

**From:** Karen Ross [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 23, 2023 2:36 PM  
**To:** Grant Scott; Alex Allen; tpeterson@islandtrust.bc.ca  
**Cc:** Sonja Zupanec; northinfo; Hornby Island Short-Term Accomodation  
**Subject:** Dec. 13th decision on Hornby Island re STVR's

Hi Grant, Alex and Tim,

As I am sure you have been receiving many letters on this subject, please add my name to the list.

Two things are coming together that create the risk that Vacation Rentals on Hornby will become illegal:

A. The Hornby Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) began the formal process to remove Vacation Rentals as a legal property use from our Official Community Plan (OCP) and Land Use Bylaws (LUB) in the fall of 2022.

The changed land use bylaw was to include a Temporary Use Permit (TUP) for any new Vacation Rentals and there was a general understanding that those who were operating legally would continue because of the historic right of property ownership in British Columbia - if a legal use becomes illegal, it is entitled to continue.

Towards the end of the meeting in September 2023, citing too much growth in Vacation Rentals, the LTC removed the TUP as a means to approve new Vacation Rentals saying that they felt more growth wasn't needed.

B. In October 2023, the Province of BC passed into law new legislation regarding short term vacation rentals that, among other things, removes Legal Non-Conforming

(Grandfathering) protections specific to STVRs beginning in May 2024— this applies province wide with no exclusions.

If the Island Trust changes the Land Use Bylaws to remove Vacation Rentals as a legal use, combined with the Provincial changes to the Local Government Act removing grandfathering protections in relation to STVR's, Hornby will have no pathway to legal operation for any STVR's existing or new. In effect all STVRs will no longer be legally allowed.

The Provincial legislation has passed and the removal of 'grandfathering' for STVRS will come into force in May 2024

The changes to the Hornby Island Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaws are underway but have NOT been drafted or passed yet.

### **What's at stake?**

Here are a some facts about Vacation Rentals on Hornby,

- STVRS are a big part of the Hornby community and its economic stability.
- Like the rest of BC, Hornby has housing challenges.
- However, unlike in urban areas, making Vacation Rentals illegal will not have any measurable impact on affordable or long term housing on Hornby. 90% or more of STVR owners are established Island community members, full and part time residents. Even if they are no longer able to rent seasonally, they will not offer a long term rental, as they stay in their home throughout the year. Those that would be forced to sell would also not create affordable housing. Hornby real estate prices are too high, and residential rents too low, for new owners to rent out. Meaning, a further march towards gentrification. Many Hornby residents continue to afford to be on Hornby through sharing their homes with Island visitors.
- 75% of currently collected MRDT funds are derived from the Vacation Renters, collected by the property owner and remitted to the Provincial Government. The visitors are paying, the owners are doing the paperwork.
- About \$50,000. ANNUALLY of MRDT money is currently contracted towards housing solutions for Hornby's "in-need of housing" workers.

- The Hornby Community profile (<https://communityprofiles.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/DRAFT-Hornby-Report-1.pdf>) counted 131 Vacation Rentals in 2023, that's a little over 10% of the houses on Hornby.
- It is a myth that Hornby Vacation Rentals are not regulated. In fact, the community came together to agree on the regulations. Including limited vacation rentals to a maximum of 5 months/year. Many properties do not rent for that full time frame. According to the Short Term Rental Association, around half of the properties that host Vacation Rentals are occupied each week in the summer. This represents about 375 visitors to the island, less than 10% of the estimated 4-5,000 visitors.
- HISTRA's 2021 Owners survey showed that owners put at least 70% of the income they earn directly into their homes costs including maintenance work landscaping, cleaning, insurance, property taxes, and other businesses on Hornby.
- Between owners and the 300-400 weekly Vacation Rental visitors, Vacation Rentals put \$2.4 million dollars every year towards the incomes of artists, craftspeople, boutiques, booze businesses, retailers, farm stands, restaurants, musicians, small businesses and workers on Hornby.
- Home sharing owners pay at least another million in taxes that support services all residents receive. (this is based on 2021 HISTRA Visitors survey estimates of weekly spending and Owners survey estimates of on island spending)
- \$2.4 million is equivalent to the average annual income for almost 20% of Hornby's labour force. Vacation Rentals sustain our island by directly supporting our economy. Think of all the small entrepreneurs that will not survive the loss of this activity unharmed.
- The Coop itself would be dramatically different. 3/4 of its annual income occurs from June to September, and 70% of that spending is done by "visitors".

The LTC can do more to directly support affordable housing on Hornby by ensuring the right to continue the use for current legal Vacation Rentals and allowing small managed growth.

What the Vacation Rental Association on Hornby (HISTRA) thinks is reasonable, fair to all and addresses community concerns:

1. The LTC directs staff, at the December 13<sup>th</sup> meeting, to ensure that currently operating, bylaw compliant properties will continue to operate legally.
2. A simple process will be managed this winter and spring to inform the OCP/LUB changes and provide clarity about the current number of operating and bylaw compliant STVRs on Hornby, their capacity, their frequency of operation, and who is operating them.

3. A cap on STVRs be established at 10-15% above the number legally operating the time the bylaw is enacted.

4. There will be attrition from the current list of properties operating as STVR's. Simply put, many of the operators will "age out". After the updated LUB/OCP is enacted, any new STVRs, up to the established cap, be approved through a set of criteria in a CVRD managed licensing program.

With the Trust going in the direction of these 4 points, it protects the needed income for owners and islanders. It puts control of future growth in the hands of our elected representatives. It will also address community concerns about those that are not following the expectations and existing regulations for operating a Vacation Rental.

The crux of the matter: If we don't figure out how to allow vacation rentals, where will the visitors stay? Camping? Glamping? In large commercial developments? Beside the roads and in public beach accesses?

Could the income from vacation rentals be replaced by commercial operations? Possibly.

However, when we agreed to the activity in our community planning, many moons ago, we made a conscious community decision to spread the economic benefit of housing our visitors throughout our community, and not into the pockets of a few owners of large scale commercial developments.

With thanks to each of you for your reconsideration on how to best manage housing our visitors and supporting Hornby Islanders incomes.

Karen Ross



cc:

Sonja Zupanec, Planner [szupanec@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:szupanec@islandstrust.bc.ca)

Correspondence: [northinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca](mailto:northinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca)

HISTRA