September 27, 2021

Hornby Island Local Trust Council

Islands Trust

Dear Local Trust Council,

On September 26th, we met as a group of members of Hornby Island organizations interested in addressing the serious affordable housing situation here on Hornby. Groups represented included our local APC, the Hornby Island Residents and Ratepayers Society, the Hornby Island Community Economic Enhancement Corporation, and the Hornby Island Housing Society. Grant Scott, our local Trustee joined us as did Daniel Arbour, our Regional District Area A representative. The meeting was very productive. We shared information and thoughts on priorities, research, data collection, and overcoming obstacles as we seek to create opportunities for new affordable housing, or for securing the existing stock of affordable homes on Hornby.

Our group has agreed to continue meeting as the ‘Hornby Housing Coalition’, a community wide initiative to explore solutions to the housing crisis on Hornby and to gather data and share resources. We know that new approaches will be required, and that it will not be possible to build our way out of the current crisis at today’s land prices and construction costs. We will require a multi-pronged approach, and we will need the help of Islands Trust and hopefully the Regional District as well. Our group has expressed strong support for Daniel Arbour’s initiative to bring a request to the Comox Valley Regional District Board for a feasibility study for a tax line Housing Service for Hornby and Denman Islands. We have attached a letter from the Hornby Island Housing Society to the CVRD Board in support of this request. To make this Housing Service a reality, we will need Islands Trust support in ironing out any details of governance, and we urge our local trustees and Islands Trust staff to smooth the way for this really important initiative as much as possible.

We have identified some priorities that we can bring to you now, where we feel that Islands Trust may be able to assist us. If more information is needed on any of these items, we would be very glad to discuss them in more detail.

i. Urgent request that the current moratorium on by-law enforcement on illegal dwellings be extended while our coalition takes steps to increase affordable housing on Hornby.

ii. A request for Islands Trust staff support for long range planning.  Staff time to make an inventory of crown lands on Hornby that would be suitable for a housing land bank, and after community consultation, for the Trust to instigate re-zoning on these properties.

iii. Streamlined processing of any application that would be for housing needs.  A strong statement of expediting the approval process for all community housing options - rentals, coops, ownership, houses, communal buildings, serviced land, worker bunkhouses, live/work buildings, seniors’ assisted living facilities, etc.

iv.   Some staff support for our local APC as they consider possible policy and by-law changes to address affordable housing on Hornby. This could be invaluable to them as they consider alternative approaches.

v. A new Housing Needs Assessment for Hornby soon after the new census information is available next spring, to assist us in planning.

vi. Add housing to discussions for reconciliation with First Nations, future planning with B.C. Ferries, or other agencies that will need to be Stakeholders in future housing needs.

vii. Liaise with the C.V. Regional District for exploring alternative community systems for servicing to wells and septic systems.

Thank you very much for your time.

Sincerely,

Barbara Baird

For the Hornby Housing Coalition

Participating members: Islands Trust – Grant Scott

APC – Vicki Bale, Joanne Ovitsland

CVRD – Daniel Arbour

HIRRA – Lynn Nunley

HICEEC – Katherine Ronan, Donna Tuele, Karen Ross, Rudy Rogalsky

HIHS – Barbara Baird, Sadie Chezenko, April Lewis (note taker)