

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, November 5, 2024 3:52 AM
To: Rob Pingle
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Baker Beach

To Island Trust Staff/Council,

With apologies for missing the deadline. I have been travelling and have only now been able to provide some thoughts about the proposed Green Shore project on Booth Bay's shores. I hope you can consider these in your mix of responses.

My family has been part of Booth Bay since 1906, and as you can imagine, we have seen many changes to the area. Notably, the housing development of the northeast shore of the Bay, including the properties in question.

We've watched the storms and king tides come and go, with the knowledge that the SW winds are the trickiest (gusts and very strong and straight into that area), and the NW winds bringing the pounding of the waves along that shore. My grandparents would have watched the machinery that moved the rocks into swales, and as I am not a marine biologist, I can only speculate on the changes to the shoreline that that activity wrought.

There's a fundamental question at work, I believe, and that is, what is the role of the Island Trust in setting the parameters for any changes to the land/marine environment. By this I mean, are current setbacks enough to protect houses built along the shore? I would argue, with the knowledge we now possess about sea level rise, magnified storms, and general geo-physics, that we are badly short of what is needed. Something to deeply consider for the future. Regardless, these property owners built their homes and now they are worried about bank erosion. Whose responsibility is this?

They have hired a group to help them create green shore plans, following guidelines prepared by the Stewardship Council of BC. This is thoughtful, but does this go far enough in deciding whether or not to approve their plans?

I think that what's missing is a recognition of the public's right to shoreline access, and the ecosystem's right to not be disturbed. When the tide is high, there almost always remains a sliver of walkable beach for those who want to find a bit of swimming/sitting/contemplating ground. This proposal would, it seems to me, significantly impact this option. The work proposed could also significantly impact the seashore life, not just by the cliffs but below as run-off will undoubtedly take gravel lower, impacting the important spawning grounds for the midshipman fish, the eel grass beds, and all that live within the tidal area and below. Finally, with a steep cliff in the background, it just seems foolish to me to think that we can stop the forces of water from eating away that shore. Everywhere you walk here you see evidence of people trying to do this and failing. Remnants of rock-filled areas, gravel areas disappeared from concrete surrounds, etc etc. I do think that there are areas where green shore techniques could be usefully employed, but I cannot see this working in this instance.

With regards,
Nora Layard

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