

Members of the South Pender Island Local Trust Committee,

At the September 1, 2023, LTC meeting, trustee Falck spoke at some length about his belief that no rationalization was provided last term to support (through scientific data or, studies, or research, I have to assume), the regulations introduced in Bylaw 122. I must also assume, therefore, that he was not present during those meetings in which that information was offered. It was also made clear by the previous trustees during the public process that they were respecting and advancing the Guiding Principles of the Policy Statement, in which it states:

- “When making decisions and exercising judgment, Trust Council will place priority on preserving and protecting the integrity of the environment and amenities in the Trust Area.”
- “Trust Council believes that to achieve the Islands Trust object, the rate and scale of growth and development in the Trust Area must be carefully managed and may require limitation.”

The goal of the Policy Statement goes further:

- “As humans occupy and modify the Trust Area, ecosystems are subject to various pressures. Protection of these ecosystems is essential if they are to remain healthy and productive for the benefit of future generations.”
- “Planning must account for the cumulative effects of existing and proposed development to avoid detrimental effects on watersheds, groundwater supplies and Trust Area species and habitats.”
- “The principle of sustainability must be upheld.”
- “Protective measures are varied and can include actions ranging from preservation of natural areas in the form of parks and ecological reserves, to increasing public awareness and understanding of the need for sustainable use and stewardship by all landowners.”

Most people in our community agree that protection of the environment and rural character of South Pender is important, but we all recognize there is some disagreement on how to do it. This disagreement, or division as trustees have phrased it, is not historical as they have stated. One only has to read the Goals of the South Pender OCP in which the community was wholeheartedly in agreement with. They state:

2.2.1 To maintain the island’s rural character so community members and visitors may continue to enjoy a sense of tranquility, privacy, freedom from disturbance, and relative self-sufficiency within a visually attractive environment;

2.2.4 To ensure land use, development, and associated servicing are compatible with the rural island character and that their growth is gradual and sustainable;

2.4.3 Regulatory provisions pertaining to numbers of buildings, maximum floor area, lot site coverage, building and structure setbacks, heights, screening, and parking in land use regulatory bylaws and permits are to be developed with regard to land use compatibility, the retention of the rural island character, the protection of natural views, and the maintenance of residential privacy.

2.4.4 In its decision-making, the Local Trust Committee will ensure that land use planning and development promote reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, support efforts to adapt to climate change impacts, and recognize the role of existing rural and natural areas in the absorption of carbon.

The Climate Change Emergency Declaration is a clear indication that Trust Council recognizes that any steps towards reducing carbon, energy consumption, and taking further steps to mitigate the impact of climate change is imperative. The size of residences (the predominate development on South Pender), have direct impacts on releasing carbon and green house gasses, energy consumption, producing waste, and the loss of natural vegetation and disruption of soil. Larger homes also create greater consumerism

which negatively influences global warming. I can gladly pass on several reports that back up these matters, although common sense should also make them obvious.

Trustee Falck stated that without providing a rationalization and/or evidence, speakers would not sway him in any argument. He wasn't exactly clear what argument he was referring to but will assume he meant his current position or conviction about Bylaw 122 amendments.

If trustee Falck believes a rationalization and evidence are crucial to him making a decision, I will expect and look forward to his providing the same for any changes he wishes to make to the current bylaws, including how trustees intend to meet their obligation to the Trust Policy Statement, the South Pender OCP, and the Declarations made by Council with respect to Climate Emergency and First Nations Reconciliation.

Failure to do that would contradict their commitments to our community.

Respectfully,

Steve Wright
Pender Island
October 15, 2023