



Hornby Island Short Term Rental Association

Email: hornbyshortterm@gmail.com

May 2, 2023

To:

Timothy Peterson, Chair Hornby Island Local Trust Committee

Alex Allen, Hornby Island Trustee

Grant Scott, Hornby Island Trustee

CC:

Sonja Zupenec, Islands Trust

Re: Islands Trust Hornby Island Official Community Project

This Friday the Local Trust Committee will, again discuss the Official Community Plan project, and provide direction to Islands Trust Staff about the scope of the work over the coming year, including potential of changes to our bylaws.

In the past year we have had 3 community meetings, many residents have come to Local Trust Committee meetings and many more have sent correspondence. In all of those the Local Trust Committee has seen a large and difficult difference on only one of the four topics that were to be addressed, between two, albeit small, groups in our community – those who vocally oppose Short Term Vacation Rentals and those who vocally support them. Yet, the referrals to the APC included Housing, Riparian Areas and Indigenous Language as well as Short Term Vacation Rentals.

There is real and pressing need in this community for affordable long term housing. The real and pressing need for us all, is climate change and water sustainability. We have consistently called on our Local Trust Committee to put its limited resources and attention on these essential, existential and critical issues. There is a limited amount of money and time for the Local Trust Committee and the islands trust to spend, we suggest these are the issues to be focused on.

We, both the HISTRA board and our members, have heard clearly that our community continues to have concerns and questions about the impact Short Term Vacation Rentals have on our Island. We support the need for enhancement to the Land Use Bylaw and Official Community Plan including:

- adding the Official Community Plan expectations regarding Short Term Vacation Rental operation to the Land Use Bylaw;



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- the enforcement of our bylaws to ensure Short Term Vacation Rental operators are adhering to the Land Use Bylaws and Official Community Plan expectations.
- requiring proper water and septic systems for all Hornby dwellings, including Short Term Vacation Rentals;
- requiring all new dwellings, including Short Term Vacation Rentals, to have a rainwater harvesting component in their water systems.

These are real and impactful changes based on the work done to date, that can be implemented quickly, easily and with the support of the community. Along with the consultant's recommendations around access to long term affordable housing, this can be the work of the Official Community Plan update project.

The issue of Short Term Vacation Rentals, as a legal property use, could impact about 1,000 property owners on Hornby Island, presently and in the future. It would surely benefit the entire community to ensure that any changes in land use bylaws be based on a foundation of trusted, skilfully gathered, current and validated data.

It is important to make clear that neither the Trustees, nor HISTRA, nor the broader community actually know the real number of Short Term Vacation Rentals operating in any year. We have opinions and perspectives but only limited data as to whether the numbers are growing, shrinking or stable. Nor do we know how many weeks of the season they operate nor how many are or are not in compliance.

Before the Local Trust Committee instructs staff to remove Short Term Vacation Rentals from our Land Use Bylaws please use the Official Community Plan update project to gather trusted and validated data about Short Term Vacation Rentals. We ask, that the Local Trust Committee and Islands Trust make the effort to truly understand the scope and determine the real impacts of Short Term Vacation Rentals on Hornby, negative and positive.

Sincerely,

The HISTRA Board, representing our 100+ Hornby Island Community members

Ray Therrien, President, Patrick Lui, Michael Williams, Angela Hudson, Karen Ross, Arifin Graham, Michelle Easterly, Karen Young, Donna Tuele, Eulala Mills