

Dear Mayor and Councillor of the District of Ucluelet,

The following pertains the rezoning application of Lot 543 on Hyphocus island from the current rural residential to the R-7 (SF)/Tourist Accommodation, R-6 Infill (SF) and Public Institution.

I am a resident of [REDACTED] (two lots North of the proposed development) on Hyphocus Island with a young family and am not in support of the proposed change in zoning to allowed for the proposed development. Creation of a densified new neighbourhood on an island accessed by a single road through an entrenched residential area where the land use is covered by approximately 25% open air sewage lagoons seems ignorant of the impacts a neighbourhood of this size will generate. The initial zoning as rural residential, from a general overview appears to be in place as a vegetated and undeveloped buffer from the residential population historically found in Ucluelet. The proposed zoning and general plans appear to transplant a larger style municipality vision and parachute it to onto one of the few affordable acreages found in Ucluelet.

1. *Increase traffic on Helen Road:*

Creating a densified neighbourhood with only a single lane access via an established single-family neighbourhood is not standard in most municipalities and will impact a large portion of current residents and increase the probability of an unfortunate accident along the various corridors leading to Hyphocus Island. The developer has stated that “a single vehicle per minute during peak weekday hours” would be seen if approved and built out. Without thorough explanation this seems absurdly modest. Given the climate in Ucluelet most homes have an above average total vehicles to total occupants compared to that of Canadian averages. As an example, of the 9 developed and occupied lots currently on Hyphocus there are a total of 22 primary vehicles used by both owners and renters. This does not account for the varying tourist visitation numbers or service vehicles that utilize the road.

The current proposal will utilize Helen Road as a traffic connector to the town core and not Peninsula Road as the developer hopes. Current residents of Hyphocus and Southern Helen Rd typically utilize Helen Rd to access the core of town to avoid the two school zones (spanning 375m from Matterson Dr. to Alder St.). Vehicle number traversing along Helen will exponentially increase with a higher probability for incidents with various driveways and blind hills connecting to Main St or Matterson Dr. Various portions of the road are currently used by families for curb side basketball, boat trailer parking and other uses further increasing a catastrophic interaction. The developer has incorporated road adjustments to Peninsula and Marine with a consideration of Helen Rd. South of Marine but there will need to be a substantial review of the entire corridor including updates to traffic calming measures, pedestrian protection along the majority of Helen Rd. if densification is to be considered through a development of the scale.

A single road also poses a considerable risk in the event of a natural disaster, utility failure, serious accident or medical incident. The recent sanitary line upgrade has highlighted the fragility of access over the past few months along the narrow choke point South of Marine Dr. along Helen Rd. I currently volunteer with the Ucluelet Fire Department and the significant disruption has limited my participation and availability to respond to 911 call outs to non-work hours while materials, machinery and trucks have the ability to block traffic up to 30-minute periods.

With the single-entry way, it has also highlighted the susceptibility if something were to occur trapping residents on Hyphocus or hinder assistance from emergency support if needed. In a previous letter from 2023, I mentioned a large multi neighbourhood development in Coquitlam located on Burke mountain, which Ekistics was also significantly involved in designing. The original rural road access to these new

neighbourhoods was expanded to remove direct property access/driveways and implementing two separate 4 lane connector roads via streets Coast meridian and David Ave. A Google Maps review can show you a quick general overview of how a corridor should exist to a densified neighbourhood as opposed to a single road with direct residential access.

2. *The sewage lagoon proximity concerns:*

The Hyphocus Island sewage lagoon is a fenced off three cell open air sewage lagoon which works on the premise of time and aeration with oxygen, to reduce the overall harmful organisms that eventually flow to the outfall pipe and discharge into the ocean. It covers approximate 25% of the total footprint of Hyphocus, and is essential for the District to maintain the required permitting allowance from the various Environmental Ministries for waste water.

- A. *Noise concern*- The current facility utilizes large, noisy floating turbines which aerate wastewater, reducing organic matter and the levels of Biological oxygen demand. With the removal of adjacent trees and building of properties closer to the facility, there will be problems involving noise from the turbines and any new close proximity development. Other options do exist for wastewater treatment; however, these will require significant facility upgrades and cost that need to be considered with a large-scale rezoning and minimal spatial proximity of new builds.
- B. *Proposed Park proximity* - The developer has also proposed a Park area just North of the current facility including playground and court facilities. This Park would be within 100m overlooking the open sewage lagoons adjacent the 'Future Utility site'. Though the notion is generous to offer land to the District, proposing a Park for recreation usage with such close proximity to open sewage seems unacceptable to someone who utilizes a playground almost daily with their three-year-old. The adjacent land that is designated 'future utility site' lends the District to become the villain if the vegetated buffer were to ever be removed between an established 'Park' and the open sewage lagoons for future utility development.
- C. *Odour concerns*- The developer has stated they are working towards solutions to address concerns of odour from the lagoon through an Engineering firm. It is good they are acknowledging the problem, and it is true that there are large metropolitan areas around the globe that have sewage treatment in proximity to residents. My concern would be that the long-term engineered solutions, maintenance would be borne by the District if properties in proximity are approved and built. Many systems can be engineered to overcome odour problems, but typically the cost with maintaining these systems can be supported by governments with a substantial budget for future required works. Ucluelet is not New York; we do not suffer the same type of land constraints nor have we the same financial ability to 'fix' a problem that never really existed by building so close to open sewage.
- D. *Safety* – Currently the lagoon is surrounded by an 8-foot chain-link fence. This was not always the case, and there was direct access to the sewage ponds many years ago. With a development on the island there will be a substantial increase in the total persons in closer proximity to the lagoon as opposed to its current remote state. I have heard accounts from long-time community members of deer and dogs falling victim to the lagoons. Staff make every attempt to ensure safety of the public, but there will always be an increased risk with close proximity development and residences. Again, there are engineered solutions to bring the risk to acceptable levels, but future maintenance costs will be burdened to the District.

3. *Benefit of Development Cost Charges and Required Infrastructure:*

All onsite requirements from water distribution and waste water transmission will be financially burdened by the developer. With the addition of these new properties, one of the few benefits would be the associated Development Cost Charges (DCC's) received for communal betterment or utility upgrades. Though council should consider some of the financial impacts of such a substantial population increase in this location that might not be immediately obvious. Thankfully, waste water proximity is close to the lagoons but it will still need to flow through the final lift station at Helen Road applying additional pressure on the largest waste water pumps and wet well within the District, possibly triggering a required upgrade. The main issue will be the additional burden of water. Currently, the water supply comes from the two storage reservoirs (Highway and Matterson) with the newer highway reservoir providing the primary pressure and supply. The Matterson storage tank is nearing the end of its lifespan, and with a substantially draw at an elevated position as far away as possible from the source, a second storage tank will possibly be required. Transmission of water from the reservoirs follows some of the oldest water pipes in town, as seen by the water main failure on Garden St May 3<sup>rd</sup> that knocked out supply for up to 6 hours. There is an upcoming update to the District of Ucluelet water master plan, with a portion reserved to water main upgrading and repair but that will take time to plan, access capital and initiate works.

4. *Forested area protection:*

A significant bolstering point by Ekistics has been the perseverance of the large amount of forested land (>50%) on Hyphocus. The majority of this land falls along steep slope and mixed with culturally modified sites (CMS) and culturally modified trees (CMT). Again, if zoning is changed with a significant population allowed on the island these sites will begin to become impacted. There is a reason that the Provincial CMS/CMT database is restricted in access to prevent the general population from learning where these specific locations are. With a change in zoning and densification, these areas will become more impacted over time. On the Southern end of the island, the proximity to the lagoon prevents any realistic building along the steep cliffs which becomes a type of forced preservation.

The other main portion of 'protected forested land' is found within and adjacent to the 29 large sites surrounding the proposed development. Large portions of these properties will have restrictive covenants applied to them on title while attempting to maintain their current forested state. Council should be aware that the District will be responsible in ensuring these areas are actually retained in perpetuity through new bylaws and staff enforcement. This will mean ensuring trees/vegetation are not removed, structures are not built and trails accessing the ocean are not created through the steep slopes. The 2<sup>nd</sup> growth forested areas along steep slopes provides impressive habitat and terrain and should be developed slowly over time as opposed to a large rezoning shift.

5. *Reality of housing needs:*

Everyone understands and agrees that long-term housing within the District is one of the highest priorities. The rezoning of Hyphocus paints a simplistic picture of a large development trying to solve a complex problem by building a large number of units through reduced cost at large scale. It appears all language of "affordable or attainable" housing has been removed by the developer and their representative. A simple common-sense overview, shows why changing the zoning to the one proposed by Ekistics is a poor choice. This site has been repeatedly proposed for development over the past few decades with core elements showing densification to be a poor option.

The sense received is one of a large waterfront lot changing hands every 5 to 10 years, where an investor can park their capital without a real interest or being involved in the community for a positive and progressive development. If granted rezoning the lands value will finally shift and ultimately provide what I would assume to be the actual end goal initially sought. The additional rental units, if they ever materialized, would bolster housing stock, however at the realistic price point housing affordability for the local population seems minimal given average incomes. Considering the above factors, the proposed zoning changes allowing major densification on this Hyphocus Island lot do not make sense for the community, and could have lasting and negative impacts.

Thank you,  
Don Morrison

