

Bylaws have been the hot topic of local Islands Trust conversation this month. Draft Bylaw 105 has opened this Pandora's box, but before we get to it, let's have a little conversation about bylaws in general. As with all islands in the Trust, our bylaws are generated from our Official Community Plan (OCP). Our OCP is the product of hours and hours of meetings by community members through which our vision of Saturna Island was created. The most recent review began in 2000 and was signed into law on July 13, 2001.

This necessitated we update of our Land Use Bylaws (Bylaw #78), which is (and I quote from the bylaw) “A bylaw to regulate the use of land, buildings and structures, the subdivision of land, the provision of off street parking spaces, screening and landscaping, and the erection of signs in the Saturna Island Trust Area.”

In 2001, a number of potential amendments were identified by the planner and our local trustees at the time Tom Johnstone & John Money (yes, like all politicians, we new trustees ensure prior trustees receive credit, or blame, depending on your point of view). A series of drafts were written and reviewed by those trustees, the APC and the community, until a satisfactory final draft was achieved. The revised Bylaw #78 is Saturna Island's own personal set of land use regulations. Some amendments have been added since then, but no full scale review has been done. These bylaws, usually complaint driven, are administered by the Bylaw Enforcement Officer who is guided by the following sections of Bylaw #78:

1.3 Penalty 1.3.1 Any person who violates any of the provisions of this Bylaw is, upon summary conviction, liable to a penalty of not more than two thousand dollars (\$2000.00) and the cost of prosecution. Each day that such violation continues, or is allowed to continue, constitutes a separate offence.

This brings us to the draft Bylaw 105, which is the **Bylaw Enforcement Notice & Dispute Adjudication System**, a proposed additional tool to enforce bylaw infractions. One important thing to remember is that **there are no new bylaws** attached to Bylaw 105, it only lists offences already in our Land Use Bylaw #78. Draft Bylaw 105 simply introduces a new way to enforce the bylaws we already have. That new way is the issuance of fines (potentially much smaller than the \$2,000 per day maximum contained in bylaw #78), graduated (even less) for early payment, and a fast-track adjudication system for disputing tickets (rather than lengthy and costly legal action). Rather than list the myriad of facts that gave rise to the system, or the list of potential infractions on Saturna, I will give you the link to access the bylaw and its background material, some 74 pages worth.

The link, <http://islandstrust.bc.ca/ltc/sa/agenda.csm> will take you to the agenda page for Saturna Island Local Trust Committee meetings. Look for the April 12, 2012 LTC meeting. Beside it is the **agenda package**, which is where you will find info on Bylaw 105.. Under item 3, **Community Information Meeting**, you will see **3.1 Bylaw Enforcement Notification No. 105**.

This information includes the Islands Trust staff report that explains the bylaw in layperson terms, a list of the current Saturna Island bylaws, the proposed fines for the infractions of those bylaws, and the methodology for disputing those fines. It also includes all of the rationale for creating the system, and describes the pilot program initiated in West and North Vancouver (North Vancouver is where we would have adjudication services available to us).

You can also find two pamphlets at the General Store that describe the proposed bylaw; **The Bylaw Enforcement Notice and Dispute Adjudication System**, and **Bylaw Enforcement Frequently Asked Questions**, are there for the taking as you walk in the door by the cash register.

Back to the agenda package, on pages 19 & 20 you will find a sample of a “Bylaw Violation Notice” and “Alleged Offender’s Copy” followed by a copy of the “**Local Government TOOLKIT: Bylaw Dispute Adjudication System**”. This booklet explains how the Local Government Management Association of B.C., the B.C. Ministry of Attorney General and the BC Ministry of Community Services came to recommend this system for processing bylaw infractions.

Please read this information and make up your mind for yourself about this bylaw, as there has been quite a lot of confusion about what it actually does.

Miles Drew, the head of the Islands Trust Bylaw Enforcement department will be making a presentation about draft Bylaw 105 at our upcoming Local Trust Committee meeting on June 21 at 12:30 in the Community Hall and will be available to answer any questions you might have about draft Bylaw 105 and about Islands Trust Bylaw Enforcement in general. Regardless of how one feels about this draft bylaw, we ask that we treat Miles Drew with respect, this is a job he has to do and he is a guest on our island. If anyone feels the need to vent about the system, please direct your attention to Trustee Paul (his words, not mine; although it is my very favourite of all his suggested edits!)

Whether we adopt or do not adopt draft Bylaw 105, it has certainly created an awareness of the bylaws that are currently in our Land Use Bylaw #78. Perhaps now would be a good time to launch a review of our bylaws.

Way less controversial than bylaw enforcement are the Community Stewardship awards given out by the Islands Trust each year to groups and individuals for strengthening island communities and safeguarding the environment. This year we had a record number of nominations from which six awards will be chosen. The very fact of being nominated is high praise indeed, and Saturna is again well represented, having two nominees, John Wiznik for his commitment over many years as our fire chief, shepherding our fire department to the modern, well-resourced, professional and highly trained organization that it is today. And to SEEC, the innovative Saturna Ecological Education Centre that has revitalized our school and brought youth, enthusiasm and jobs to our island. The Islands Trust Council will select the recipients amongst the eighteen nominees at its upcoming quarterly meeting this June.

Besides spending time on Bylaw 105 and a myriad of individual local issues, I attended a meeting of the Local Planning Committee this month. I also finally passed muster with Parks Canada and am the official Trust representative on the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve Advisory Board and have my first meeting with them next month. I also went to the Gulf Islands National Park Reserve (GINPR) information meeting at the Rec Centre and had some very interesting and informative conversations with the Parks staff. I urge you all to take the time to share your thoughts of what you would like to see happen with all the land they manage on Saturna. Maybe some easy access campgrounds to bring in more visitors? Or develop some trails to attract more visitors?

The Superintendent, Wayne Bourque, had some interesting ideas about tying together local accommodations and expanded trail systems to offer Park visitors a more complete vacation package.... sounds good to me....but they need to hear more voices. Drop into their office or their booth at the Lamb BBQ, or if you'd rather talk to me, as your GINPR Advisory Board rep I'd be happy to pass on your suggestions. And, as always, if you have any questions, please contact me at 539-5150 or at pjanszen@islandstrust.bc.ca or Trustee Paul at 539-5454 or at pbrent@islandstrust.bc.ca