From: Aina Yasue <aina@saltspringsolutions.com>

Sent: Tuesday, May 25, 2021 4:00 PM

To: EC <ec@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Executive Admin <execadmin@islandstrust.bc.ca>

Cc: Laura Patrick < lpatrick@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Peter Grove < pgrove@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Peter Luckham < pluckham@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Elizabeth FitzZaland < elizabeth@greencitybuilders.ca>

Subject: Letters to Trust Council for Upcoming Meeting

Dear Trust Council,

Please see attached document for the upcoming Trust Council meeting. They are easily printable, readable, and shareable for your convenience.

Sincerely, Aina

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Aina Yasué (she/her) saltspringsolutions.com

This email was sent from the unceded territories of Hul'qumi'num and SENĆOŦEN speaking peoples, including the Quw'utsun First Nation and Tsawout First Nation.



May 25, 2021

Dear Trustees,

Re: 100+ Letters Addressing Policy Statement Revision

I am writing to formally submit the 100+ letters (listed in the attached document) regarding the Island Trust Policy Statement revision into the public record of Trust Council. These letters were emailed from individual residents to every trustee in advance of the March 2021 Trust Council meeting with the intent of being read, recorded and publicly available. While the letters were referenced by trustees during the Trust Council meeting and the preceding Open House on March 3, they were not included in the correspondence section of either the initial or late agenda packages.

The attached letters were facilitated through an on-line tool organized by Salt Spring Solutions that provided a base letter written by our local volunteers which individuals could then customize however they like. A base letter is similar to a petition, allowing people who may otherwise not have the time or capacity to follow the process or write a letter from scratch to express their opinions to you, our decision-makers. This same kind of letter writing tool is used by thousands of community and grassroots organizations across the world – including organizations like Black Lives Matter, Sierra Club, Georgia Strait Alliance and RAVEN Trust – to make it possible for everyday people to participate in democracy. Organized participation tools are increasingly prevalent and especially critical for amplifying the voices of populations chronically underrepresented in public processes such as low-income and working class people, parents, youth and young adults.

I was disappointed that the 100+ letters (more than 25 of which were thoughtfully customized) received a negative reception by some trustees and then were not included in the public record. The letters show strong support for Trust Council maintaining healthy and resilient communities as a priority in the Policy Statement alongside (and certainly **not** to the detriment of) the natural environment. To dismiss these letters as anything less than equal democratic contributions from residents is a dangerous step towards censoring public discourse. We cannot address the challenges and crises of the 21st Century by tuning out opinions or isolating issues. We can only move forward in a positive way by listening to disparate voices, learning from each other, and finding integrated solutions that consider the real complexities of our times.

Myself and my fellow volunteers and letter writers are looking to you to correct the previous omission by including all 100+ letters in the June Trust Council agenda package.

Thank you in advance for honouring the input of all voices and perspectives, and fostering healthy and inclusive public dialogue.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth FitzZaland, RPP, MCIP

Below is a sample letter written and sent to Trust Council by 111 members of the community in response to removing housing and community from the mandate. Please note: variations of text among the 111 letters are not noted in this letter. List of people who wrote and sent these letters are contained in the following pages.

Emailed to: Alex Allen, Benjamin McConchie, Cameron Thorn, Dan Rogers, David Critchley, David Maude, Deb Morrison, Doug Fenton, Grat Scott, Jane Wolverton, Jeanine Dodds, Kate-Louise Stamford, Kees Langereis, Laura Busheikin, Laura Patrick, Lee Middleton, Michael Kaile, Peter Brent, Peter Grove, Peter Johnston, Peter Luckham, Scott Colbourne, Steve Wright, Sue Ellen Fast, Taria Rockafella.

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 make the case that, in the face of the climate crisis, the Trust's mandate should be focused only on the environment, by removing its 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 not abdicate your role in protecting our community.

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