

December 6, 2021

Good afternoon Chair Rogers, Trustees Rockafella and Wolverton and Planner Smith,

It is a pleasure to be standing in front of you in person today! Thank you for all the hard work you do to benefit the community of Galiano Island. It is truly appreciated.

My name is Susan van Asselt. I live at the North end of Galiano Island and I support the rezoning application put forward by Crystal Mountain Society. I am very appreciative that Crystal Mountain is proposing a progressive and creative Land Use plan to rezone its 50-acre F-1 Forestry lot to Spiritual Education use, removing any possibility to clear cut the land. As well, its proposal to rezone the 10-acre residential property adjacent to the F-1 lot, removing the residential building rights of house, guest cottage, home based business, gardens etc., and giving it Nature Protection status, is refreshing.

I am also impressed with the Local Trust Committee's site-specific rezoning process, based on the Islands Trust Policy Statement (ITPS) and the Galiano Island Official Community Plan (OCP). Looking explicitly at how the land is configured and its proposed use provides the basis for a unique, one of a kind rezoning, specific to this location only.

My first unease is about the opposition's focus on spreading non-pertinent misinformation about the Land User rather than concentrating on Land Use components. For example, members of Crystal Mountain have been accused of polluting creeks, contravening COVID policies, overpopulating the land, inappropriately welcoming visitors from other countries, being volunteers, getting paid, breaking rental agreements, taking over the North end, being bad at composting, etc. These accusations are often delivered in a harassing and bullying tone and appear to be aimed at questioning the integrity of this registered charity and the trustworthiness of anyone associated with Crystal Mountain.

How are personal attacks and statements warranted or pertinent when a rezoning proposal is about Land Use? Future discussions need to focus solely on Land Use and not on the Land User. This is the responsibility of ALL residents of Galiano Island. Any attack on the Land User needs to stop and any concern supported by verifiable facts.

My second unease is regarding the fear mongering taking place over the perceived danger of having split lots and that it damages the integrity of the environment and amenities and sets a dangerous precedent for other rezoning proposals. It is important that this application be viewed as the site-specific rezoning that it is and is not used to instill fear about what others may or may not propose to do in the future. The site-specific qualities of this application provide assurance that this proposal cannot be duplicated elsewhere.

I appreciate the delicate balance the Local Trust Committee must walk in order to be respectful of all residents of Galiano Island. I am deeply grateful for the tireless work you do to benefit all of us and I urge you to consider the above-mentioned points of view and take steps to rectify these issues.

Yours truly,

Susan van Asselt, BSc., MA