

July 26, 2020

Jim Traversy
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



Islands Trust

Dan Rogers drogers@islandstrust.bc.ca

Jeanine Dodds jdodds@islandstrust.bc.ca

David Maude dmaude@islandstrust.bc.ca

Robert Kojima rkojima@islandstrust.bc.ca

Letter in support of the Mayne Island Housing Society's proposed housing project on Village Bay Road.

I'm writing to express my full support for this project. As a longtime resident of Mayne Island for over 20 years and having been a tenant that whole time, I am very aware of the need for more available rental housing stock here as well as just about every other community on the planet currently. Somehow the private sector has not managed to keep up with the need for rental housing that is in reasonable condition and at affordable prices, which is having a disastrous effect on those of us not lucky enough, healthy enough or with the required family money to be able to purchase our own dwellings.

The need for more available long term rentals on Mayne is urgent both for the health and viability of our community and the needs of those long term residents who cannot purchase their homes and who face the possibility of having to move away. Businesses, services and community groups could not exist without a segment of people who are available to work at those businesses and volunteer in those groups. As we all know it has become increasingly difficult for young families to be able to purchase a home. Our community cannot exist with only older retired senior residents and vacation property owners. All communities need younger long term residents to do a lot of the work required to provide the services we all need.

I myself am no longer young but I am gainfully employed on Mayne. I also have contributed greatly to this community with many countless hours of volunteer community work over my 20+ years here and I think many of my Mayne Island neighbours would agree. I am not a disposable member of this community and I personally would like to have some sense of security in being able to continue living in this place that I love for many more years to come.

I have heard many of the objections from those who are opposed to this project going forward and while it's understandable for there's to be some concern, I can only conclude the outright objections amount to nothing more than NIMBY-ism (Not In My Back Yard).

The main and most valid concern with this project is regarding water usage. The Mayne Island Housing Society (MIHS) has stated that they will be careful to ensure the water is available, and is used responsibly. It should be noted that the property is extremely wet and has abundant water. The MIHS has also committed to employing a rainwater collection system, (which I believe should be a requirement for all new buildings in the Gulf Islands).

Will those who object to the project commit to making sure they are also being careful with their own water usage or do they just want the available water to be used in the traditional wasteful manner for only themselves? Are the Maple Drive residents going to protest any other new building in their neighbourhood who just stick another well in the ground, or lobby the Islands Trust to insist that the other residents of their area do everything they can to avoid wasting water and to put in rainwater collection? Not likely.

So this leads me to believe that the water objections are only a convenient fig leaf for nimbyism.

Other objections I have heard of are supposed concerns about the "ecosystem". I wonder if those concerns have stopped any of those residents from taking down any tree on their own property that they felt was necessary to remove, or taking down the trees required to build their houses on their properties? I doubt it. Why did they even build a house if they felt so strongly about preserving the ecosystem? Where were these residents when 15 years ago the property next door to the proposed project was virtually clear cut? All I heard at the time was "It's their property, not much can be done." Again, I believe this supposed concern for the ecosystem is really just more nimbyism.

The MIHS has stated that their intention is to preserve the forest on the 3 acre lot and only take down the few trees necessary to put in the buildings. Furthermore, the buildings will be closer to the road on the 3 acre site and shouldn't be even visible from the Maple Drive properties. There will be a solid and large section of forest between the neighbours and the proposed buildings.

Other objections are about possible noise. I believe the MIHS will be very conscious of the need to be good neighbours. I would support there being an on site property supervisor as well as a board of tenants of the property to ensure that standards are adhered to. I have been a quiet tenant resident for over 20 years, the main problem from noisy neighbours being those who use their places as vacation properties, showing up on weekends with a carload of friends and relatives to "let loose". Or those who, legally or not, rent their properties as AirBNB short term rentals to make money from their properties when they aren't using them.

I would support the MIHS in signing an agreement promising to be quiet and respectful neighbours. Would the property owners on Maple Drive agree to do the same?

I am disappointed in my Mayne Island neighbours who are being rather selfish and shortsighted by objecting to this proposed solution to a very real problem in our community.

They came to Mayne, cut down trees, put in wells and impacted the ecosystems in their properties, yet now that these people have their little chunks of paradise, they insist that the gate be closed behind them.

I urge the Islands Trust to make sure that the objections of the NIMBY residents do not interfere with this necessary project to help solve the rental housing problems, something that the Islands Trust has already agreed needs solutions. The Islands Trust has put in place rules around subdivisions for the purposes of community amenities and allowing for increased densities to help provide such solutions for our community and with the approval of our community. The Not In My Back Yard dissenters do not have the interests of the community at heart, only their own desires.

Sincerely,
Jim Traversy

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Dan Rogers drogers@islandstrust.bc.ca
Jeanine Dodds jdodds@islandstrust.bc.ca
David Maude dmaude@islandstrust.bc.ca
Robert Kojima rkojima@islandstrust.bc.ca
cc: Narissa Chadwick nchadwick@islandstrust.bc.ca
Mayne Island Housing Society mihousingsociety@gmail.com