

From: William Thomas <willsenior@protonmail.com>
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HORNBY CELL TOWER BULLETIN

APRIL 13, 2024

Outside the co-op earlier [today](#), Grant called me over, asking, “Do you want to hear the latest on the tower?”

“I’m not sure,” I replied. Then, not wanting to spoil his big surprise: “Go ahead.”

“There will be no tower on Hornby,” Grant declared.

“Yea!” I said.

Before I could finish cheering, Grant added: “Not in its present location. I know this is not what you guys want to hear, but...”

Turns out, trustee Grant Scott is fine with a cell tower on Hornby Island. Just not near the school, other buildings, or near people.

Where then?

“Some other place on Crown Land far from people,” Grant reiterated.

“Rogers says there are no other suitable locations on Hornby,” I reminisced.

“We both know what that means.”

“That saying no other sites are suitable is just a pressure tactic?”

“Exactly,” Grant nodded.

What then?

The only other discussed location for blanketing Hornby Island with electromagnetic radiation — though at greatly reduced power densities — would be up on Mt Geoffrey.

But that's a provincial park, with presumably bushels of red tape required for road, power line, fire suppression and tower construction. Of course, to adhere to this latest “not near people” stipulation, any proposed mountaintop cell tower would have to be placed far from the recycling depot and Slade Road. And dismantled every summer during tourist season, when Mt Geoffrey's roads and trails are crowded with... people.

What about Helliwell Provincial Park? Same restrictions apply.

Salt Spring's LTC torpedoed itself by agreeing to a second cell tower. Just not where Rogers wanted to put it — in residents' front yards up on Channel Ridge. Guess where that multiple antenna tower is radiating from [today](#)?

Right.

“Are the other two trustees onboard with this?”

“I don't know what they're thinking,” Grant told me.

“Is the Trust [LTC] going to vote on the tower this month?”

“We have not received an application from Rogers,” Grant replied. “Until we receive their application, we can't vote on it.”

One-quarter true: Obviously, Hornby's LTC cannot vote on Roger's application for a permit to proceed until it receives Rogers' application for a permit to proceed.

Three-quarters cop-out: Carla Conkin's legal opinion underlines that **our trustees can vote non-concurrence at any time**, regardless of the status of the Rogers application. This includes Rogers' most recent residents survey, a process completed last month.

Given how Brian Gregg and “our” unelected ex-Trust Planner colluded to keep Roger's July '22 tower application secret *until after the October '22*

LTC vote — thereby ensuring this highly contentious issue would not become a hot button election issue — our double-crossed LTC has every right, many might say duty, to vote nonconcurrency at its next meeting later this month.

And finally shut down a corporate bully's reprehensible travesty of our democratic rights and long-established community process. Not to mention hijacking without compensation our considerable time, energy, expenses and expertise. (And we're not the only ones.)

Why does the Islands Trust feel so strongly that despite our current fiber optic installation and Starlink orbiting overhead, it must give precedence to corporate profiteering over its own constituents?

Right again.

"I don't know what ISED will do," Grant added, alluding to our LTC's favourite "we're helpless," hand-wringing refrain.

"ISED won't do anything," I responded, before reminding him: "They did not overturn the Telus decision."

* * *

Unfortunately, a spine-crippling cowardice virus appears to have infected politicians everywhere on this wobbly world. With our LTC still refusing to become proactive, 21+ months into this fight it appears that Rogers "strike team" (their phrase) can continue holding their unwelcome threat over our heads by *withholding* their tower construction permit application until after the next LTC election here.

That could be a risky gambit. The assumption that a new batch of trustees will be more amenable to injurious corporate exploitation could backfire as surely as "regime changing" Putin for Medvedev.

The good news: With all three trustees now on record opposing the tower, the [July 2022](#) Roger cell tower application is dead.

(Yea, etc.)

But...

Just like the CVRD's Dove Creek decision to vote "no, at least not here" — it remains to be seen whether our local government will similarly demand that Rogers stick it somewhere else on Hornby. With whatever image that brings to mind.

If our remaining trustees reverse course and go along with Grant's "compromise", Rogers and Hornby's concerned residents are back to square zero. And this whole sorry "process" begins anew.

Is this really the legacy our elected representatives want to leave behind?

Come on, guys.

Remember the condos.

And just say no.

Will Thomas
April 23, 2024

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Grant Scott has requested that I "tell everyone" of these developments. Now that you know, please write your representatives with your respectful responses and suggestions [today](#). (For the record, kindly cc your remarks to my email.)

Grant Scott:
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ADDENDUM:

"Innovation, Science and Economic Development (ISED) Canada recognizes the need to have a collaborative and consultative policy with respect to antenna-supporting structures. As such, [CPC-2-0-03 Radiocommunication and Broadcasting Antenna Systems](#) requires proponents of an antenna system to consult local communities and respond to all reasonable and relevant concerns. Since municipalities are directly impacted by towers in their community, our procedures also allow municipalities to define their own antenna siting procedures and make informed decisions in regards to providing concurrence for the proposed tower."

-Bernie Ries, Operations Manager, STS-Western Region
ISED Canada [Feb 25](#), 2023

William Thomas