

From: Ryan Denomme [REDACTED] >

Sent: Sunday, March 15, 2026 5:24 PM

To: Timothy Peterson <tpeterson@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Alex Allen <aallen@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Grant Scott <gscott@islandstrust.bc.ca>; northinfo <northinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Sonja Zupanec <szupanec@islandstrust.bc.ca>

Subject: Concerns Regarding Proposed Vacation Rental Bylaw Changes

Dear Trustees Allen, Scott and Peterson,

I am writing regarding the proposed changes to the Vacation Rental bylaws discussed at the March 3 meeting.

Like many others, my impression from the January 23rd community meeting was that we were moving toward a balanced approach that would address concerns about water, septic systems, and responsible management while still allowing existing legal vacation rentals to continue operating. The introduction of both a permanent residency requirement and a significantly reduced cap was therefore **surprising and concerning**.

I am not a permanent resident of Hornby Island, primarily because my professional responsibilities require me to live elsewhere for most of the year. However, Hornby is deeply important to my family and me. Between ourselves, our friends, and extended family, our home is occupied a significant portion of the year. The remaining time it is used for vacation rentals, allowing others to experience the island while helping offset the significant costs of maintaining the property.

Importantly, these rentals are not replacing local housing or sitting empty when they are not rented. If the ability to operate a vacation rental were removed, the likely outcome would not be an increase in housing availability for full-time residents. Instead, many properties would simply become seasonal homes for owners and their guests—resulting in little change to summer population levels while eliminating important economic activity that currently benefits local residents.

Vacation rentals generate meaningful spending within the Hornby community. According to data compiled by the Hornby Island Short Term Rental Association, existing vacation rentals contribute over **\$2 million annually** in direct local spending through cleaning, maintenance, caretaking, and visitor purchases at local businesses. Removing a large number of legal operators would therefore have significant downstream effects on the livelihoods of many full-time residents who depend on this seasonal activity.

I also believe it is important that decisions about caps and restrictions be grounded in careful analysis. A recent comparison of short-term rentals per capita across Gulf Islands suggested that Hornby may have the highest density of vacation rentals. However, that comparison did not consider several critical contextual factors.

For example, Hornby has very few alternative forms of accommodation such as hotels or resorts compared to other islands. When these are included in the analysis, the difference between Hornby and comparable islands becomes much smaller. Additionally, Hornby's existing bylaws already limit vacation rentals to a relatively short seasonal window (May–September), which significantly reduces the total number of rental nights available compared with jurisdictions that permit year-round short-term rentals. When the analysis is adjusted to consider available rental nights rather than simply unit counts, Hornby is no longer an outlier with the current number of rentals that are available.

Given these factors, I would respectfully encourage the Trustees to **reconsider the permanent residency requirement and the proposed cap of 65 units.**

A more balanced approach would be to:

- Remove the permanent residency requirement.
- Set a cap that allows all currently legal and qualifying vacation rentals to obtain a Temporary Use Permit.
- Allow any future reductions in total numbers to occur gradually through attrition.

This approach would protect the community from unchecked growth while also recognizing the contributions of responsible operators who have invested in Hornby and followed the existing rules.

Finally, I would note that part-time residents represent a significant portion of the Hornby community. Many of us contribute economically, maintain properties responsibly, and have long-term plans to spend more time on the island in the future. Policies that effectively exclude this group risk creating unnecessary division within what is ultimately **one shared community.**

I appreciate the difficult balance the Trustees must strike in making these decisions and thank you for taking the time to consider these perspectives.

Sincerely,
Ryan