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Reprint from Volume 23 Number 15

July 28, 2011

Hornby Island passes new STVR bylaws

Short Term Vacation Rentals on Hornby Island may soon be subject to two proposed bylaws: N^o 142, which amends the Official Community Plan, and N^o 143, which amends the Land Use Bylaw. Both have had third reading, and await approval by the Islands Trust Executive Committee and the Minister.

Bylaw 142 recognizes STVRs as a permitted land use, requires adequate sewage capacity, and suggests that additional water needs should be met by water catchment rather than well drawdown. It emphasizes, however, the need to deal with impacts and to maintain the residential character of neighbourhoods.

To accomplish this, the bylaw requires that the property be ordinarily occupied by the owner. Regulations are intended to limit how many people may stay on a property and how long they can stay. They also require that adequate parking be provided, that the appearance of the property remains residential, and that tents and recreational vehicles are not used for this purpose.

The bylaw also encourages STVR owners to form an association to establish 'best practices'.

Bylaw 143 provides more detail. It specifies that rental vacation homes (STVRs) may be occupied by paying guests from May to September only. Occupancy is limited by the following clause, here quoted in its entirety:

'3.23.2: During a period of seven (7) consecutive days a dwelling unit may be occupied by only one group of paying guests.'

While this clause limits short stays, it also appears to require unoccupied periods between groups of guests.

Vacation home rentals are to be identified by small signs: '7.7: On lots where a vacation home rental use is in

use, a sign measuring 15 centimetres (6 inches) by 30 centimetres (12 inches) clearly readable from a public road is required and must provide contact information including name and telephone number of the owner or their agent who is reasonably available on an ongoing basis.'

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'This article was published (July 28, 2011) in 'Island Tides', an independent, regional newspaper distributing across the Southern Strait of Georgia from Tsawwassen to Victoria to Nanaimo.'

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