

June 22, 2021

To the Attention of the Islands Trust Trustees and Executive Staff  
Re: Island Trust Council Policy

I am concerned, and, indeed, gobsmacked at what the Island Trust perceives as the “process” for gathering public input for such an important alteration of policy.

The basis for my concern includes the following:

1. It seems incredulous that public input would be sought during a pandemic.
2. The Trust offices in Victoria, Gabriola and Salt Spring have been closed during the pandemic and have just recently opened.
3. While seemingly shut down, the trust has been busy crafting an extensive draft policy change. That seems to lack integrity under the circumstances of a pandemic.
4. Meetings have been on ZOOM. If familiar with signalling for hand up, unmuting, etc. there is little issue. If not, the equity offered to taxpayers does not exist.
5. ZOOM is dependent on good internet access. Not all islands have that. Again, no equity.

While now retired, my career saw me provide professional services on the following islands: Mayne, Saturna, Pender, Galiano, Salt Spring, Hornby and Penelakut. I can assure you, beyond a shadow of a doubt, each one of these island communities is unique and has their own needs and values. Each deserves a voice when significant changes are being proposed.

Please: slow this down and create a process that enables all communities to be heard. The changes, as written, bear the mark of a uniform cookie cutter. That does not do justice to these beautiful islands in the Salish Sea.

Yours truly,

Barb Aust  
Salt Spring Island