From: Islands2050
Sent: Wednesday, June 9, 2021 8:34 AM
To: Islands2050
Subject: FW: Please don't remove housing and community from your mandate

From: Allie Quelch ███████████████████████████
Subject: Please don't remove housing and community from your mandate
Date: March 2, 2021 at 6:16:28 PM PST
To: sfast@islandstrust.bc.ca
Reply-To: ████████████████

Sue Ellen Fast,

Hey trustees,

My name is Allie. I live and work full time on Hornby Island, helping our elders to continue living their healthy, fulfilling and sustainable lifestyles. I do everything from housecleaning to ditch digging. I try my best to keep my rates affordable because there are people without much money who deserve help. Because they are good people. However, the cost of living here is high and I think I deserve something too. My husband (who also works full time) and I have been living without access to electricity or running water for 3 years now. It's been hard, but worth it because I love this place and the community. But we can't sustain this forever. As we get older, it will become too hard.

As trustees, you have to save people like us. If not for our sakes, then for your own. What happens to an island without a workforce? The elders have to move away, the culture dies, there will be no economy. You want to focus on the environment? Well what kind of carbon footprint will we be creating if the workforce had to commute from across the sea every day?

Dropping community from the mandate is not a commitment to the environment. It is giving up on something important because it is hard. Please challenge yourselves to do what's right. I try to every day. If we all try, we can save our community together.

During the global disaster we're living through right now, the value of our community in the Gulf Islands has never been more clear. The diversity of our community is not only part of what makes life here special, it's what makes it safe.

So while we seem to be surviving the pandemic pretty well, because of the other major crisis predating the pandemic - housing - this foundation of our community is quickly being eroded.

Hundreds of healthcare workers, educators, front line grocery store heroes, workers who staff our restaurants, grow food, care for our elderly and sick, or make the art and crafts we all love were being forced off the islands due to the high cost or just complete lack of safe available housing. These trends are only getting worse since the pandemic.

So to hear that, instead of working hard to creatively solve these problems, the Islands Trust is actively discussing whether it's better to simply walk away from responsibility for community well being entirely is shocking.

We understand there is a group who are making the case that the Trust's mandate should be not include affordable housing, and in fact be focussed only on the environment. That there is a motion to remove from the Policy Statement up for discussion right now both housing, and the original dual purpose of also protecting our unique island community and culture.

This is misguided. The climate emergency is stretching all of us, but looking at climate solutions solely through an ecological lens and ignoring people is the opposite of a compassionate approach. Building walls - or moats - is not an acceptable response.

Climate solutions must include people, particularly those most at risk and impacted by our current systems. That's climate justice. With smart planning and incentives from the Trust and others, this can be done with less impact on our environment than the current mansion-driven rural sprawl our system is encouraging today.

I urge you to reject the Policy Statement proposal to remove housing and community from the Trust's priorities and mandate. Thank you.

A personal addition... housing is not an isolated issue. You want to focus on the climate issue? If an island's entire workforce has to commute from elsewhere, is that not a huge carbon footprint? A decision to remove community from the mandate is not a further commitment to the environment, it is only an excuse to avoid doing what is right because it is h

Allie Quelch
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