

**Subject:**

FW: APC recommendations for Housing and Short-Term Rentals

On Jul 4, 2022, at 3:31 PM, Ryan Denomme [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear Ms. Fast, Mr. Allen and Mr. Scott,

I am writing to you today in hopes that you will reconsider the recent proposed changes/restrictions to Hornby Short Term Vacation Rentals (STVR). The APC proposals as currently suggested are so extreme that it would prevent us from continuing owning and operating our much loved rental property, which compels us to write this letter to you. In addition to the many aspects outlined below, we would be happy to elaborate further on our position and collaborate with the APC to find a compromise that benefits all of the people, visitors and protectors of Hornby Island, instead of just a single group.

I attended the University of Waterloo's Nanotechnology Engineering program where I met Jake Berman, who is from Hornby and currently lives and works there with his own business. After visiting Hornby a few times at his recommendation, I became passionate about owning property on the island and helping to support the local economy and environment. As an entrepreneur of a 100+ person biotech company, I am well versed in running a business that has a positive impact on people's lives, and was happy to be able to bring more conscious visitors to the island to share in the beauty and ensure the preservation of its uniqueness through my STVR.

Owning and operating a STVR satisfied our main goals, which were to support Hornby's economy, establish roots for ourselves and our families there, and bring more conscientious individuals to the island for sustainable growth and support of the locals. Once we confirmed this could be done in an environmentally friendly and compliant way under Hornby Island regulations, we did not hesitate to purchase 1420 Mount Road - which, like many Hornby properties, is among the most beautiful places in the world.

We have been part of the Hornby community for 2 years now, during which time we have hired locals for all upkeep, operations, cleaning and maintenance. We also provide a welcome basket which includes items from local businesses to help drive our guests to supporting the Island. The guests that have stayed have been so appreciative of being able to share in the unique beauty of Hornby and its local economy. While our long-term goal is to move to Hornby, we are not able to do so at the time so this is our only

chance to support the economy and ensure our families have a place to visit anytime we can.

The APC Proposal was disheartening to us for many reasons. It is clear that they are written in a way that would eliminate the STVR business on Hornby Island. Given we feel we are part of the solution, not the problem, it is difficult to have learned there is hostility towards STVR owners that would make our business impossible to be successful and have a cascade of negative impacts on the Island if these proposed changes were to be approved.

It is challenging to understand what problems these regulations are trying to solve, so we will assume it includes reducing environmental and infrastructure stress on the island in the summer months. This is a shared interest for STVRs as the lack of control on the number of visitors to the island causes a poor experience for our guests who must wait in the hours-long ferry line-up, as an example. In the longer term, it risks the sensitive Hornby Island environment which is a critical part of our success. So we agree on this being a problem but reject the idea that the primary source of this congestion and other issues are regulated STVRs under existing bylaws. Instead, it is likely people coming to the island without proper housing. These people also do not support the local economy the way our guests do - estimating they spend at least \$400 per day on the island's local shops. In any case, there was no data presented to support the proposed changes so it's impossible to evaluate their validity.

So if the problem is congestion, destroying STVRs and shortening the season is only going to amplify the traffic and congestion and do irrevocable harm to the Hornby economy. There are many very simple ways to control tourism numbers that are currently employed by national parks and other islands in BC, which we'd be happy to discuss - none of which involve stifling the STVR community and destroying the economy of the island.

On a longer-term perspective, the more 'short-term' minded individuals visiting the island, the greater impact the natural ecosystems will have to absorb. When you are a guest staying for a week and planning on returning for many years to come, and have a relationship with the local operator, you simply do not disregard the island's health. If this did ever occur, we would blacklist the guest and would not allow them back to our STVR. Our guests love knowing and following the guidelines we provide on preservation & supporting the local environment and the economy.

In another long-term perspective, if you suggest that STVR owners 'roll the dice' with being able to operate on a longer term basis with the currently proposed permitting system, the one thing you are guaranteeing is having many 'ghost-homes' on the island which detract from the local economy. For us, we would decide between selling or having the home be occupied fully (and supporting the economy) for only 2-3 months a year, which benefits no one.

We are strongly against the proposed restrictions to STVRs for many reasons, but we feel most passionately against them given that we deeply care about Hornby Island and believe that everyone deserves an opportunity to visit it and enjoy its magic. The number of heart warming reviews and messages we have received from guests after they have visited the island is proof that we are doing a good thing in this world. These proposed restrictions will significantly limit the number of people who can visit Hornby in favor of appeasing a small group of locals who do not think this island should be shared. **We will fight these proposed restrictions aggressively and strongly advise that they are rescinded immediately.**

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Ryan