

# Gabriola Island Route 19 - Island Class Engagement

Thursday, February 27, 2020

## Summary of Comments

Approximately 30 people attended during the two hour (4 pm to 6 pm) Open House on February 27, 2020 at the Gabriola Arts & Heritage Centre. The intent of the open house was to introduce the Island Class Vessels and update the residents on the Nanaimo Harbour and Gabriola Terminal Development Plans including rezoning, permitting and planned work. Format of the meeting was an informal drop in with a series of panels illustrating the proposals. Proponent representative were Steven Mayall, Brian Green, David Hendry, Cody Britz, Halyna Tataryn from BC Ferries and John Steil from Stantec. The event was advertised in the local newspapers, on the BC Ferries website and at the terminal.

Attendees were asked to complete a comment sheet, in total 13 feedback forms were returned summarized below. Comments were also posted to a series of poster boards. Feedback was generally positive with 10 out of the 13 people who completed the survey, stating they were **Somewhat** or **Very supportive** of the Island Class Ferries on the route. Issues discussed included the desire for more public parking at the terminal and conflicting views on issues such as the need for electronic signage.

Details of the responses from the feedback forms are summarized below.

**Do you have any concerns or questions about the *Island Class* vessels, or the Nanaimo Harbour or Gabriola Island Terminal Development Plans you feel were not addressed in tonight's session? If so please detail them below.**

- *What is not addressed is the transit systems on either end, massive improvement needed. I recognize this is hardly in your purview but it needs to be in the forefront of your planning with other government bodies.*
- *I support illuminated information signage at terminal. It is important to know what the ferry traffic schedule or the Nanaimo side is affected.*
- *APC (Advisory Planning Committee?) concerns*
- *My concern is the proposed roundabout because of eagle trees historical on Taylor Bay Road*
- *Do Not support:*
  - *The illuminated signage*
  - *Commercial retail space*

- Parking configuration
- Support – Yes for:
  - Environmental development permit area
- Not enough parking nor line-up space
- Parking!! Current plans are inadequate, 2<sup>nd</sup> oldest community in B.C.!? Handicap spot is inadequate. The pay lots are not accessible to mobility challenged, pregnant moms with kids, frail seniors, etc.
- I would like to see BC Ferry Co. rent the lower Robbin's parking lot for crew parking. Far too many parking spots both full + empty are for the crew.
- A stairway at the end of the parking lot closest to the ferry would save the crew time getting to their vehicles + save them the climb up the hill

**How supportive are you of the introduction of the two new *Island Class* Ferries to your route?**

Not at all	I have questions	Not sure	Somewhat	Very
	0.5	1.5	2	7

*General*

- Wonderful – make them electric soon.
- Increased carrying capacity
- The fact they are hybrid & quieter a big plus for ocean/Salish Sea

*Specific*

- I like the idea of 2 ferries but, with the reduced space, will they be able to handle the long line-ups we now have?
- Sound to be quite comfortable – thankful for seats not in the lounge. Presently school kids are very very very noisy.

**How supportive are you of the terminal development plans presented at today's session?**

Not at all	I have questions	Not sure	Somewhat	Very
	2.5	3.5	2	3

*General*

- Still processing

*Specific*

- Way too much emphasis on moving automobiles, not enough on moving people. Great on bike parking. Nice design in general. Don't like filling in parts of the harbor.
- The need for a separate loading area for the walk-ons is desperately needed. Too much time is lost on this issue.
- I feel strongly that there should be 2 cubicles in each washroom
- Parking – handicapped? Proposal cut by 50%. Walking up the "mountain" to the paid parking – quite painful. Heavy load – have to look for help.

**How helpful did you feel tonight's session was in understanding the changes planned for the Nanaimo Harbour – Gabriola Island route?**

Not at all	I have questions	Not sure	Somewhat	Very
			3	5
Was the time convenient for you?		YES 11 No 1		
Was the venue convenient for you?		YES 12		
<i>Other suggestions/comments</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BC Ferries personel were very informative</li> <li>• Sadly, Gabriolans might think this will alleviate the car line-up issue. It will in the short term but in my experience (considerable) this alleviation is short, i.e. maybe 5 years at best.</li> <li>• Car parking will always be an issue and no amount of parking spaces made available will satisfy some people. More parking will only increase congestion.</li> <li>• Thank you for your time &amp; explanations of what is being proposed. The people explaining &amp; greeters are very positive. Excellent.</li> </ul>				

**Comments on the poster boards and discussions included:**

**General Share your thoughts board:**

**Feedback:**

*"We don't need free parking at the terminal! No other terminal has this – need better p/u and drop-off spots!"*

*"How is the shoreline going to be enhanced? What ecological services will it provide?"*

*"Actually, many small islands have free parking at the ferry!"*

*"What can be done to improve the number of parking places at terminal?"*

*"Please accommodate GERTIE & school bus, pick up & drop off in a safe area. Do able bodied crew really need prime parking spaces so close to the ferry?"*

*"Creation of new habitat? How, with what? It will take decades to recover."*

*"BC Ferries should rent the lower Robbins parking lot for crew parking. Build a stairway from the crew parking at the corner nearest the ferry. More customer parking yeah !"*

*"Love the roundabout concept"*

*"New development, native species, include local very knowledgeable botanists and landscapers."*

*"Illuminated sign is extra unnecessary light! No adverts – we are not a city."*

*"Need safe pedestrian crossings – the area is an accident waiting to happen!"*

*"TDP timeline – the board says that improvements will be phased in over time according to need – up to 25 years – a) too long, b) what is the actual schedule to achieve the improvements to 2022, c) need roundabout. The Gabriola APC and BC Ferries should advocate for the roundabout – this is an unsafe corner today. Waiting room should be larger, more people are walking on ferries than only 16. Less free parking is ok – but what there should be is safe pick-up and drop off zones, 10 minutes etc. Many people cannot walk far, but walk on ferry."*

**Gabriola Island Advisory Planning Commission – APC Recommendations**

**To require the provision of potable water**

**Feedback:**

*"Potable water on Nanaimo side – water fountain"*

*"Potable water is available if BCF works with the Province authorities to demonstrate how rain water collection can meet the requirement. It is safe, low maintenance and surely less expensive than well water (from a private property)."*

**Gabriola Island Advisory Planning Commission – APC Recommendations**

**To re-examine the advocacy policies that were removed from 7.2 of the OCP**

**Feedback:**

*"Don't slow down the process"*

*"OCP (f) should reference BCF service not just the TDP infrastructure. Sign outside for BCF updates – its ok at the current size or put it inside"*

**Gabriola Island Advisory Planning Commission – APC Recommendations**

**To not support the illuminated signage at the terminal**

**Feedback:**

*"Take down the illegal screen now, please"*

*"Take it or leave it, no big deal"*

*"Please keep electric signage, useful information"*

*“Don’t need the big screen!”*

**Gabriola Island Advisory Planning Commission – APC Recommendations**

**To not support the provision of retail sales at the terminal**

**Feedback:**

*“Good to allow for this activity, moderate space allocation”*

*“No retail please”*

*“Retail use – having a small concrete pad (maybe with a roof and power) is ok for temporary retail but not a permanent indoor space”*

**Gabriola Island Advisory Planning Commission – APC Recommendations**

**To not support the parking regulations as presented and encourage more accessible parking**

**Feedback:**

*“Does crew parking have to be this close?”*

*“What business has their employees get the prime parking spots?”*

*“The crew are strong & active, they can walk up the hill in a couple of minutes. Octogenarians and older (and younger) struggle.”*

*“Seniors and young children, mothers & fathers with strollers find it extremely difficult to walk up the hill to the parking”*

Employee engagement sessions were also held with the Quinsam Vessel crew between 1:10 and 3:05 pm (Watch #1) and 7:00 – 7:35 pm (Watch #2). Employee feedback was positive, with staff looking forward to the two vessel service and terminal upgrades at both terminals.