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Subject: Galiano LTC re: Crystal Mountain Society rezoning application to create a Forest Retreat Meditation Centre

To Islands Trust Planners and Galiano LTC Members,

When I first came to Galiano as a visitor in the early 2000s, I was working in the field of Satellite Image Callibration. In my day job, I was writing computer programs that callibrate many of the images you see in Google Earth or Google Maps. When you view a satellite image of south-western British Columbia, you will see something very striking. Zooming in to the level that includes Vancouver and Victoria, only Burns Bog and the Gulf Islands have any real forest left, and both of those areas are showing signs of encroaching development. I believe that the Islands Trust mandate is a crucial tool in saving and restoring an ecosystem that will be of incalculable value to creatures and humans alike, especially in the decades to come.

It is in this light, as a now long-time resident member of the Galiano Island community, I am writing in enthusiastic support of the Crystal Mountain Society's application to rezone. Their application is a shining example of how to ensure ecosystem preservation and restoration, while providing residents and visitors the opportunity to heal and witness first hand the value of the ecosystem. Humans and nature can restore each other in harmony, most directly through projects like those of the Crystal Mountain Society.

Parcel rezoning is a process by which, step by strategic step, land use can be transformed from what is permitted today, to what is more optimal for the community and area ecology. Rezoning of any given parcel, by approval of an Islands' Trust LTC, is an evolution, where each strategic step, if taken at all, should move area land use toward a more ideal footing.

All rezoning must, of course, be compatible with the Islands' Trust Mandate to Preserve and Protect, and this proposal is, in my opinion, very much in line with that mandate. The CMS proposal presents our island community and the Islands' Trust with an exemplary model for preserved and protected land use, while simultaneously preventing potential future harm.

It is very important that each proposed rezoning be assessed on its own merits, regardless of who is making the application. Land must be zoned in a way so as to prescribe its use by all future owners of the land, not just the current applicants.

That granted, it is nevertheless very important to highlight that the CMS application represents a rare opportunity. I believe that no other applicant would ever be more likely to propose the kind of parcel reunification via an ecologically-driven use plan than CMS.

The CMS proposal is one that would very likely never come to the Islands' Trust if the land were owned by any other type of owner. Where a developer would seek to divide and resell, CMS seeks to combine and restore. Where an investor would seek to resell the property to maximize

profits, the CMS application shifts the land into being owned by not-for-profits going forward. In this light, I see the CMS proposal as an opportunity that should not be missed.

Living in a wider world where parcels of land are getting carved up into smaller and smaller pieces, having this example of how things can be better managed with respect to local ecology, through the combining of parcels, is a breath of fresh air.

The plan and protective covenants included as part of this proposal should be celebrated and emulated. If accepted, these would become an example of precisely how preserve and protect, and how to remove land from those areas that may be damaged by human activities.

Due to the particulars of this pair of properties, and the choice to build on areas that have been heavily impacted by past logging, I believe that rejecting this proposal would actually run counter to the Islands' Trust mandate, precisely because this rezoning has such strong measures to Preserve and Protect, plans that are motivated by the on-the-ground ecology of the area.

In this light I hope that the Islands Trust will see fit to approving the CMS proposal.

regards and thanks

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