

From: PHIL IRELAND <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, September 17, 2021 12:21 PM
To: Deb Morrison <dmorrison@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Benjamin McConchie <bemconchie@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Laura Patrick <lpatrick@islandstrust.bc.ca>
Cc: South Pender Planner <southpenderplanner@islandstrust.bc.ca>
Subject: North Pender Land Use Bylaw -- Allowable House Sizes

Trustees Morrison, McConchie and Patrick:

I would like to take a moment to raise a concern with you.

I listened to a recent North Pender Trust meeting recording, in which potential changes to the existing Land Use Bylaw were discussed and more specifically with regard to allowable house size as a function of total lot size.

In that meeting the Staff Report dated June 24, 2021, gave the Trustees two options labelled Example A and B. Example A which was based on the current South Pender guidelines was a significant reduction from what is currently in the North Pender Bylaws. Example B further reduces the Maximum floor area for dwellings by 21 to 29% lower than those in the South Pender's bylaws, depending on the lot size. Lots of 3 to 10 acres in size saw the largest proposed reduction - nearly 29%. As if that weren't enough of a reduction to be considered by residents, the decision was made rather arbitrarily to make another across the board reduction of 500 sq.ft. reduction at that meeting. In the case of properties 3 to 10 acres in size that is a 37.5% reduction vs. what is currently in place for South Pender Island.

The rationale at the meeting seemed to be that it would result in lower water consumption. I would like to challenge that assumption based on our own situation and discussion with other residents with similar considerations. You appear to have not considered the following:

- residents are expanding their homes to accommodate working from home given current and possible future pandemic considerations and the growing realization that much work can be accomplished from home without the need to commute and incur greenhouse gas emissions as a result. That does not result in more water consumption.
- residents are expanding their homes for purposes like home gyms and hobby rooms, etc -- again avoiding the need to commute to perform such activities and incur greenhouse gas emissions. That also does not result in more water consumption.
- residents are in some cases creating capacity for multigeneration home to care for elderly relatives. While you could argue that more people in that particular house incurs more water usage, they were already incurring water usage at another location, and that location is now available to someone that needed housing given our overall housing shortage.

I know you have been through this before and plan to grandfather, but I fail to see the logic in creating a myriad of legal but "non-conforming" houses on North Pender by being overly restrictive on allowable house sizes. The fact that so many of the residents were upset about the suggested limits to house size and their homes being deemed legal non-conforming suggests that much of current housing stock on North Pender is in fact larger than the sizes being proposed at your last meeting on this subject. It seems unfair to disadvantage those who are building new dwellings or expanding existing dwellings,

especially when the construction standards and options under which these new homes will be built are much more environmentally responsible than much of current housing stock. New construction can take advantage of better insulated walls and windows, water capture systems, low flow toilets and taps.

Don't get me wrong, I support that the land use bylaw needs to be updated from the current 25% of lot size area to something more along the lines of the current South Pender bylaws. That alone would be a very dramatic reduction in the size of dwellings that could be constructed on North Pender. These further proposed reductions that resulted from your last meeting on this subject do not take into consideration the points that I have raised above, that I believe are important in setting practical house sizes suiting a variety of home owner needs. As other residents have noted, one size does not fit all.

Personally I would like to see Option A in the June 24, 2021 Staff Report adopted. To achieve some of the water conservation objectives, wouldn't it make more sense to mandate rain water harvesting and water meters so that all have visibility to their daily consumption, etc. I realize you may have other regulatory challenges in how to implement and administer but such measures seem much more logical to achieving the stated objective of water preservation/conservation.

When you look back at the objectives that were stated in establishing a maximum floor area (MFA) you cited "preserving rural character and limiting resources and energy demand". You went on to further note that "introduction of a MFA support protection of green space on residential lots for visual, environmental and storm water management purpose and generally minimizes visual and other impacts often associated with large dwellings." Surely that is more of a concern on smaller properties of 1 acre or less.

As other residents have noted in their commentary, energy efficiency depends on age, design, construction and maintenance of house rather than size. And size is not a key determinant of "rural character". Again design, siting and use of landscaping screening can be effective tools. Using our property as an example (4 acres in size), I find it hard to understand that having allowable dwelling units of up to 5,600 sq.ft. (Example A recommended in Staff Report and current South Pender bylaw) on a total property of 174,240 sq.ft., when constructed to today's standards - does not achieve your goals -- even with an accessory building of say 1,200 sq.ft. added to dwelling size, you would be still be under 4% lot coverage vs. the current North Pender bylaw of limit of 25%. Moving to the South Pender guidelines would be a dramatic reduction so why make even more drastic cuts when there are so many unintended consequences that would have to be dealt with.

Thanks for your consideration of the above and I would be happy to chat at anytime.

Respectfully,

Phil Ireland

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Pender Island, BC