

From: L P <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Saturday, June 4, 2022 3:13 PM
To: Kim Stockdill <kstockdill@islandstrust.bc.ca>
Subject: MacKinnon Rd north Pender

Hello Kim Stockdill

I own the [REDACTED] property on North Pender Island. I have just read your letter of April 19/22 regarding proposed zoning density changes, which a neighbor kindly showed me, since I didn't receive one myself. Can you please put me on your mailing list for any other pertinent information regarding Pender and Islands Trust. Thank you.

Regarding the proposed reduction in the number of CGAUS on the 4 properties on MacKinnon Rd, this is a welcome step in the right direction. However even 31 units on those properties would hugely affect the intensity of use and groundwater availability. I realize it would be grossly unfair to not allow any expansion on these properties but fewer than outlined in this letter would be even better in order to help preserve the rural character of this part of North Pender. Those of us who have been island residents, both full time and part time, for many years value what we have as it is, and would like to keep it that way as much as possible.

Thank you for reading my personal input on this project.

Linda Budzak

[REDACTED]
North Pender Island BC
[REDACTED]

From: Andrew MacLean [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, June 17, 2022 2:08 PM
To: Steve Wright <stwright@islandstrust.bc.ca>
Cc: Benjamin McConchie <bemconchie@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Deb Morrison <dmorrison@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Cameron Thorn <cthorn@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Laura Patrick <lpatrick@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Peter Luckham <pluckham@islandstrust.bc.ca>
Subject: Re: Zoning on Pender Island

Hi Steve,

I do have a fair few specific examples I'd like to go over. Before we dive in I'd like to clarify a few things that I could have perhaps done a better job of explaining.

When I refer to "Urban Planning" I refer to the field of study discipline profession and subject matter studied in universities by those who typically design and develop zoning bylaws. Urban Planning includes such subdisciplines as regional planning, town planning, city planning, and rural planning. Many Urban Planners specialize in rural planning. I'm not suggesting that we should use urban strategies in a rural environment, but rather alluding to the broad array of tried and tested tools designed and developed to help communities like ours deal with the precise problems we're faced with now.

There's a lot of really good things being proposed with the proposed new zoning. The proposed square foot limitations on house size is a really bad idea. We can do so much better and have a much more positive impact on our communities if we impose different and better zoning to shape development.

You wrote "Unfortunately I wasn't joking about the ultimate gentrification of the area." and cite Cumberland as example of gentrification. It's important that we separate development from gentrification. Development is inevitable, gentrification's not. Gentrification refers to the supplanting of one population with a new more affluent population. Not just rich people moving here, but rich people pushing us out. One of the ways we can defend against that is by passing zoning bylaws that sustain value of properties for those that currently own them.

Houses are bought sold and priced by the square foot, but this measure tells us really nothing about the character of the house. When we limit the size of a house to say 1000 we make that house cheaper. We become Adam Smith's invisible hand holding down the perceived value of the house. A greater number of potential buyers can now afford the house, competition for that house is increased, demand is increased while supply is not, so our cheap house ends up costing more. The small house that costs more is a more attractive option for the affluent weekender who supplants the local buyer trying to purchase a larger house to accommodate a growing family. That's gentrification.

We can pass zoning that creates smaller houses without directly limiting the square foot size of houses. Driving past Magic Lake as you turn left down Schooner a blue house all but jumps out at you. I really don't like this house. I see it as a monument to failed zoning bylaws. We can legislate against this type of massive house. But the proposed bylaws don't.

Blue house is massive and imposing regardless of how many square feet it covers. It is a big rectilinear mass sitting well forward on its lot. Some of the tools we can use to combat this are:

- redefining the way we calculate height. We need to rethink height so that it informs an envelope of maximum buildable area. Our current height definition fails in two ways:

Height described as the mid point of the exterior wall it's too easy to manipulate. I know of one house where the builder did not pull a proper topo survey before he began construction. He ended up building a house a foot or so taller than zoning permits. His solution was to attach a garage in plane with the over height wall pulling the midpoint of the wall to a lower area of the property. His house is now much more massive, but by definition is lower than the smaller house he had before. There are lots of better schemes for measuring height, the ones I would prefer to see employed here establish a plane following the contours of natural grade.

Measuring absolute height does nothing to encourage more desirable shapes of houses. Many jurisdictions (West Vancouver and Vancouver are particularly advanced in this regard) encourage less massive houses by manipulating the point at which height is measured to. Currently our zoning encourages flat roofs like the blue house: you can build more house under that tall flat roof. If we instead lowered maximum height to 24 feet and measured to the midpoint of a maximum 15/12 sloped roof massive feeling rectilinear flat roof houses would be kept lower (but at a height where two stories would still fit), and less imposing peaked roof houses would be permitted to use more of the available envelope while not looming over their neighbours.

- establish highest building face limits. Part of why the blue house feels so imposing is that it pushes big flat rectangular walls up against the street. West Vancouver has developed a good tool to prevent this from happening. They limit how high an individual wall can be. In our context that would be like stating that while the house can be 32 feet tall, no individual wall can be more than 24 feet tall. If you want to realize the other 8 feet of allowable height you have to step back before going up again. This reduces the apparent mass of the house.

- our current zoning bylaws limit the number of stories that a house can be. Many other jurisdictions, in order to keep massing down, include limitations that subsequent stories may not exceed a certain percentage of the floor area below. Sometimes this amount is 75% sometimes it's another number. Whatever number it is, what it does is prevent the floor above from being a duplicate of the floor below and prevent houses like the blue house where four exterior walls are extruded straight up until they meet the maximum allowable height.

- We can pass planning bylaws that affect the siting of the buildings on a lot. Perhaps why blue house is so well know is that it really does jump out. It presents a massive building face, high up, pushed against its front setback. Regulating the size of setbacks is one of the most obvious ways we have of affecting siting.

Our current setbacks exist only as 2D offsets from the property line. In many jurisdictions setbacks are used to define a building envelope. One that's perhaps familiar is used in Kitsilano where the setback line rises 24' vertically then kicks back at a 45 degree angle. This prevents houses from looming over the street and creates the cute gables we see throughout kits. Many jurisdictions require landscaping within setbacks. We don't. That's strange to me. It would be conceivable that an owner could asphalt their entire front yard.

You wrote of your noble desire to "ensure that the scale and style of new development is in harmony with the environment and natural character of the islands." I believe we have very similar aspirations for our beautiful island. My concern is not with your aims which I wholeheartedly support, but that the wrong tools are being proposed. Rules that, if implemented, will produce a different landscape than is being advocated.

Limiting square foot sizes of house does nothing to inform scale or style. These are affected by a buildings massing not its footprint area. Most jurisdictions have moved away from square foot restrictions and instead use the sorts of tools described above to influence scale and style. When square foot limitations are involved it's important to include exclusion areas so that we push for the development we want to see. South Pender is the only community I am aware of that does not include exclusion areas within its square foot limitation. One thing many communities have done with exclusion areas is discourage the detached garage. To do this we create an exclusion area for a garage encouraging the garage to be included within the house rather than as a standalone building. I know of at least one house on Pender where the current square foot limitation encouraged the owner to revise their design maximizing their house's square footage and detaching the garage. The zoning bylaw encouraged the creation of more mass on site, the opposite of its intended effect. I can't see why we would, if we're insistent on legislating the footprint area of a house: 1 do it in a way that encourages the creation of more mass on site; and 2 not use the limitation as means to trade floor area for things of benefit to our community. Why not let someone create a larger house if they move it well back from the road or neighbours? Why not grant someone additional floor area if they remediate a portion of their site or covenant a portion of their land? Why not create zoning that encourages the land use we want to see?

My concern is that the tools we're planning to deploy don't and historically haven't worked the way we're expecting them to. There is a wealth of information and precedents we can lean on and learn from. My fear is that the proposed square foot limitations are a bridge. What I mean by a bridge is a grandiose gesture lauded by politicians as a solution. A symbol of progress. One that costs the community a fair bit, and one that when carefully examined doesn't do the things we hope it will. Politicians in the lower mainland famously spend billions of dollars to replace bridges adding more and more lanes. When we look carefully we see that although traffic's stopped on the bridge, it's not the bridge that's the problem. It's the way the traffic grid absorbs and feeds the bridge that needs to be fixed. We don't need to widen the Massey Tunnel or build a multi-lane bridge there. All of us who have ever tried to get back home to Pender at peak traffic times know that what we need to do is the much more mundane work of changing the phasing of traffic lights installing stop and yield signs and creating additional access points so that the flow of cars coming off the Steveston Highway no longer cripples the right lane of the highway.

Similarly if we're to ensure that the scale and style of new development is in harmony with the environment and natural character of the islands. We don't need the grandiose gesture of capping square footage to some arbitrary number. I've talked above at length of the many negative things that does. It doesn't inform style or character. The proposed zoning amendments would permit the blue house and other terrible ones like it to be built over and over across our islands. What we need is someone to roll up their sleeves, to take the time to change our zoning bylaws so that they inform massing on site, describe a buildable envelope, prevent overshadowing of neighbours, prevent overlooking, protect our investments (I know you've said you don't believe

we have to do this, I believe it's essential to making our many retirees and their fixed income resilient to the pressures of gentrification), promote the creation of green space, planting of trees, minimization of heat island effect, reduction of cap effect, promotion of sustainable design, all the things that other jurisdictions routinely do in their more modern zoning bylaws.

Please reconsider and rethink the proposed amendments. They don't do the work we need them to and bring many negative consequences.

Andrew MacLean Architect AIBC BFA March LEED AP

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On May 20, 2022, at 08:45, Steve Wright <stwright@islandstrust.bc.ca> wrote:

I guess, Andrew, I'd like to see some examples of the zoning you are referring to. Much of what you say makes sense but studies don't reflect each and every situation. I'm not sure applying "urban" strategies to a rural community would work equally well or whether they would be accepted. We have recommended some basic building design and siting guidelines and have run into stiff opposition, which I find strange as they are not compulsory. There are beneficial technological advancements for homes but that doesn't mean every house is going to employ them unless they are mandated in the building code, something we cannot do.

Unfortunately I wasn't joking about the ultimate gentrification of the area. I have seen many rural areas from Big Sur to Mendocino, to Carmel, CA, from small Mexican fishing villages to small Hawaiian towns, all become gentrified due to their location and desirability. Cumberland is a closer and more recent example of a small rural town where popularity of its recreational opportunities has pushed up prices and pushed out long term residents. To think it won't continue to happen here is, respectfully, short sighted.

We have limited means to challenge the demands for housing that we currently face and the seemingly endless wealth that is accompanying it. I am very much interested in hearing any ideas that might help us ensure that the scale and style of new development is in harmony with the environment and natural character of the islands.

I will however, leave it to you to recommend to the community that we get rid of the garage. I will quietly support you, way in the back of the room!

If you would like to continue discussing this, and can offer some suggestions on how better to meet the objectives of the Trust, we should get together. I'd enjoy hearing more. I too, want to avoid past mistakes.

Cheers,
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From: Andrew MacLean [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2022 9:08 AM
To: Steve Wright; Benjamin McConchie; Deb Morrison

Cc: Cameron Thorn; Laura Patrick; Peter Luckham

Subject: Re: Zoning on Pender Island

Hi Ben, Deb, Steve,

Steve, Thanks for writing back. I feel I do have a basic comprehension of the environmental policies of the Islands Trust though would love to know more. I believe the time and energy I have spent studying for and earning my LEED credentials is testament to my understanding of and commitment to sustainable design and development. My own knowledge and experience of the Islands Trust is as our local urban planning authority. My experience studying and working with such planning authorities and the zoning bylaws they create to mitigate and shape development causes me to question if the proposed tools are the right ones for our purposes?

I'm concerned by statements like "I don't believe that anything we do will lessen the trend toward gentrification whatever the house size." I feel this was perhaps tongue in cheek? Gentrification, for me, means the supplanting of one population with another more affluent population. I believe, and have studied how to make our communities more resilient against gentrification. When we study urban planning, we learn about how the implementation of zoning bylaws can be used to shape development and study the effects that various sorts of polices have on development. I believe this community resilience is important to you too. Later in your letter you discuss that rising tax rates cause many locals to question if they will be able to remain on Pender. In my previous email I'd mentioned the university professors being forced out of the house they'd inherited as they couldn't afford the taxes. The property tax for that 2400 SF house was nearly \$70,000 last year.

Urban Planning is by nature economic interventionism. It's important that it is, that's how we shape the development of our communities: making some activities more favourable and others less so. When we lean from laissez-faire and begin to tip scales we must be cognizant of how and why we're tipping the scales and the effect that our actions will have. Urban Planners have been able to learn a lot from the mistakes of their past. One important fact we've learned is that policies that limit property values have negative effects on communities and pave the way for rapid gentrification, while those that bolster value make for resilient communities that thrive. You're right there's nothing in the Trust Act that suggests we should protect property values, but there is a wealth of information suggesting fairly negative consequences if we don't.

I'm not an advocate for large homes. Our family of three lives in a small (less than 600 SF) cabin in the woods and we like it that way. I do advocate for the institution of smart policies building on the wealth of experience and precedents learned through the study of urban planning and policy.

In your response to my letter you wrote that "larger homes increase values far more than land values". I don't believe this to be true. I think I understand correctly that this is allusion to assessed values being composed of two parts: value of land and value of buildings? What I worry about is that a direct correlation is drawn between size and value of a house. I had tried, and perhaps could have done a better job, to describe how bylaws that limit the square footage of houses do not limit the value of houses but rather make smaller houses more expensive.

I very much agree with and wish to support Islands Trust's environmental policies and your own stated goal to maintain the rural character of Pender Island which is why, when we have an opportunity to reframe our bylaws to shape development to come, I take exception to limiting house size by square footage. Square footage limitations have been used for a long time in many different jurisdictions. We have quantifiable data of their shortcomings and through their failings have evolved much better tools. A 1000 square foot house can take many forms: a bar 12 feet wide and 80 feet long, a 30 x 30 box, it could be a rancher, or two stories built over a cellar. It could have a flat roof, a series of peaks, it be built seven feet away from the neighbouring lot line, it could be built as a giant box with walls each thirty-two feet tall looming over its neighbours. A square foot limitation does nothing to inform the form or character of the house. Modern urban planning has much better tools to sculpt our neighbourhoods, ones that have positive impact on communities. These can be used to promote the creation of smaller houses and to maintain a rural character in ways that a square foot limitation misses. I previously wrote of how we can create zoning bylaws that more accurately describe envelopes of buildable area, limit width and depth of houses, limit highest building faces, regulate height in relation to roof slope, increase setbacks, require landscape buffers, create FAR exclusions to discourage outbuildings, limit successive stories footprints in relation to those below, encourage access to daylight and discourage overlooking, etc. We should be looking to these newer better tools and not repeating the mistakes of the past.

A 1000 square foot house does not necessarily have any greater or lessened environmental impact than a 5000 square foot house. Siting, roof form and finish, solar readiness, cap effects, daylighting, embodied energy, permeable surfacing, water management, heat island effect, shading, and so on are all factors that can contribute to the environmental impacts a building and site development has on its environment and are all aspects of building design and site development that well written zoning bylaws can influence. Similar to how if we want to use zoning bylaws to inform form and character we should create bylaws that speak to form and character, if we want to create sustainable communities and foster ecologically sensitive development we should create zoning bylaws that speak directly to those issues.

Your closing paragraph begins "If the Trust Area was likened to a National Park ...". I chose the precedents I cited carefully. Robert Sandford studied hyperdevelopment in mountain towns. Banff was a small mountain town in a national park. It has suffered the weekend effect, been dragged through hyperdevelopment and gentrification, and has been stripped of its rural character. The Canmore I remember was about as close to a national park as you can get, the park gate being just up the road. I don't believe that small town wanted or asked for the development that happened to it. Urban Planning and its creation of zoning bylaws is our most effective means to check development. I believe that, at one point, Canmore had the ability to sculpt a future that would have allowed it to maintain its rural character and community. I believe we too have the ability to sculpt our future, but, that if we are to do so we have to be careful and considered with our interventions. We have to use the right tools. We have to learn from past mistakes.

As perhaps a post-script. Another example of a small mountain town with surprising resilience, of concerned citizens working hard to protect their rural character and the national park they live

in, of how careful planning of small interventions can create a ripple effect, and of creative solutions in urban planning: back in the nineties Field BC removed their gas station. It meant that residents had to drive a half hour or so to West Louise to fill up but it thwarted the flow of tourists, cutting their weekender effect, and did arguably more to protect their rural form and character than altering the single family home would have. I'm not arguing that we should remove our gas station. I believe we need creative solutions, an understanding on what the pressures on our own rural character are, and to use the best tools we have to shape development and preserve our community.

Sincerely,

Andrew MacLean Architect AIBC BFA March LEED AP

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On May 16, 2022, at 10:05, Steve Wright <stwright@islandstrust.bc.ca> wrote:

Thanks for your thoughts Andrew and I'd welcome any opportunity to sit down and discuss this with you. Your experience would be invaluable but respectfully, not sure if many of the things you mention are applicable to these islands.

Your example of gentrification on the basis of "value" is unarguable but I'm not entirely convinced it applies in this particular context. There is nothing in the Trust Act that suggests we should protect and preserve "property values" and I have found through the years that persons who are more concerned with their financial values do not necessarily support the aims of the Trust's environmental policies. I don't believe that anything we do will lessen the trend toward gentrification whatever the house size. The Trust Area is, by comparison to surrounding areas, is undeveloped with many prime properties that are going to be desirable to those with the money to buy them. My goal is an attempt to maintain the rural character which I consider to be different from urban areas where the size and massing of structures seems to have no bounds. As a side note, larger homes increase values far more than land values, which are reflected in property assessments and result in higher property taxes. This rise in taxes is having many long term residents consider whether they can continue to remain on the island and impact the intrinsic social fabric we enjoy and value.

Affordability of housing is not something we can solve as trustees given the enormity of the crisis and the demand for housing. Certainly gentrification is a primary cause but more so is the commodification of housing as an investment. If we were to allow a similar density of Hong Kong, there would still be homelessness and a demand for housing. At some time, we are going to have to accept that not all people will be able to live on these islands if we wish to uphold the mandate. That in itself will generate a sense of exclusivity and hike values resulting in those people who continue to live here, will be wealthy. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't limit their activities to maintain the islands rural and natural character.

I think the major misconception of the Trust is that it is a local government which must facilitate development to meet the needs/desires of the community. I totally reject that concept. The Trust Area for me, is a protected place for the benefit of all residents of the province, where the environment and

natural character is primary and sacrosanct. There are, unfortunately for me, many trustees who disagree, but by doing so, I believe they will speed up gentrification and the loss of this so called "unique" area.

If the Trust Area was likened to a National Park, I imagine people's expectations would be different. Perhaps this is one of the conundrums for the Trust, how to convince residents of the limits to development that must be imposed to achieve its mandate versus the desire for more services and conveniences that new property owners are used to and wish to maintain. We should discuss further....

Cheers,
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From: Andrew MacLean [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, May 15, 2022 2:26 PM
To: Benjamin McConchie
Cc: Deb Morrison; Steve Wright; Cameron Thorn; Laura Patrick; Peter Luckham
Subject: Zoning on Pender Island

Hi Ben,

It was great seeing you yesterday, thank you for taking time away from watching kids baseball to chat with me about urban planning. I'd love the opportunity to come chat to you, Steve, and anyone else who may be interested. I encourage you to share this letter.

For those that don't know me, I'm a registered Architect. I've been working in Architecture for about twenty years now. I've completed lots of projects across Canada and some in the US. One of the areas I specialize in is helping my clients navigate planning departments and zoning bylaws. I took Masters level Urban Planning courses while completing my Master of Architecture degree, and studied gentrification and the mechanisms by which it is accelerated as part of my thesis.

I'm writing because I'm concerned that you may vote to impose a square foot limitation on single family house sizes. I feel that your reasons for doing this are noble, but would like to talk about how the sort of size limitations being discussed don't achieve the goals being discussed; and to suggest that there may be better means to achieve them.

imposing bylaws that lower the potential value of a property is a doorway to rapid gentrification

When studying Urban Planning we discuss how one of the aims of planning is to protect the value of property. One fun example of devaluing neighbouring properties comes from San Francisco in the 1870's where a railroad baron was unable to purchase all the properties on the block he lived on so erected a massive wall to block the sun from the holdout and squeeze him out. (<https://www.mentalfloss.com/article/94298/crocker-spite-fence-san-francisco>). Since then Planning Departments have evolved a great many tools to prevent one group from preying on others in this manner. One of the surest ways to enable gentrification (by gentrification I mean the supplanting of one population with another more affluent population) is to use tools (exploited glitches in urban planning, burned out cars, bad tenants, etc.) to push

down the value of properties in order to purchase and redevelop those properties. Neil Smith (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neil_Smith_%28geographer%29) is a geographer and social theorist who writes about the gentrification of the inner city as an economic process propelled by urban land prices and city land speculation.

limiting the size disproportionately raises the price

A great many jurisdictions have moved to limit the size of dwellings. A common reason for doing this is the thinking that by making a dwelling smaller it becomes less expensive so more people will be able to afford to live there. In practice, and conversely, because a greater number of buyers can now afford it the dwelling becomes proportionately much more expensive (demand is increased but supply is not). Local examples of limited house sizes producing a landscape of wholly unaffordable designer jewel box houses are found throughout Whistler and its environs. Canmore's perhaps a better example, I'll talk more about that one later. I suppose I shouldn't be too upset if Pender were to gentrify in this manner. Working on expensive homes for rich people is how a lot of Architects make their money (joking obviously).

rules that limit square footage are easily subverted

Radcliffe Ave in West Vancouver is a fine example of how those with greater resources can purchase more than the rest of us. Zoning on Radcliffe limits house sizes to about 2000 SF. The average house on Radcliffe is nearer 4000 SF and stands big and proud on its lot. Architects are really good at finding loopholes and exploiting oversights in zoning bylaws. Those that can afford the services of professionals prosper, the owner/builder is disproportionately punished, and the good intentions of the politicians and planners subverted and pushed aside. Because of the manner in which the bylaw is written the square foot limitations imposed on South Pender in many instances actually encourage the creation of more mass on the lot. There are better ways to create neighbourhoods with lots of green space and less imposing houses.

homeless workers, locals, and the weekender effect

Canmore is perhaps my favourite example of rapid out of control gentrification arising from an abundance of smaller more affordable housing. My family spent a lot of time in Canmore when I was growing up. I remember it when it was small: a cluster of single family homes, a town centre, a grocery store, only saying the last four digits of your phone number. Canmore's population exploded in the early 2000's. Development pressures meant that houses affordable to residents were also attractive to wealthier people looking to escape the city and establish second homes vacation properties and weekend retreats in a peaceful mountain town. My brother was a writer and photographer for the local paper. I remember that a lot of the reporting at the time showed a new landscape of houses in the hills and whole neighbourhoods under construction while the locals suffered a housing crisis. Workers constructed gorgeous homes while living in tent cities. Bartenders and baristas were living in cars. Families in travel trailers. The local population was literally pushed aside to make way for vacationers. Robert William Sandford, the EPCOR Chair for Water and Climate Security at the United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health, wrote *The Weekender Effect Hyperdevelopment in Mountain Towns* (<https://rmbooks.com/book/the-weekender-effect/>) described as "a passionate plea for considered development in these bedroom communities and for the necessary preservation of local values, cultures and landscapes."

I hope this letter comes across as a passionate plea against enabling the weekender effect

From my office window I watch Sandford's weekender effect unfold in the Driftwood parking lot. Starting Thursday afternoon we see and feel a steep increase in our island's population. Thrifty shoppers head to Tru Value on Sunday afternoon to buy up the extra stock brought in for weekenders at discounted rates. The weekender effect describes a mode of gentrification unique to tourist towns and describes pressures we're starting to experience. We, the residents, become responsible for the provision and maintenance of services and infrastructure that we don't need in order to support periodic influx and increased holiday/tourist/weekend population.

Gentrification is inevitable but we can prepare for and shape how it affects our community.

When we limit the size of homes we make small homes more expensive. This increases cost of and decreases availability of housing for locals. It opens the door to an increased vacation home ownership. Increased vacation and weekend home ownership brings periodic influxes of population and increases the cost of living for those of us able to remain living on Pender. If instead of decreasing their value we make our properties more valuable we make it attractive to create affordable housing, we provide places for the people we rely on to keep our island going to live, and we make our communities more resilient against gentrification.

For some time now progressive planners have been looking at how to move past single family housing. Much of our population and the majority of new home buyers have abandoned the post-war dream of owning a detached house with a yard. For a long time now Architects, Urbanists, and Urban Planners have been studying alternate housing typologies. There are many good ways to bring these urban housing models into our rural environment while not detracting from our neighbourhood character.

California which has 12% of the US population, 28% of its homeless, and very severely limited water resources has recently voted to end single family zoning. (<https://www.latimes.com/homeless-housing/story/2021-09-17/what-just-happened-with-single-family-zoning-in-california>).

Nathanael Lauster's The Death and Life of the Single-Family House discusses how regulatory transformations enabled Vancouver to renovate, build over, and build around the house. He discusses how we can start building our communities differently, and without sacrificing their livability. (<https://tupress.temple.edu/book/20000000008389>)

Allowing owners to increase the value of their investments protects our neighbourhoods and creates affordable housing.

Many communities across North America have made provisions to enable home owners to incorporate suites within their homes or construct laneway/carriage houses on their land. Some allow for the construction of multiple dwellings on lots previously designated as single family provided these new buildings look like the buildings around them. We're working now on a project in Vancouver which fits five units into the envelope of a single family home. The lovely couple that owns the property is doing this to secure their retirement. I remember friends of friends who inherited their parents house in Vancouver but because it was worth so much could not on their two university professor's incomes afford the annual property taxes. I'm not proposing that we should allow 5 units within single family homes on Pender but do believe that

allowing people to realize more value from their own properties provides a way to both provide affordable housing and to enable locals who are being pushed off the island as our real estate prices and cost of living increases to remain here in their communities. By layering new development into our existing communities like this we these communities more resilient against raze and replace gentrification.

There are better ways to limit the size of homes

Many many planning authorities cap square footage in attempt to discourage the creation of mansions and tracts of suburban row houses and to encourage the creation of green space in our communities. As Urban Planning has evolved as a discipline we have developed much better tools to encourage community friendly development and to stop neighbourhoods like Radcliffe Ave in West Vancouver where mansions are built in 2000 SF.

When we say we want smaller houses what we often mean is that we want houses that appear smaller. Some of the tools that other planning jurisdictions use instead of limiting square footage focuses on reducing the apparent mass of houses and increasing the green space around houses. We can create zoning bylaws that more accurately describe envelopes of buildable area, limit width and depth of houses, limit highest building faces, regulate height in relation to roof slope, increase setbacks, require landscape buffers, create FAR exclusions to discourage outbuildings, limit successive stories footprints in relation to those below, encourage access to daylight and discourage overlooking, etc.

It was once mentioned that if we had limited the square footage that could be built on a property someone wanting to create a bigger house could apply for a variance. It's important to understand that this is not correct. In BC variances can only be granted after demonstrating a hardship. Variances exist to overcome that zoning bylaws are applied evenly over an uneven landscape. It would be impossible for a board of variance to permit someone who had bought a property designated for a 1000 SF house to construct a 2000 SF house because they desire a larger house. However if instead of limiting the square footage we regulated the buildable envelope we open the door for those who encounter hardship to apply for variance. For example if we increase the setbacks to 50' from the front and 50' from the back someone who has a 105' deep lot would be able to demonstrate that this causes them hardship and to appear before the board of variance to show their plans to build into the setbacks while respecting the spirit of a setback and not negatively impacting neighbours.

Limiting square footage to create affordability has been tried for decades and has literally never worked.

Since the 1960s/70s planning authorities have limited square footage to create affordable housing. We have more than 50 years of empirical data on the results of these planning policies. Limiting square footage to create affordability has literally never worked.

Thank you,

Andrew MacLean Architect AIBC BFA March LEED AP

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