

Denman Community Land Trust Association - Delegation to the May 2, 2017 Local Trust Committee re: Seniors' Affordable Housing Project

Denman Community Land Trust Association (DCLTA) will soon be applying to amend the Denman Island Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw to enable the creation of 8 dwelling units (four duplexes) dedicated to affordable housing for low income residents of Denman Island over the age of 65.

The land subject to the bylaw amendment and strata subdivision process is Parcel M, Section 18. The application will propose that this four acre parcel be divided into two 2-acre parcels, with the parent property retained by the owner.

To advance this project, DCLTA has undertaken measures involving research, outreach and two regulatory changes to alter the status of the property. The research resulted in completion of a needs assessment (Sept. 2014), a Wastewater Assessment for Development (Jan. 2016), and a business plan for the project (June 2016).

The outreach has included discussion with and updates to the owners of neighbouring properties from 2013 onward; an open house to introduce the proposal to the community (Feb. 2014); a meeting with Trust Planner Milne (Mar. 2014); meetings with VIHA/IH and MOTI in 2014 and further update-meetings in 2016; and a pre-application meeting with Ann Kjerulf, Islands Trust Regional Planning Manager, this past March, as recommended in the Bylaw Application Guide. This presentation today is DCLTA's second delegation to the LTC.

Regarding the regulatory changes, we applied successfully to exclude the parcel from the ALR (approved by the ALC in Nov. 2016), and we arranged for transfer of the easement area on the Guest House property to Lot M (as recommended by MOTI).

Further, following two work bees and many hours of individual volunteer work to open up the project area, we have revised the project concept map to create a more useful strata subdivision configuration (see the attached). Our next step is to host a pre-application community information meeting, which is tentatively scheduled for July.

Today, in advance of that meeting and of our application for the necessary bylaw amendments, we are asking that the LTC consider adopting an "affordable housing first" policy that gives priority to any application relating to an affordable housing initiative. This tool is described on p. 44 of the 2010 *Islands Trust Affordable Housing Tool Kit* and is proposed as an effective way of streamlining and facilitating affordable housing projects. According to the tool kit, a policy to this end had already been adopted by Salt Spring Island at that time. We are also asking that the LTC consider reducing the fees and cost-recovery charges applicable to all applications for affordable housing.

Time is of the essence. The land cannot be purchased in advance of bylaw and subdivision approvals, and fundraising for the land purchase depends on these approvals. Also, construction will require a combination of government grants and loans that require DCLTA's secured

ownership of the land. Delays are critical, considering that the need for affordable housing is immediate.

Islands Trust fees may seem minor compared to construction costs; however, Trust fees drain DCLTA's resources at a time when other costs must also be covered up front (p. 45 *Islands Trust Community Housing "Tool Kit"* – pp. 44 & 45 attached).

Please consider and adopt an “affordable housing first” policy in order to fast track the amendment process and to enhance cooperation within the process, shrink time lags and reduce fees.

Harlene Holm
on behalf of DCLTA