



News Release

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Islands Trust Council Narrowly Decides Against Galiano Bylaws

VICTORIA — In a rare move, the Islands Trust Council decided on August 14 to refuse an Official Community Plan amendment bylaw and an associated Land Use Bylaw amendment that had been referred to it by the Galiano Island Local Trust Committee. The decision was split in a 13 to 12 vote against the Official Community Plan amendment bylaw.

The proposed bylaws would have amended the Galiano Island Official Community Plan and related zoning regulations to permit one dwelling outright where lots are zoned for forestry use on Galiano Island. The amendments would also have removed current rezoning requirements for addressing specific siting, access, groundwater management, and sustainable forestry commitments prior to establishing a residence on lots in the Forest 1 zone. Thirty-eight percent of the land on Galiano Island is in the F1 zone.

“This was obviously a difficult decision and one that reflects the spectrum of opinion that exists throughout the Islands Trust Area,” said Kim Benson, Islands Trust Council Chair. “I hope that the discussion this topic has generated will be of use to the Galiano Island Local Trust Committee as it moves forward to find a resolution to this challenging issue. Already, I am hearing new and constructive ideas about how an acceptable solution could be reached.”

The bylaws came before Trust Council because the *Islands Trust Act* requires that all local trust committee bylaws must be approved by either the Islands Trust Executive Committee or the Trust Council. The four person Executive Committee is elected by Trust Council from amongst its members. The *Islands Trust Act* requires Executive Committee members to serve as chairs of local trust committees and to review local bylaws for approval. After the Executive Committee had considered the bylaws and refused them in June, the Galiano Island Local Trust Committee referred them to the entire Council for consideration.

The *Islands Trust Act* indicates that bylaws cannot be approved if they are contrary to the Islands Trust Policy Statement, adopted by both Trust Council and the province, which contains general policies designed to preserve and protect the unique amenities and natural environment of the Islands Trust Area for the benefit of the residents of the Trust Area and of British Columbia generally. Trust Council members were split on whether the bylaws were consistent, with a narrow majority deciding they were not.

Approximately 100 people attended the public meeting. Prior to considering the Galiano bylaws Trust Council members received almost 500 written submissions from members of the public, speaking to both sides of the decision.

The Islands Trust Council consists of 26 elected trustees who represent some 25,000 people living in the Islands Trust Area. The Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the unique environment of the Islands Trust Area through planning and regulating land use, development management, education, cooperation with other agencies, and land conservation. The area covers the islands and waters between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island. It includes 13 major and more than 450 smaller islands covering 5200 square kilometres.

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