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Sent: Sunday, August 30, 2026 9:59 AM
To: northinfo <northinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca>
Subject: Gambier OCP

The OCP process for Gambier that has, thus far, not had great response numbers to the surveys nor great attendance at the public meetings. Why would this be? The previous OCP was before a number of newer subdivisions came online on Gambier and most of those subdivisions are part of the 93% of privately owned land on Gambier that are water access only. One third of Gambier's population lives on remote and generally larger property's of 10+ acres average. There are also changing demographics - some properties have been marketed to a more upscale market of professionals with waterfront but also hydro and wifi. Should there be a fire, there is a connecting road to move the fire fighting equipment from the south west peninsula where 2/3 of the population lives on 7% of the privately owned land. They tend to have their houses built whereas 2 decades ago there were more do it yourself cabin builders on Gambier. Most water access only properties do not have any connecting roads with any other Gambier communities or New Brighton on the sw peninsula! The New Brighton property owners have a road network so property owners can easily get to the meetings in the New Brighton Community Centre but not all water access residents have boats - if they use water taxis to get to their Gambier property then the only way they can get to New Brighton is to get a ride with someone else who does have a boat, or use a water taxi (a potentially expensive option but if the Trust really wanted to get people to meetings, paying for group water taxi transport between various Gambier pick up locations and New Brighton might solve the problem). Many water access only property owners have a boat to commute between city and Gambier, to carry building materials and food as well as family and friends. We have been to New Brighton only to find that there is inadequate moorage at the dock for visitors so we have given up attending meetings in New Brighton and other events and markets. Residents of New Brighton need to think about whether the docks are there for the use of local people to keep their boats or if it should be a mix of locals and keep some moorage open for special events so visitors can come by water. This could mean better attendance at meetings held at New Brighton and more sales for residents at Farmers and Arts & Crafts markets. If New Brighton and other residents of the south west peninsula tie their boats for free at the dock, they are depriving other islanders of participation in meetings and events and this should be fixed. We have to pay for our private docks, to build, install and maintain them so people mooring in New Brighton should be paying moorage fees to cover the full costs of maintaining the moorage system (fees should be based on linear foot of dock space) and providing some moorage for visitors whether free or for a fee. If the goal is to get people to meetings the moorage should be free. The Trust could try asking via email how many people would consider attending meetings and be requiring dock space and how much.

Having submitted my survey I subsequently did some online surfing looking for information and talking with neighbours. Since the Advisory Planning Committee is doing the OCP review work, the minutes of the APC meetings are supposed to be available to public (a legal requirement) and I understand they are posted somewhere on the Trust website but the website is huge and not easy to navigate. So far I haven't found them. Why hasn't our Trustee put a link in an email and included that information after every meeting? Or why hasn't the Trust sent the minutes to anyone who wishes them by asking if they wish to subscribe to emails of those minutes? And it isn't like the APC meets on a regular schedule so that anyone interested in reading those minutes can just check the website the first Monday of every month. To engage islanders, make it easy and put those minutes in their inboxes! Also by doing this regularly, the people who are interested can follow the process as it unfolds instead of getting a shortened report or maybe a whole pile of minutes in one large overwhelming bundle - let people follow the process as it

unfolds. The details in the minutes give this work context which has been lacking in this process as far as most property owners are concerned, leading to a number of misunderstandings.

Instead, what we have heard is that it is too difficult to reach the water access only residents, the Trustee doesn't know how to reach the water access only property owners, funding is so tight the Trust cannot afford to extend trying to contact remote properties, and that there is no "public" space to meet at other locations. What a defeatist attitude! Nor have the Gambier stakeholders been ASKED how this could be done better. A will to do better and a positive "we can do this" attitude would go a long way to actually reaching more people and the stakeholders should extend to yacht clubs, and recreational boaters, hikers and campers, who are harder to contact but not impossibly out of reach. A little creative thinking is all that has been lacking and a WILL to do this properly.

We have been told what damages are being done by private docks but private docks are synonymous with water access only properties and Gambier is unique within the Trust in that there is a huge amount of Crown Land and then 93% of the privately owned land is water access only so people commute by boat, get building supplies delivered and groceries to the island by boat or barge, we visit our neighbours by boat, and a lot of our recreation is on the water - therefore we need a dock of an adequate size to secure our commuter boat and to moor and store smaller boats with a motor, row boats, sail boats, kayaks, canoes and paddle boards which residents regularly use to go out on the water and to enjoy exercise and the scenery as well as for transportation. Docks can be shared if people choose to do that or in new subdivisions where community docks are supplied by the developer. All docks shadow the sea bed, the larger the dock, the larger the potential impact yet smaller private docks seem to have been demonized by the Trust. If we want to protect the eel grass and kelp, then the studies the Trust has done or used need to be shared with the public, which they have not been. People need to understand how and why docks may need to change. Anyone who wants to know more must do their own searches for studies - what studies has the Trust used? Are the studies current and in the same general area? We need to have current, ongoing, local studies - not studies from other parts of North America or the world where conditions are very different and make a difference in what designs and materials work. We need studies for our latitude, water temperature, and tidal action which varies significantly along BC's coast so that we make the right choices around docks of all sizes and all other moorage and breakwater options and not just focus on private docks. This has NOT been done thus far in this process! The map at the beginning of the survey has a blue line all around Gambier's shoreline where, supposedly, both eel grass and kelp grow but these marine plants each have their own very specific conditions for growing: shallow sandy protected bottom or steep, rocky, deep shoreline with ocean currents. You can't have both sets of conditions all around the shoreline. This map is detrimental to proper consultation, is misleading and needs to be removed from the Trusts' files and should never have been used as part of a survey. If this map had appeared at a public meeting that included water access only property owners, it would have been challenged. This type of misinformation can skew results for incorrect conclusions. We need new studies that will be ongoing, thus they become living studies so we can see if the changes are improvements or not. If not, then why not and we all learn and adapt.

Any OCP review is supposed to consult the stakeholders as to what is important to them. One meeting does not mean successful engagement either - a series of meetings are required, just as was offered for the First Nations consultation. Would they have been content with a few surveys and one meeting? I doubt it! This entire process has been top down with drafts and survey's presented to some stakeholders for approval - that is not what Official Community Plan is about. And without substantial involvement from a full cross section of community residents, it is a total failure that residents and stakeholders have not bought into, will not respect, and will not promote.

First Nations were consulted over a year and a half according to our Trustee but what is important is how many meetings and of what duration. And why haven't the results of those meeting been shared with the other stakeholders in Gambier through out the talks. With both First Nations stakeholders and a group of property owners, residents, and recreational visitors both developing their vision being done at the same time, then working to harmonize and work towards shared consensus, an inclusive process could have been created instead of the fractured exclusive process where a third of Gambier residents have been pretty much excluded.

To be successful, to have a document that will be actually useful over the next 2+ decades, the process has to reflect what residents need and want, not what the Trust planners and Trustees want. Success comes from having engaged people who want this to work and so far that isn't happening. There is a lot of knowledge and expertise within any group and by harnessing this for the good of the OCP process, the Trust can maybe turn this process around with good consultation, otherwise the process will fail. Let the people talk, let them offer solutions, and really to work with them instead of being so exclusive. You just might find it is easier to work with the stakeholders than against. Let the property owners and other Gambier stakeholders guide you to a successful consultation.

Regards,
Irene Wotton

Sent from my iPad

none of these reports were reveiwed by the stakeholders / property owners

3 - flawed understanding by the DPA writers of both the reports and what they were trying to do with this DPA

4 - flawed directives for the orginal reports

5 - that the DPA writers were too restrictive in their understanding of say hard and soft as both are required - you need something to for the soft to stay put ie something "hard".

6 - the writers were too restrictive on widths, 30m is too small for eel beds (should read bed width and growth potential) and too big for our 90% of the island steep rock foreshore. Again flawed understand of what modern facts tell us.

7 - the writers of DPA were too restrictive of potential new technologies, materials and better understanding.

8 - they were too liberial with things that benefit the wealthy and large developers. To the detriment of the little guy.

9 - the report should be a living report that can adopt new ideas, understandings, technologies, and facts such as ocean rise.

10 - the report is well written to get as many yeses by the uncaring, unthinking, and wealthy.

11- they MUST communicate with the property owners to find out what we want and require prior to commisioning such an undertaking

12 - i did not say that they should also be issuing drafts so as not to go so far off the rails as this report does.