

Islands Trust
Mikaila Lironi Island Trustee

I asked and received 16 single spaced pages of opinions and ideas about housing on Lasqueti. I have summarized these points below. The views here are NOT those of the Islands Trust nor of Tim and myself. If anyone would like to see the full 16 pages, please email me at mlironi@islandstrust.bc.ca and I'd be happy to send you the whole (edited only for anonymity) document:

“Exactly how we go about finding a balance between the needs of nature and the needs of us is beyond me.”

It seems clear that most islanders want: 1. Affordable housing to ensure that we can keep a vibrant and diverse community. 2. The island to stay as it is: quiet, beautiful and unpolluted and 3. Not a lot of rules. Unfortunately, we cannot have all these things in tandem. We can only choose two of these options, and perhaps it is time for us as a community to decide which two are most important to us.

There are those who would like to see guest cabins rented out full time. The justifications for this are: increasing housing availability, maintaining demographic diversity, and supporting caregivers for the elderly so that they can age in place. The opposing view thinks that guest cottage rental is not a solution as it doubles density. Our island is already overpopulated for the size of our ferry and quality of our roads. There are already many empty dwellings here that are not available for rent. Would allowing guest cabin rentals really solve the problem?

There are already many empty dwellings here that are not available for rent. Would allowing guest cabin rentals really solve the problem? How would deterring summer people impact the availability of employment, and sales to part time residents who come and shop in the summer?



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We must have more affordable housing on the island so that youth are able to put down roots. Even the most talented folks on this island have trouble finding work and also maintaining a 40h work week. It's not just about the prohibitive cost of buying land, but the ability to find stable rental housing. There is also no official support for those who live in unconventional or unofficial rentals or dwellings: you can be evicted, whenever, with no notice.

If we are unable to make living here a reality for younger or less financially privileged folks then we have a problem. Without young, hard-working people on island there will be no more fire department, no fire responders, no one to organize events or arts and music, and no one to buck, split, and stack our firewood. At the same time, for those running businesses on island, finding employees has always been a problem.

There are also those who feel that the main barrier to being able to afford property on Lasqueti is lack of hard work. For example, there are those who made owning property their goal and simply made choices to ensure this reality. This has included family money, working in the city, having remote work while living on island, or a combination of the above. One might argue that not everyone has inherent privilege, but as hard work is a universal asset, this shouldn't be a problem. Others cited the increased disparity between wages and the cost of living (and land ownership) today versus all previous decades.

For someone who bought land on Lasqueti for \$1000 an acre, in an era when homegrown pot sold for \$4000 a pound, to judge the economic predicament of being a young working person today is deeply insulting. Even the most talented folks on this island have trouble finding work and also maintaining a 40h work week, and we all have to persistently advocate for a living wage. Older folks have suggested that if we want to own land too, we should abandon this community and work or live elsewhere. Most of us can hardly afford to volunteer anymore. The disparity of wages and cost of living is becoming increasingly noticeable.

Another contributor argues that even the 10-acre minimum does not prevent density increases or maintain island character. For example: there's a 30+ acre piece currently for sale. The 30 acres allows 3 dwellings and 3 guest cabins, but only on 10 of the acres are usable due to a covenant. There is a very urban clear cut and lawn at the end of Millicheap Road, and we're all anxiously waiting to see what happens with the upcoming north end subdivision.

How do we find creative ways to make affordable housing achievable for those who need it? Perhaps some new zoning that allows for tiny homes with centralized infrastructure can be created. Co-op housing is model

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... must do so at market value.

Another is concerned that the Islands Trust continues to preserve land so that it is unusable to live on. An alternative view is that there could be stewards who live on the land under preservation in order to keep it safe from harm.

Unfortunately, the long-term fears of many are accelerating into reality: our Lasqueti lifestyle is changing. I'm sure everyone has noticed the increase in vehicles, ferry passengers, increased land values and a more affluent demographic. There are complaints that affluent people who have moved to the island are more often consumers than contributors to the community, as well as acknowledgment and appreciation of folks who bring money and employment to the island.

Again, this is a compilation of voices in our community and views or opinions are not reflective of my own; they are shared in an attempt to give insight on how people feel about housing in our community.

Thank you everyone for reading, and please feel free to email me with any other ideas. Mikaila Lironi mlironi@islandstrust.bc.ca

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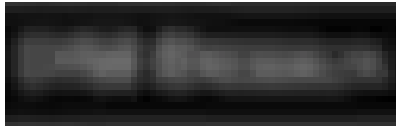
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