



Islands Trust

Hornby Island Local Trust Committee

A Guide to Conducting Vacation Home Rentals on Hornby Island December 2012

This guide outlines the regulations governing vacation home rentals and the planning policies on which they are based. Property owners considering conducting vacation home rentals should read the actual definition and regulations in the Hornby Island Land Use Bylaw and the policies in Section 6.5.3 of the Hornby Island Official Community Plan. If you have any questions, please contact Islands Trust planning staff. See links and contact information at the end of this guide.

Introduction

Vacation home rental refers to the use of a residential dwelling to provide temporary accommodation for paying guests. (Rental for periods longer than four weeks is considered a residential use.) This commercial use of residential property can present a challenge for destination communities which have taken a range of approaches. Some (like most of the Gulf Islands) have prohibited the use in order to retain residential neighbourhoods for purely residential use. Others have adopted a permitting or licensing process.

Here on Hornby Island, vacation home rentals are generally accepted for their contribution to accommodating the many visitors who support a tourism-based economy. Rentals provide valued supplemental income for homeowners. At the same time, there are potential impacts that are cause for concern. After extensive community consultation, we have developed a made-on-Hornby approach to allowing vacation home rentals in ways that attempt to balance the interests and concerns.

Options

There are three options for conducting vacation home rentals:

1. Summer vacation home rentals

From May to September vacation home rentals are allowed through zoning regulations on any residential or agricultural lot in order to help address the summer demand for accommodation.

2. Year round vacation home rentals

At any time of the year, vacation home rentals can be conducted on lots where an owner or tenant is residing in one dwelling while a second legal dwelling is made available for rental in order to meet off-season accommodation needs (such as in conjunction with workshops and other events).

3. Commercial-level vacation home rentals

Home-owners wishing to conduct vacation home rentals at a more commercial level may do so through a successful Temporary Use Permit application.

1. Summer Vacation Home Rentals

These are allowed on any residential or agricultural lot in accordance with the regulations which are designed to protect the character and environment of residential neighbourhoods (recognizing that usually there is no on-site supervision as is the case with house guests, B&Bs, campgrounds and resorts).

Period of use

The use may only be conducted during the months of May, June, July, August and September so that the dwelling is available for its primary residential use for most of the year.

Rental turnover

Only one rental can be conducted during any 7 day period in order to prevent a frequent turnover of guests (which is associated more with a motel than a residential dwelling). The one rental can be for the full 7 days or as few as 2 or 3 days.

Occupancy levels

Only two beds can be provided in each bedroom. On lots less than one hectare, 3 bedrooms may be used. On lots one hectare or larger, 4 bedrooms may be used. This is to keep occupancy levels at usual household size (the average Canadian household is 2.5 persons and 98% of households are of 5 persons or less) and to reduce potential problems with noise, water use and waste disposal on smaller lots.

Parking spaces

One parking space must be provided for each bedroom being used for the rental.

Signage

While a vacation home rental use is conducted a sign must be posted providing the name and telephone number of the owner or their agent who can be available to deal with any problems. The sign should be 15 centimetres by 30 centimetres (6 inches by 12 inches) and visible from the road.

Sewage disposal

The water supply of one area of Hornby Island (the peninsula that includes Anderson Drive, Whaling Station Bay, High Salal and most of St Johns Point Road) comes from an aquifer that the Province classifies as highly vulnerable and highly developed. Before a vacation home rental is conducted in this area, an authorized person (as defined in the Sewage System Regulations of the Public Health Act) must provide a statement to the Islands Trust that the sewage disposal system is capable of providing adequate treatment for the proposed rental use.

Residential character

The residential character and appearance of a lot should not be altered except for the provision of required parking and signage.

2. Year-round Vacation Home Rentals

These are allowed on larger lots where zoning regulations allow a second dwelling. When an owner or tenant is living in one legal dwelling the second legal dwelling may be used for a vacation home rental at any time of the year. The other regulations outlined above for summer vacation home rentals also apply to these situations.

3. Commercial-level Vacation Home Rentals

This is an option for property owners who are interested in conducting vacation home rentals at a more commercial level that exceeds what is described in the previous options. The additional use might involve year-round rentals on a single dwelling lot, a higher level of occupancy or more frequent turnover of rentals.

A property owner can apply for a Temporary Use Permit (which essentially provides temporary site-specific zoning for uses that are not permitted through land use regulations). A Permit can be issued for up to three years and can be renewed for a further three years. At the end of that time the property owner can apply for a subsequent permit.

The Hornby Island Official Community Plan includes guidelines for issuing a Permit. Provincial legislation requires that a proposed permit be subject to public notification through a local newspaper and notices delivered to immediate neighbours. The decision to issue a Temporary Use Permit rests with the Local Trust Committee. A permit may include specific conditions. A copy of the 'Guide to Temporary Use Permits' and the application form are available on the Islands Trust website.

Best Practices and Problem Solving

The Hornby Island Official Community Plan encourages owners of vacation home rentals to form an association which could establish best practices and ways to resolve problems so that good standards are in place. In the absence of such an association, owners are encouraged to provide information to visitors and neighbours about who to contact to quickly resolve any problems that arise.

Links and Contact Information

Hornby Island Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaws:

<http://www.islandstrust.bc.ca/ltc/ho/bylaws.cfm>

Islands Trust Northern Office:

700 North Road, Gabriola Island, BC V0R 1X3 (250) 247-2063 (Toll Free via Enquiry BC 1-800-663-7867)
www.islandstrust.bc.ca

Hornby Island Local Trust Committee Contacts:

Trustee Tony Law
tlaw@islandstrust.b.ca

Trustee Alex Allen
aallen@islandstrust.bc.ca

Chair David Graham
dgraham@islandstrust.bc.ca



Islands Trust

Hornby Island Local Trust Committee