office uses, it may need to be assessed as a multiple occupancy building and require fire separations to be constructed. As this is a Part 3, Complex Building we are required to have registered professionals involved in the assessment of the project.

CONCLUSION

The CRD is now leasing the property and buildings located at 163 Drake Road. There is an opportunity to license or sub-lease the building or property to one or more tenants and a public process is proposed to be completed to try ensuring the optimal use.

A method of procurement needs to be determined to provide any interested persons or groups an opportunity to present their intentions. Zoning and building code implications will need to be considered when looking at opportunities for short- and long-term rentals.

An initial Expression of Interest followed by a Request for Proposals is suggested. This will enable a more informed decision and enable any unforeseen complexities to be resolved in a timely manner.

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RECOMMENDATION

That the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission authorize staff to post an Expression of Interest for the buildings and land located at 163 Drake Road (PID 004-607-295) for consideration.

Submitted by:	Dan Ovington, BA, Manager of Parks and Recreation
Concurrence:	Stephen Henderson, Senior Manager, Real Estate, Southern Gulf Island Electoral Area and Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission

ATTACHMENT(S)

Appendix A – Site Map, 163 Drake Road (PID 004-607-295)