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Subject: Statement re Crystal Mountain Proposal

Dear Trustees,

I regret that I was not permitted to read the rest of my statement to you at today's LTC meeting.

Please find attached my full statement. I am hereby requesting as well that this statement be included as a correspondence on the Islands Trust Web Site.

Yours sincerely,

J. Ronsley

Good afternoon.

The agenda for today's LTC meeting includes an update to the Galiano Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) on the application by the Crystal Mountain Society to rezone its Forestry zoned lot.

My purpose in speaking to you today is to say that from the outset this update is grossly deficient. It addresses only two of many fundamental problems with the Crystal Mountain proposal. The two issues are the applicant's Water Management Plan and the question of Limits to Daily Visitor use. These are important questions but it should not be assumed that they are the most serious problems or deficiencies with the proposal.

I want to emphasize that the problems with the Crystal Mountain proposal are profound. They strike at the very core of the Society's activity which is not legal on the property and continues to the present day. The Crystal Mountain Society appears intent on dismissing legitimate concerns from the community without providing any response to them. Instead they persist with demands for special allowances that are based on nothing more than what they say are necessary for the Society's activities. For example, the Crystal Mountain land use proposal continues to demand not one but two separate development sites and now not one but six days during the

year when the limits of daily use are exceeded. These demands are not just unreasonable. They distract from what is really needed. What is really needed is focus on the long term implications and not simply the short term needs of the current property owners.

The principle of good governance by this LTC or any governing body requires that all aspects of a submission be seriously considered. This LTC cannot claim that they do not know about the other problems with the Crystal Mountain proposal. These concerns have been submitted to them repeatedly and in writing by a number of Galiano Island residents. The residents have not received a response. They feel blown off at the same time that the application appears poised to move forward as if everything is OK except for just a couple of last things to work out.

So let me summarize what the problems are. There isn't enough time to get into all of the details. But as I said these issues should already be known to you.

Problem #1: The proposed two development sites on a single lot or so-called hooked development will have a negative ecological impact for the whole property, including the portion that would be transferred to the Islands Trust Conservancy. It will fragment the forest and restrict public utilization and

access to the area between the two development sites which is designated “nature protection.” There is no water management plan at all for the proposed development site on the upper ridge.

Problem #2: The Crystal Mountain proposal makes a mockery of the Galiano Island Official Community Plan. The response of the LTC to this has been to propose an OCP amendment, bylaw amendment 256 that defies logic and the very spirit of the OCP. The proposed amendment has also been found to be outside of its own legal parameters. The notion that the Crystal Mountain Society is a Community Facility under the OCP is ridiculous. The Crystal Mountain Society serves its paying customers and itself only. It is not open to the general public. Its revenue which it uses to buy properties on this island rather than contribute to charities as its “Charitable Status” would suggest comes from the “sale of goods and services.” And its business model which is to fly tourists from all corners of the globe to its retreats on Galiano Island runs counter to the OCP’s emphasis on respect for the climate.

Problem #3: The Crystal Mountain Society wants to bring large numbers of tourists to live and stay on its property during mainly the summer months of the year. The property itself is situated in an area where the ground water aquifer has already

been designated as “vulnerable”. The groundwater quality in this area is already poorer today during the summer months of the year. Everyone knows this is true or should know. It is an inconvenient fact for the applicant, and apparently for members of the LTC as well. Yet they continue with their attempt to justify the Crystal Mountain proposal using water data that has been collected outside of the dry months of the year and outside of the time of maximum negative impact. And this is to say nothing of the question of sewage and waste water management. The impact of so many people on the property at one time and what is the right sewage treatment isn’t being addressed at all.

Problem #4: Water and sewage issues aside, the surrounding community stands to be impacted negatively in other ways as well. There is no road access to the upper ridge nor is one part of a Road Network Plan for the island as a whole. There are only access and egress solutions that have been negotiated between the applicant and the planner without community input. There is no vehicle parking location for dozens of visitors in a small area of the island that abuts residential communities. There are no specified setbacks for buildings in the proposed development areas from streams, wetlands and the cliff forming the upper ridge. And most egregious of all is that the proposal puts stock in a Covenant that is well known to be

unenforceable, easily ignored or even discharged at the whim of Crystal Mountain or another future landowner of the property. The local community does not want to be put into the position of having to monitor and report on compliance and infractions against a complex Covenant of rules. The majority are against the proposal and have signed a petition which has been submitted to the LTC. The Crystal Mountain Society says that the petition is based on false premises. But they don't say which of the premises are false or how they are false.

I could go on with the problem list. But as I said, these issues are already before the LTC and have been for some time. Neglect of legitimate concerns as expressed by members of a community goes against the basic principles of good governance. My personal belief is that the LTC has not responded to legitimate concerns that have been raised for the simple reason that there are no good answers. So it's now past time for our LTC to reject the Crystal Mountain land use proposal. There are simply too many problems with it.

Thank-you for listening.