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February 16th, 2010

to: O.C.P. Steering Committee

c/o: Sue Ellen Fast
Chair of the O.C.P. Steering
Committee

Dear Committee Members

EDITED TO ADD: We are currently members of the Belterra Co-housing group and we have been involved with some members of the former Island Spirit group. We are well connected both personally and professionally to the folks on Bowen and have been planning to move to Bowen - awaiting the right place and circumstances. So yes, we look forward to becoming part of the Bowen community in the near future.

We are writing to you as a party committed to bringing forward 'co-housing' developments on Bowen Island. As the current O.C.P. review is accepting submissions regarding future developments on Bowen, we would like to share with you the reasons we believe 'co-housing' should be adopted as a positive and viable form of development in the Snug Cove area.

Our interest in this type of development revolves around creating greater sense of community for our children in the most sustainable way. After our first daughter was born in 2000, we discovered that we required the help of a 'village' to raise our child. Living in a single family household we found our 'support system' was inconsistently available and dispersed over the city. With this realization we began to make inquiries regarding alternative housing with the creation of community at the forefront. We then visited an existing 'co-housing' development and found it successful as a supportive community. This group took full responsibility at all levels: as individual home owners sharing a larger complex; with the larger municipal community; and with their stewardship of the untouched land which surrounded the development. Due to reasons of location and work at that time, we were unfortunately not able to commit to this specific co-housing community.

Co-housing offers us the following: neighbours who are dedicated to helping raise our family; neighbours who work together in creating and maintaining a beautiful place to live; individuals committed to working towards a more sustainable development on a smaller footprint; due to the economy of scale of a collection of households the possibility of pioneering low impact waste disposal, water collection and alternative energy systems; community outreach; setting aside areas where stewardship of the

environment is prioritized; maintaining the rural character of Bowen with its clustering of buildings and its larger 'greenspace'.

Co-housing offers the municipality responsible neighbours and stewards. From my experience, co-housing incorporates a process of development which works actively with planners, neighbours and the larger community, and seeks the best solutions to all issues that arise. Drawing from a large pool of private resources amenities and below market housing can be included.

As a housing design professional I have been involved in many projects on Bowen Island and have presented in a 'Housing Symposium' which occurred a few years back. I believe the 'co-housing' model both embraces the maintenance of the island's rural character, as well as satisfying the many development and housing issues native to Bowen. Lori, I, and our two daughters ask that the committee include the 'co-housing' typology as part of the new O.C.P. and zoning guidelines.

Thank you for your consideration.

Warm Regards

Steven Snyder
Lori Snyder

Note from Sue Ellen Fast