



SALT SPRING ISLAND

FIRE RESCUE

NEEDS AND FACILITIES ASSESSMENT

PROJECT UPDATE #4 | May 13, 2020

Planning During COVID-19

The Board and the Advisory Committee are keenly aware of the impact of COVID-19 on the local community and the economy in planning for a replacement for the Ganges Fire Hall – the main hall and operations centre for the Island’s emergency response. We are doing the research necessary to identify actions and options and will continue to inform and engage the community in the process.

As recently announced, the community volunteer-based Fire Rescue Advisory Committee and the Board of Trustees reviewed the two [detailed technical reports](#) on the status of the Ganges Fire Hall. Both reports provide conclusive evidence that the building nor the physical site are suitable for rebuilding: the site is not seismically sound, it is too small, and it would cost in the millions of dollars to retrofit. As a result, the District is now investigating the Brinkworthy site, a property the District already owns, thanks to a generous donation.

Next Steps

Additional items discussed at both the recent Advisory Committee and Board meetings included:

- Access to water is key and the Board is meeting with the North Salt Spring Waterworks, recognizing there is a moratorium on new connections. Other options, such as drilling a well, are also being explored.
- Both the Advisory Committee and the Board recognize the potential value in partnerships such as a shared Emergency Operation Centre and the Board Chair and CAO are meeting with the Capital Regional District to explore options.
- The District is also reaching out to ensure area First Nations are informed and engaged in the process.

The *Baseline Needs Assessment* report also outlines a number of additional recommendations, including that the process for a replacement hall should:

- Be based on common understandings of affordability and need
- Consider how much space is needed for the fire hall, administration offices, and any potential partners
- Should be based on a long-term vision for fire protection for the island
- Designed by professional architects and engineers as required by law, and based on criteria provided by Committee and Board, and functional needs as provided by firefighters, staff, and others.

In the meantime, steps are underway to obtain quotes to address the short-term and immediate repair issues at the Fire Hall such as the roof and the electrical panel, as discussed at previous meetings. The Advisory Committee and the Board will be addressing these topics in upcoming meetings.

Online Open House

Join us at an Online Open House to learn more, ask questions and provide feedback.

Date, time, and details to be announced soon.

Sign up for email updates to stay in the loop at: saltspringfire.com



Online Open House

Given current physical distancing requirements, the District will be hosting an online 'open house' and discussion to provide information about the process to-date, discuss site and building considerations, and to answer questions from the community in the coming weeks (date to be confirmed).

The Open House will be online via video. As the live presentation airs, you will be able to join in the discussion by asking questions and having them answered by the panelists in real time. The presentation will also be recorded and you will be able to ask additional questions at any time.

Information to promote the event and boost participation will be published in local media, on the District's website and on the Salt Spring Fire Rescue's social media channels.

Be sure to visit our website for all the project information, reports, meeting minutes, and sign up for our email to receive Open House details by email at <https://saltspringfire.com/fire-rescue-advisory-committee/>

We hope to 'see' you there!

Stay in the Loop

Here's how you can learn more, provide feedback and ask questions:

- Visit the Fire Rescue Needs and Facilities Assessment at <https://saltspringfire.com/fire-rescue-advisory-committee/>
- Read the Project Updates and the Question and Answers
- Read the technical reports and meeting minutes
- Sign up for Project Updates and details of upcoming engagement opportunities by email at <https://saltspringfire.com/fire-rescue-advisory-committee/>
- Email us at info@saltspringfire.com

Read the Full Reports

The full reports, as well as the Board Report with the Advisory Committee recommendations can be found on the Salt Spring Fire Rescue website:

1. **2020 Fire Station Baseline Needs Assessment**, prepared by FireWise Consulting
2. **2020 Update, Fire Fall No. 1 Structural Assessment Report**, prepared by Herold Engineering
3. **April 27, 2020 Fire Protection District Board Report**, a summary report, and recommendations

Thank you for your continued interest in creating community solutions for public health and safety.

Take care – and stay well!



For more information visit saltspringfire.com | call 250-537-2531 | email info@saltspringfire.com