

February 12, 2025

South Pender Island LTC members,

In following your project there are a few matters than have raised my concern in relation to your initial commitments made to the community at the beginning of your term. During the first meeting you outlined your intentions to re-open discussion about the amendments made last term to the Land Use Bylaw through Bylaw 122. Your original position was to “rescind Bylaw 122” in it’s entirety “because that was what we were elected to do”. Your motion to rescind Bylaw 122, aside from demonstrating the absence of neutrality and your lack of knowledge regarding due process, was later tempered with your assurance that a significant majority of the community (“not just 51% but a large majority”), would have to agree with this direction. You also stated your sincere desire was to bring the community together, through dialogue, to repair the division caused by Bylaw 122.

It appears that you have either forgotten those commitments or intend to ignore them. In the first instance, according to the public record, there has not been a majority of residents that want changes made to the provisions laid out in Bylaw 122, specifically relating to floor area, interior setbacks, and height. Secondly, trustees have shown little interest in any comments that do not support your intention to rescind Bylaw 122 or significant portions of it. Your choice of APC members, of whom 4 out of 5 were vehemently opposed to Bylaw 122 last term, are using the same rhetoric that has been proven false with respect to potential consequences of Bylaw 122. One member has now suggested that our OCP policies should be ignored because it is an “old” document (not quite as old as the speaker, however).

The community process being followed is more prejudicial than you have repeatedly accused the previous LTC of conducting. You have refused to listen to alternative options provided by property owners resulting in fewer people becoming involved in this debate. In so doing, you have failed to repair the division you were so concerned about at the start of your term. In fact, it appears you have encouraged it to continue as long as it fits your purpose.

If there are areas in the bylaw that are creating significant hardship for property owners, then those particular provisions should be identified and the means to correct them discussed. To date, there has been no hardship demonstrated since the adoption of Bylaw 122 that can not be resolved through better design or a Variance application.

I’m asking you to honour your commitments made to our community at the beginning of your term and if you feel there are technical or legal errors in the current bylaw, to bring them forward for discussion. However, it is my belief that the provisions in Bylaw 122 upheld the policies of the Trust Policy Statement and our OCP. The Islands Trust Act and these policies are not to be ignored simply because they may be inconvenient for a few property owners.

Respectfully,

Steve Wright  
South Pender Island