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Sent: Thursday, January 20, 2022 5:41 PM
To: Islands2050
Subject: Governance, Power & Public Engagement

These are John Money's notes from the Webinar that took place October 27/21 on Gulf Islands - Governance, Power & Public Engagement as it was posted on the Islands Trust policy and discussion forum:

Pre 1969, development in the gulf islands was quite Wild West. The market was for small affordable recreational lots for camping and summer holidays.

Concern was voiced by island communities as to the lack of planning for development and long term effects.

In 1969, the Provincial Government imposed a 10 acre subdivision freeze on lot size in most of the Islands Trust area. This freeze would remain on each island until each island produced a local Official Community Plan (OCP) and Land Use By-laws (LUB) in that order to be signed by the Minister for government approval.

Under the guidance of the 7 Regional Districts and their Planners, each island went to work creating their OCP and LUB and local governance began.

Countless committee and community meetings went into creating a consensus for these OCP's and LUB's.

I was on the committee for Saturna Island and can testify to the thousands of volunteer hours involved to produce documents that represented our communities and achieved consensus.

Under the 7 various regional districts, the islands were shadowed by larger communities such as Victoria, Nanaimo, Comox, North Vancouver and concern was expressed.

In 1974, the provincial government decided to create a federation of all the islands in the area that would supply Planning Services and bring the federation together in quarterly meetings. It was called the Islands Trust.

The mandate of the islands Trust was to consider the unique amenities of the islands for the people of British Columbia as well as the local communities. The working tools would be the local OCP's and LUB's.

Each island would have 2 elected representatives and with an appointed Chair from the Islands Trust Executive, formed a Local Trust Committee.

Most residents looked favourably at this federation as a unique form of local governance for their elected representatives, OCP and LUB's giving them autonomy while belonging to a federation of island communities similar to themselves.

Creating a Policy Statement for the Islands Trust that allowed each and every OCP and LUB their autonomy and local self government while maintaining a provincial interest, was not an easy task and took many drafts.

Each draft was taken out to each island community and many rewrites had to be taken to each community to achieve some kind of consensus.

With each draft, people needed to see the changes and shown how it would affect their OCP's and LUB's.

At that time, the Islands Trust was respectful of the uniqueness and independence of every community and understood that it was the tax payers in these communities that funded their budget. Few funds were contributed by the province and that soon dried up.

Each island community and their by-laws are very unique and different, and that needs to be respected.

The Staff and Executive of the Islands Trust has now decided to promote a rewrite of the Policy Statement and has created, with NO community input, a draft Policy Statement.

In my opinion this Draft basically neuters the local OCP's and LUB's and the local elected representatives removing the word local from Governance.

They have not said where the existing Policy Statement is broken, or failing the province, or the locally elected Trust Committees and their by-laws.

People complained bitterly about the lack of community consultation.

The Trust has now called for bids to have recommendations for a consultation process which was awarded to a group called Modus.

There are statements in a RFD to Modus posted October 21, 2021. Information shared by the Islands Trust in a workshop that are very disturbing.

For example: 13 bullet 6 quote: "There may be a need to set expectations regarding the degree to which residents can comment on rights and title). This is just one of many disturbing comments and shows disdain for residential property owners and tax payers.

I can't help thinking that the staff are promoting cookie cutter by-laws for each island community to make their job much easier, while the Executive is being heavily influenced by some of the large lucrative Conservancies.

Many of the new policies are almost word for word from recommendations of some of these Conservancies.

To my knowledge the province has not requested a rewrite of this magnitude.

In my opinion the Islands Trust Executive and staff have lost sight of the local island taxpayers and community members, their elected representatives and local by-laws which are the working tools of the Islands Trust.

These taxpayers and community members are the very hand that feeds the Islands Trust.

Sincerely,

John Money

October 27, 2021