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Sent: Sunday, October 4, 2020 1:14 PM
To: ssiinfo <ssiinfo@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Peter Luckham <pluckham@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Peter Grove <pgrove@islandstrust.bc.ca>; Laura Patrick <lpatrick@islandstrust.bc.ca>
Subject: Housing Challenges and Solutions

Dear Colleagues,

I am a full-time resident and business proprietor on Salt Spring Island. I am writing because as a consultant in environmental philanthropy, with a scientific background in biology and conservation science, I am deeply concerned about integrative housing solutions on our island. I work with clients and partners across Canada, the United States, Europe and the UK, and even in Asia and Africa. My home is this lovely, fragile island.

Our fragility is social, cultural, and economic — not just environmental. Solutions must be similarly intersectional. We have the seeds of best-fit policy frameworks here in BC, such as Ecosystem Based Management legislated for the Great Bear Rainforest, but are ignoring them right here on our island. I want my home to sustain not only natural beauty, but a community of artisans and small businesses and farmers and non-profits and performing artists and tradespeople who can afford to live here, alongside generous contributing wealthier people who visit or retire here. In the last 100 years, Canada became a globally recognized multicultural society. Yet 100 years ago, Salt Spring was far more diverse than it is now!

[REDACTED] and I moved to Salt Spring [REDACTED], when I launched my independent consultancy after a long previous career in academia and foundations. Because I can work remotely, we could have moved anywhere in Canada, but we chose this place because of its reputation for thoughtful, leading-edge problem solving, local food and nature, artsiness, and active community engagement on multiple issues.

I am second guessing how far out in front of global and regional challenges we really are. I have had a chance, as a charitable funder and scholar, to visit and work with other communities around North America tackling similar challenges that are the local symptoms of global problems — climate adaption and mitigation, biodiversity and forest loss, income inequality, cultural erosion, and barriers to a just, sustainable economy.

Housing for all different kinds of humans — housing that sustains a diverse, vibrant community without doing excessive environmental damage or creating unnecessary stress on families and small businesses — is an absolute core element of successful solutions elsewhere in the world.

I find it fascinating that the Island Trust was established decades ago with just such an integrated vision in mind — environmental and social distinctiveness were front and centre in the enabling legislation and at the heart of the original vision. But nowadays, other places that don't *talk about* being sustainability leaders nearly as much as we do are actually quietly *doing far better*. Our innovative local form of government, so exciting decades ago and part of what attracted me here, seems to have evolved into a rather ordinary bureaucracy that is simply not addressing adequately key issues of the times. We need to do better, much faster. The issues are urgent, and we have been fiddling around for far too long.

We need a vision and policy framework in place that will accelerate the discovery and implementation of tools addressing multiple issues at once.

The Housing Challenges and Solutions Project you will be considering at your Oct 6th LTC meeting is a first step in *reclaiming and demonstrating leadership that is urgently needed*, and frankly *expected* of our elected officials and senior staff by citizens like me.

I did not choose to make my life here, to invest in this community economically and socially, only to find the fabric of the *community* (social and economic) and of the *environment* (climate, shorelines, watersheds, forests) are fraying rapidly. These two domains are absolutely interrelated. They cannot be dealt with separately. Conservation issues relate to housing — **all** housing (**not** just “affordable” housing) including that which subdivides thoughtlessly, fragments habitat, damages watersheds, and uses materials recklessly. And housing issues (**all** of them including land use, not just affordable housing, whatever that means) relate to all people’s livelihoods, schools, families, and environmental quality of our lives.

In short, I hope there will be no question about your embracing the proposed project — and giving it the resources it will need to bring *us* the best global solutions that can be informed by evidence and extremely well-diagnosed needs of Salt Spring. **It is time to lead or get out of the way.**

Thank you so very much for your consideration.

Dave Secord

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