

From: Michael Wall <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, May 16, 2022 9:05 PM
To: Laura Patrick; SSIInfo
Cc: Peter Grove; Peter Luckham
Subject: Re: Proposed Bylaw 530

Yes, but ensuring that the rentals remain "affordable" may be more challenging.
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On 2022-05-16 6:26 p.m., Laura Patrick wrote:

> Good evening Michael and thank you for the suggestion. Yes there are
> mechanisms to ensure units are made available as rentals. Other
> jurisdictions are successfully using things like covenants. Laura
>
> Sent from my iPhone

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>> On May 16, 2022, at 4:23 PM, Michael Wall <[REDACTED]> wrote:
>>

>> Dear Trustees,

>> I wrote the letter below in regards to the proposed bylaw 528, but it still expresses my views on the new 530.

>> I think the key to making any changes of the sort you are considering is to make any newly available accommodation limited to use as genuinely affordable housing for locals who are working on Salt Spring. Unless this can be done by covenants (I suspect it would be almost impossible to achieve this) or otherwise, these changes are too dangerous to implement because they will not solve the main problem you are trying to address, but may cause unintended consequences. It is clear to me that we will never be able to provide housing for the unlimited number of people who want to reside here without ruining the precious nature of the place.

>>

>>> I am very concerned about the contents of this proposed bylaw.

>>> We do have a serious scarcity of affordable housing on Salt Spring, but an ill-considered, reactionary response and subsequent unintended consequences is, in my opinion, the wrong way to go. I understand the immense pressure you are under from all corners of the community, and I do not envy your responsibility. There are no simple answers.

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>>> There are several reasons for this housing problem, few of which are solvable by zoning changes alone:

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>>> 1. Worldwide monetization, and commodification of real estate, for purposes of investment. This increases property values.

>>> 2. The desire of many very wealthy people to build show homes, in this most pleasant part of Canada, and occupy them for short periods of the year.

>>> 3. The ability of home owners to incorporate STVRs into their properties, thus earning more than they would from long-term rentals, and with less risk of problem tenants.

>>> 4. The willingness of long-term rental landlords to increase rents (through renovations or otherwise) to rates they feel are justified by property market rate increase brought about by 1. above.

>>> 5. The realization by many, through their experience during the pandemic lockdown, that working from home is feasible and preferable to living and commuting in cities and suburbs, and Salt Spring is an ideal location to do so, thus creating increased market demand for both home purchases and rentals.

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>>> Many of these reasons are a consequence of global capitalism, and though dire and destructive, there is little that the Trust could do about it. The extension of the provincial speculator tax, and vacant homes tax to the islands would be useful to some degree. As would implementing a maximum house size regulation to deter monster homes which are environmentally caustic.

>>>

>>> But I think the most immediate and effective action the Trust can take is to enforce existing regulation of STVRs pro-actively through monitoring of listings. If need be, a permitting system for STVRs with a strict limit on the number permitted. This limit determined by water requirements and availability of rental stock generally. I also think that the creation of a "landlord damage insurance scheme" financed by permit fees, which would encourage landlords to take the risk of renting out property. And perhaps a rental subsidy scheme, also financed by permits, which would offer subsidies to landlords who rent to local service tenants at affordable rates?

>>> And I think the phrase "in perpetuity" has no place in local government zoning regulations.

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>>> You have very difficult decisions to make. I wish you the necessary wisdom.

>>>

>>> Respectfully,

>>> Michael Wall

>>> [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]