

From: S. Leichter <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, February 11, 2022 3:15 PM
To: Laura Patrick; Peter Grove; Peter Luckham; SSInfo
Subject: Re: Proposed Bylaw 528

Trustees:

I write to urge you to take no further action on proposed Bylaw 528.

I was appalled to learn that you have asked Trust staff to report back on allowing additional residences in suites and cottages in all zones on the island and are considering changing our Official Community Plan to remove the long standing ultimate population limit. The Official Community Plan was the result of a long and difficult process of community discussion, input and agreement. To disregard this community work and decision in such a cavalier manner shows a complete disregard for the work done and the decisions made by the community as a whole. That this enormous change would be considered without considerable public consultation is terrible.

While there is no doubt that Salt Spring needs affordable and worker rental housing, this is not a problem unique to this island but is a difficulty in many places. What is unique is this island's carrying capacity. There must be a realization that there is only so much water, sewage capacity and other infrastructure. As much as it may be difficult for some to consider, not everyone can live here. The island just cannot support it. Bad planning will not fix our affordable and worker housing issues. Bad planning, however, will surely exacerbate our other serious problems such as water availability.

I have seen neither a definition of what would be considered affordable housing here nor any indication that an increase in allowed residences in suites and cottages or removing the population cap will guarantee such affordable housing. What will increase the residential rental availability is to actively enforce current bylaws prohibiting the many short term vacation rentals that openly and defiantly operate here.

Coincidentally, I recently received a letter about "mission creep" at the Trust. I urge you to maintain our current Official Community Plan population cap and re-orient your priorities to land use planning and protecting our fragile island environment.

Affordable housing is a legitimate problem but it should be dealt with by those with the power to construct purpose built housing, especially for island workers. They are the Capital Regional District, Community Services and other non-profit organizations, not the Islands Trust.

Sincerely

Steven Leichter