

From: E O'B < >

Sent: Thursday, July 7, 2022 12:48 PM

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Subject: Housing Considerations on Denman Island intended for review and consideration for your July 8th, 2022

Good Day Trustee's

It has been brought to my attention that you at the Islands Trust require repeat letters, petitions and attendance at local meetings and completed surveys in order to deepen your understanding of the broad perspective of Islanders. Thank You for your ongoing work as we are indeed desperate to be heard at a local level.

In this formal letter to the Islands Trust Council I will attempt to be clear and efficient with my words.

- 1) We are pleased affordable housing has emerged as a "top priority" for the islands trust
- 2) There are many families, extended families, elders and single people in immediate need of housing currently and many of these individuals are long time Denman Island Residents who are established with work, school and community inclusion.
- 3) Access to ground water as a primary potable water source is not reasonable on these islands. Certainly ground water can not be reasonably considered as a marker of carrying capacity for housing. Many if not all homes on Denman Island, that are not using lake water, are established on wells that seasonally dry up with basic use. Almost every home requires the use of cisterns, rain catchment and the trucking in of drinking water year round. Much of our water is sulphur rich, salinated, high in metals including aluminum from aerial spray and other environmental factors leaving it non-potable. We on Denman Island are among the most water rich, in the gulf area, with 2 large freshwater lakes and a network of deep well established marshlands and creeks we all still suffer from the locally understood water limitations. Rainwater catchment is a must for most everyone not already buying water in the summer. Rainwater or trucked water is vital to our collective survival.

Those larger, often seasonal (summer low water), properties that have large costly homes are commonly the ones that do not understand the limitations to gardens & lawns due to limited water. These properties are either draining aquifers to feed their commonly ornamental gardens or are trucking in huge amounts of water. Water usage, in this case, is disproportionate to time spent on the island.

- 4) Please note that those requiring housing are not necessarily poor. While affordable housing is a need for everyone and some more vulnerable groups absolutely require it other people simply need reasonable rent and long term security year round. Everyone i know who needs housing has a working

car and a job or 3. The need for centrally located housing is there however we should not assume it is a requirement.

5) All people who have secure housing on Denman feel insecure due to the fear of bylaw enforcement. We need to make the current housing that people have used for decades legal and support those homes to see ways forward for upgrades. Grants and funding incentives for landowners would assist in the creation and improvement of secondary dwellings that are large enough to meet the needs of families.

6) We own our home and house for both extended family and persons with disabilities. We need to look at the importance of supporting the most vulnerable by making secure housing options that are large enough for families to stay together sharing resources and skills. It becomes unsafe for elders and persons with disabilities to live in their rural home communities without the support of the "community" and increasingly we see the need to break down barriers for these groups. Many elders and persons with disabilities can not live alone and must be supported to share in social contact, family and healthy lifestyle and community connection. intergenerational "family groupings" require access to 3 and 4 bedroom homes.

7) If the "environment is the concern" then say no to all large homes and heavy water usage. All secure rental or rent to own properties can meet a centrally established set of "environmental criteria" and move ahead. Be it noted that it can be deadly for people not to have access to axillary wood heat options in the winter here. We can easily lose power for weeks at a time, as seen on Denman a number of times in the past 30 years I have lived here. Electricity dependent living is not viable as a requirement for residency.

8) The people currently in marginalized housing circumstances on Denman Island and all Islands for that matter must be supported to participate in this conversation. These people are scared and vulnerable. These people are primarily silenced by your current bylaws and fears for their survival. How will you immediately make it safe for them to identify and for their voices to be heard?

Thank You for your thoughtful consideration of this very serious and pressing matter.

Respectfully,

Erin O'Brien-Hornsey  
Denman Island Resident 30 years