

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2023 3:04 PM
To: Alex Allen; Grant Scott; northinfo; Timothy Peterson; Sonja Zupanec
Cc: Karen Ross; HISTRA Association
Subject: Changes to Hornby Island Short Term Rental Rules and Zoning
Attachments: Little Trib 1979.jpg

Hello Alex, Grant, Timothy, and Sonja

I don't know any of you, but I understand you're my Island's Trust Representatives for the Island or involved in the long-term planning of the island. My name is Alexander Wardle and I have been coming to Hornby Island since 1978 (photo attached). Initially we came each summer as campers through to the Mid 80's. We then started to rent the Graham property on Little Tribune Bay Road, then known as Brigadier Farm, as short-term vacation renters well before the invention of Air B&B and Hornby Island.com.

In 1988, my Dad purchased the rental house and I have been on the Island every summer since that time. I have watched the Island and Islanders grow and thrive since that time. Yes, there has been change to the Island but considering the immense change to the cities that surround us it has been relatively mild.

In 2020, my wife and I purchased a second property on Seawright Road as a short-term rental investment for our kids as they get older. I feel we are now going to be punished for this should the Island vote to "opt out" of having short term rentals. At the time of purchase this property was already a short-term rental with Wind and Waves and had been for almost a decade.

To say that Hornby Island has had a strong effect on my love of the environment or a quest to maintain its strong community would be an understatement. My wife and I, along with our 3 kids, are committed to seeing the environment of this Island protected. We have, for the past 15 years, cleaned the beach (Little Trib) by hauling garbage off the beach three times per summer to have it recycled. In 2017-18 my kids walked Beulah Creek to prove to the Ministry Fisheries and Transportation that there were fish in there to be able to have the stream course upgraded and re-vamped to improve Salmon habitat. This stream runs across our property, and we value it greatly. We also re-planted the trees along this river course along with kids from the school in fall of 2020.

This fall we planted 17 Trees on our Seawright property and many more at our property on Little Tribune Bay Road to help minimize our carbon footprint and improve the environment. For years Paula and I have donated personally to various causes on the island. Paula and I have never sought personal recognition, nor have we asked for anything back and I like to feel that we have done a very small part to contributing to making Hornby's environment a better place for all residents and visitors.

Our kids Madeleine and Spencer have worked at the Co-op and the realty office for the past two summers and our youngest, Audrey, runs her lemonade stand at the golf course. We feel we are part of the community and between the two properties we would pay over 16,000 per year in property taxes, so we are well vested emotionally and financially in making sure the Island is a great place.

From an economic standpoint we have supported many Island vendors over the years by purchasing art, pottery, clothing, books, food, plants, and such from the local businesses. We have eaten at the many

restaurants, hired locals to baby sit our kids and we have visited the cidery and numerous other distilleries. When we built our house, I hired as many locals as we could to help support the island economy.

Ending Short term rentals on the Island would be devastating for locals and will do nothing to improve the rental housing stock on the Island. The impact of losing this economic contribution to the local economy would have a significant impact on many businesses. Sadly, given the polarization of the local population I am sure many of the local business owners are reluctant to fight for this given the potential impact to them personally and their businesses within the community if they speak out. Hornby has been known for its small-town justice if you're perceived to be on the wrong side of the loudest of voices, as such many voices just remain quiet.

Our Guests, either at the "Barn Suite" or "Tribune Bay Get-away", spend money, and lots of it when they come to the Island. My guess is that many other members in HISTRA would say the same thing and many members of Hornby Island business community would say that they depend on the revenue from summer visitors. That revenue/spending flows to the local businesses and their staff and this then provides for their own ability to pay their mortgage and or rent on the Island. This also helps improve the quality of all the businesses on the Island. We charge GST, PST and the MRDT and we have brand new septic fields to ensure that we are compliant with local regulations. These taxes, along with the income tax that I pay on the revenue contribute to the overall regional and provincial tax base.

When short term renters come to our property, we promote many local companies for them to visit. These businesses are part of the fabric that makes Hornby so great. As an example, the Market is successful in large part due to tourists and those who have greater economic means generally tend to purchase more than the locals. The festival is successful based on the people coming to the island. My family has raised money for the Island's causes for well over 30 years and many of the contributors have been from renters who visit in the summer. When our visitors arrive, we also stress the fragility of the environment, and we promote water conservation with low flow toilets and other items to help minimize our impact. We limit the impact on our properties to 6 guests at Tribune Bay Get-away and 2 guests at the Barn suite.

If we lose this economic impact, then business will start to slow, and jobs will be lost. The Co-op is successful based on the summer trade and their sales would shrink without the visitors that rent. Dale and his coffee store would have less customers and then he would hire fewer young people. Mellissa in the pottery store would sell less pottery and thus this would impact the local potters. The festival would see less visitors and be unable to support local artists. The impact would go on and on and the compound impacts would be great. A strong Island economy benefits many people on the Island and a strong local economy allows for contributions to help protect the local environment.

I would agree that there is a major housing problem in many areas of the province including Hornby. This, however, is not the fault of landowners who can rent their properties for a few months a year. This really is a zoning problem and a problem with the way the residential tenancy act is written as it's next to impossible to rent a home on the island to a local for a few months a year until the owners want to use it.

It is my belief that many homes will just sit empty until their owners come up for their annual visits or they will just end up being sold in time to others for their summer homes. I know our two will just sit empty as I would never consider renting them out long term as it would impact my personal use on each property. I am sure we are not alone, and it is my belief that changing the short-term rental policy will

really have very little impact on housing and will have a detrimental problem on the local economy and jobs.

If zoning was changed, I could build a coach house or even place a trailer on the back of my property on Seawright. This could then house someone who could look after my property and hold down a job on the island to help contribute to the Island. The rent on something like this would be far more in the market range than a full house. This could be a win/win for all. I don't do this now as the zoning does not permit me to.

I know there are many on the Island that wish they could go back in time and have no visitors but that is not possible and with the expansion of the provincial park we will only attract more visitors. What we all should be working on is a plan to use the new Hornby Rental tax to help provide housing for those who need it or to protect the environment as I feel that we really don't need to put much more effort into "marketing" the island. We should also be working on a plan to bring visitors to the Island all year in the short-term rentals to help spread the economic impact out year-round. We have many people wanting to rent our homes year-round and we must tell them sorry we are not allowed to. This not only effects our income from the property, but it also lessens the economic prosperity on the Island.

As Trustees you have a duty to represent all voices on the Island and work to preserve the natural environment. I would urge you to consider the large impact on the island should there be a change to the current ability to rent. Renters have been coming to this Island for over fifty years and real change on the island will come from changing density and zoning on properties.

Sincerely

Alexander Wardle

[Redacted]

Property Owner

[Redacted]

Little Trib 1979.jpg

