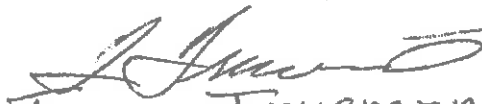


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ISLANDS TRUST

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PLANNER
 LTC

major method here, as stocks are so abundant (Open bonding)


Terry Trueman
Irene Trueman

Concur with this
article
and are absolutely
apposed to this rezon-
ing and or development
of forest zoned property
on Galiano Island.

Submitted May 2, 2016

 www.clairetrevena.ca

www.islandtides.com

Covenant Not Enough For Long-term Island Protection

Dear Editor:

Galiano's Local Trust Committee meeting on April 4 showed staff, the chair and the local trustees how strong the support is for the Islands Trust's 'preserve and protect' mandate; the reason that these islands are still rural, peaceful, and so unlike the urban centers around us. The public at the meeting understood the only tool for containing the tentacles of urban sprawl is land-use regulation.

The public wanted the Trust Committee to hear that they are the loyal community represented in the Official Community Plan; the people who take one day a month to come to meetings and who take the time to become informed. We so desperately need our local trust committee and staff to hear the voice of the people but it is difficult when two of the five people representing us at the local government table have listening difficulties. So then, the people write because all our elected people can read.

In the March 24 edition of the Island Tides I wrote: 'The LTC proposed change (March 7)—that in exchange for a lot of density, ten times more than the existing bylaw would allow, the landowner could, instead of donating land as an amenity for the up-zoning, be required to only covenant the land. Chair Busheikin in proposing and voting in favour of the motion then made a statement 'that in her view to covenant the land was enough.' Trustee Harris followed up with the comment 'that if he could see 75% of the forest zoned lands under covenant this way, he would be very happy.'

In making the motion Trustees Busheikin and Harris ignored the insights of the third Trustee Pottle, who was part of an LTC committee which had conducted a year and a half OCP review (55 meetings) on the Forest Zoned Lands between 2008 and 2011. Using one application to trigger it, Trustees Busheikin and Harris are proposing changing the principal use of the forest zone from 'Forestry with accessory residential use' to a commercial residential retreat zone. This proposed change was never discussed at anytime during any OCP review.

Received May 2 -> Town Hall

To allay the distress expressed at the March 7, meeting staff promised to be back in a month with a report of the Private Managed Forest Land (PMFL) implications to Galiano's Forest zone bylaws, an area of 6,000 acres. Staff also said they would be bringing a draft of the new zone.

That the audience at the April 4 Local Trust Committee meeting were prepared and wished to speak to the proposed change to the OCP should not have been a surprise to Chair Busheikin. Yet the agenda of the April 4 meeting ignored the high density for covenant motion put forward March 7 and also the legal opinion about PMFL that was promised. This deflection of trust business caused an eruption of the public voices. Whoever crafted that agenda package is responsible for the reaction of the people.

Digesting what they were expected to do, the people then sat quietly through the business of the agenda, which had only one item on it—telecommunications towers in the Trust Area. Even that one item of business was drawn out, empty as it was of content. However it still left ample time for the second town hall.

At the second town hall, Chair Busheikin restricted the people reading their presentations to two minutes per person. The chair then became busy watching the clock and interrupting the speakers with a caution to wrap up. How could the voice of the people be heard? With the huge unprecedented, undiscussed changes proposed to the Forest Zone somebody has to take responsibility for listening. The chair has since gone on to describe the April 4 meeting as 'contentious'. Was she surprised?

The peoples' unanswered concerns about Chair Busheikin and Trustee Harris as elected trustees are, what do they hear and what do they understand about our OCP and about due process for changing that document? And what is their grasp of the meaning of 'trustee'?

The Applicant for the proposed high-density development, a non-profit society who describe their mandate as 'Eastern and Western studies', have taken possession of the rezoning process; hired eco-professionals to do a layout design, assess the water quantity and quality, hold advertised community information meetings without Islands Trust staff, organized and circulated a petition, and finally, independently, at their own expense, have begun negotiating a conservation covenant with The Trust Fund Board before the rezoning process has even gone to public hearing—it looks like it is a done deal.

Years ago, I had the best land-use regulation teacher in veteran Trustee Margaret Griffiths. Sadly my colleague Margaret passed away on April 11 but at 95-years-old, blind and with limited days to be in this world, she was dictating to her son a letter to Galiano Islanders about the importance of the Islands Trust and about using the only tool in the tool box—land-use regulation. Never again will I look out over these beautiful islands without remembering the dedication of those who 'Preserved and Protected' these fragile islands for us and for the people of British Columbia generally. Developers now describe the islands as 'low hanging fruit'.

The other Forest Zone applicants referred to in my March 24 letter, using an existing OCP option for developing in the forest zone—one house in 50 acres with a sustainable forestry covenant, have asked me to inform the readers of the *Island Tides* that they are not interested in this proposed high-density for covenant option of 30 huts, 2 commercial kitchens/dining areas, a manager's cottage, a meditation hall, a bath house/laundry facility, two outhouses, a tenting area and parking for 20 cars. I apologize for any confusion regarding the applicant's intent. It was only mentioned in my letter as an example of the broad implications of the changes being proposed that could affect the remaining undeveloped 5,950 acres of forest zoned land; that any owner(s) in the future may demand equivalent development levels in exchange for just a covenant.

If you have an interest in or are concerned about this change to the Forest zone bylaws or the Private Managed Forest Land Legislation dominating Galiano, it is important to attend the meetings of the LTC. The next meeting is May 2 at the North Galiano Community Hall, 12:30pm. If you can't attend you could write a letter to The Galiano Local Trust Committee, #200-1627 Fort Street, Victoria, BC, V8R 1H8.

Debbie Holmes, Galiano Island

LETTERS, please turn to next page