

**COMPILATION OF EMAILS AND LETTERS RECEIVED
ON THE DENMAN CROSS-ISLAND TRAIL
June 23, 2012 to January 31, 2013**

Summary of letters and emails received by the CVRD

In support of cross-island trail: 7

In support of cross-island trail and propose to link to rest of village on Northwest Road: 1

Prefer Lacon/McFarlan route, but if other route comes to be would like it 1.2 m wide and paved along the main roads: 1

Opposed to trail along unconstructed portion of Corrigan Road (use Marcus and Jemima instead): 12

In support of the trail only along dangerous sections, the entire stretch is not a good use of money and the gravel surface will get overgrown with weeds: 1

In support of off road sections only (Mallard to Corrigan, Denman village), some shoulder widening along dangerous sections, leave ferry hills to Highways: 1

Opposed to entire trail: 2

Summary of emails sent to the CVRD by one resident. Original email sent out to solicit opinions and original email responses were not submitted to the CVRD:

In support of cross-island trail: 1

Not in support of trail, concerned about weeds growing in on trail, \$1 million to complete the entire route is money not well spent, support for dangerous sections along Denman and East roads being made safer: 17

Note: The summary is only a quick capture of the comments. The emails and letters raise many important points and the reader is encouraged to read them in their entirety to understand resident's views on the Denman cross-island trail.

June 23, 2012

Just wanted to say how much I support the proposed Denman Island Cross Island Trail idea. I have been copied in on *several* emails expressing opposition, but I, as a Denman resident & member of both the Parks Committee & the Trails Committee, fully support both the idea & the work that has gone into this project thus far.

November 3, 2012

Re: Neighbourhood Meeting re Ferry to Ferry Trail along Corrigan Road extension (RoW)

Date: Nov 3, 2012

Place: Thornton residence

Note taker: L Mather

Attendees: Larry Berg & Anne DeCosson, Harold Gleusteen, Bob Koontz & Sharon Mackin, John & Linda Mather, Marcia Mester, Roberta Pagdin, Ginny & J Thornton

Regrets: Lorraine Martinuik (provided a letter)

In response to your letter, ten (10) “PROPERTY OWNERS ABUTTING CORRIGAL RIGHT of WAY” held a meeting Saturday last to discuss your decision and to share information regarding the decision prior to asking for a meeting with you. It has proven difficult to contact several of the owners on Jemima Road; one is in Hawaii, others live off-island but all deserve the opportunity to be heard.

We find the letter hand delivered to us during the fourth week of October to contain little other than a decision by the Trails Committee, made without prior consultation with those affected. There was no discussion of the scope or timing of the project. Last July 7, 3 members of the Trails Committee and 1 DIRA executive member trespassed on 5 properties without advance consultation or notification during a reconnaissance of the southern part of the right of way. We would have appreciated consultation.

Nor to our knowledge, did you inform the Islands Trust Fund, owners of the Lindsay Dickson Nature Reserve, of your planned action. You should know that the ITF normally excludes bicycles and horses from Nature Reserves, but in this instance, as the trail pre-existed the ITF acquisition of the property, that rule was relaxed. ITF retains the right to cancel the privilege as it is recognized there is an existing trail on Highways RoW that skirts the Reserve. It would be prudent therefore, to assure yourselves and the CVRD that permission for horses and bicycles will continue and under what circumstances the permission might be revoked.

We include the notes from the meeting, with clarification provided by those who participated in the discussion which followed a very loose agenda, roughly categorized by the following topics and conclude with the suggestion of an alternate route.

COST

- density of trees on road allowance fronting some properties – tree removal? idea not supported
How to dispose of waste? Heavy machinery use? – idea not supported
- Extreme wet conditions Oct-May for approx 400+ meters starting at mailboxes. Ditching, culverts and boardwalk over wetland area required to create all-weather trail to support equestrian and emergency usage.
- Fencing required at least on farm (east) side to protect livestock / path users
- fencing along route south from farm to prevent “straying” public
- to be acceptable for some, funding for RoW trail must include the amount necessary to construct a fence along both sides of the trail for its entire length. The CVRD would also have to accept financial responsibility for maintaining the fence.

PRIVACY

- a request for fencing both sides from mailboxes to south end of RoW to protect integrity of private property.
- More than 1 residence very close to trail location – owners feel compromised – suspect that another owner (not present) would feel same way.
- private trails lie very close to property boundary and start of RoW
- Farm owners – exposes the whole west side of farm – danger to livestock from dogs, etc.
- danger to people from livestock – colts, calves, lambs, bull

FIRE HAZARD

- extreme fire hazard in late summer – suitable non-flammable path materials required
- difficult access in some places - for injury evacuation in emergencies – require wide path
- 3 meter (?) width to accommodate DIVFD ATV

FENCING

- confusion over existing trails – public may stray – fencing to guide public but not inhibit free wildlife movement (especially through LDNR boundary with RoW)
- existing old logging roads and deer trails extend into LDNR – not permitted under Management

- Plan.– suggest low (0.6 m) snake fence Requirement for signage
- fences need to be dog proof – barbed wire not an option, especially with equine usage of trail consider impact on deer population movement
 - post-and-wire fence, ~ 3 feet high (?)-- high enough to deter humans from wandering "off-piste", whether accidentally or intentionally, but not so high as to hamper the free movement of wildlife.

Consensus was that split rail or some other natural material would be more favorable for wildlife safety. The idea is to protect the privacy of the adjoining landowners, the integrity of adjacent forest lands and pasture lands, and to ensure safety of livestock and wildlife.

TRAIL SUPERVISION & ENFORCEMENT

This topic was not recorded in any sort of order but it is universally agreed that motorized vehicles must be prohibited, perhaps except for emergency use only. How will such a rule be enforced?

ALTERNATE ROUTE

The property owners are united in recognizing the value of off-road trails. We suggest the aforementioned obstacles may push the cost of the planned trail to an unacceptable level.

We propose that the Trails Committee seriously reconsider the use of the existing roads (Marcus and Jemima) to good purpose. Jemima Road is very popular with walkers and cyclists alike as the road dead-ends at the entrance to the Nature Reserve and the trail to Mallard Way through the Reserve. Road traffic is generally light; increasing during the summer months to access the Graham Lake swimming area. Recent grading has increased the width of Jemima Road to accommodate at least 3 lanes of traffic, one of which could easily be dedicated to a multi-use trail surface. A major concern is the dust issue, which could be mitigated by a modest increase in dust-control measures on the part of Highways.

We recommend that DIRA ask the CVRD to enter a dialogue with Highways to:

- a) dedicate some part of Jemima Road or the Jemima RoW for a multi-use trail and
- b) ask for a regular program of additional dust control spraying to make the route more pleasant for trail users.

Are there designation or zoning changes possible that would remove permanently the possibility of building a vehicle-road on the current easement? Or, put another way, if a multi-use trail is approved, can this land use then preclude building a vehicle road later on? We would like DIRA and the Regional District to research what could be put in place as a legal land-use designation.

Sincerely,

The undersigned residents of East and Jemima Roads are all property owners adjacent to the Corrigal Road extension Right of Way.

Larry Berg, Anne deCosson, Harold Gleusteen, Bob Koontz, Sharon Mackin, Lorraine Martinuik, John Mather, Linda Mather, Marcia Mester, Roberta Pagdin, Ginny Thornton, J Thornton

December 12, 2012

Thanks for coming over & spending time with me the other day. I am more clear about the plans & just as unhappy

- with the overall cost v benefit - \$1,000,000 for a handful (maybe) of users?
- with ripping up perfectly good, wide and attractive grass verges in front of homes to put in an ugly gravel path which will become overgrown with weeds & look even uglier

What I would support would be a selective improvement in pedestrian/bicycle 'right of way' such as - the ferry hill, the 'big' hill, the rise on East Road before McFarlane etc all of which are truly dangerous.

Instead of starting at one end & creeping along with your trail, no matter the existing road/path width, pick out the danger points first & fix them. Then re-think the rest.

Finally, as mentioned, I do think the householders whose attractive green frontage may be replaced with gravel, as above, should get specific notice, by mail, with a drawing of what is planned & notice of the Jan 16 meeting, sometime the first week of Jan. If you do not do this it will appear to them that they are having an expensive, ugly 'boondoggle' imposed on them by CVRD - and they will be right!

January 8, 2013

I feel compelled to write you an email with my thoughts about the Denman Cross Island trail. I was one of the 30 or so residents that completed the Denman survey a few years back when the idea of the ferry to ferry trail was again proposed.

I voted in favour of this trail as I think it is a great idea in principle. However, I am not in favour of the trail as it is currently proposed. When I envisioned a cross island trail I thought it would consist of foot paths wandering through forested lands such as the Lindsay Dickson Reserve and Filongly park as the majority of the path and not the minority.

The primary reason for this ferry to ferry trail was for safety for all that are using the main throughfare of Denman and East Roads and this route is often treated by automobiles as a highway and going highway speeds. Therefore, I do not believe that a path that follows the main throughfare to the Hornby ferry offers any enhanced safety. I believe the routing should be along Lacon and McFarlane which is the alternative road to the ferry and not as heavily used.

I believe this plan as it currently stands would place the path along side the Denman and East Roads for about 80% of the way. If this is "cast in stone" then I have the following comments to make:

1. I think a two metre wide path is too wide and not visually pleasing. All the footpaths that currently exist on Denman are usually a metre to 1.5 metres and this works for the residents and horses just fine. I had horses for many years, and they do not need anything wider.
2. I would like to see the shoulder widened on one side of the road with the gravel path there. To place the path with a "grass" swath and then the path will be an eyesore, full of weeds and gravel that will be very difficult to keep esthetically pleasing. Also to move the path from side to side of the road forcing people, horses and bikes to cross is again a paramount safety concern for me.
3. My daughter and her husband are avid bikers and have both road bikes and mountain bikes. When I asked her about the usability of this trail for bikers her comments were this: "the trail is not 'fun' enough for the mountain bikes and too rough for the road bikes. If we were going to Hornby, we would use our road bikes and stay on the paved road as it is smoother".
4. We live in the little area on East Road that has about seventy five homes fairly close together. We all walk back and forth to each other houses and when out on our evening strolls. Most of us are also gardeners and the gravel path through this neighbourhood will be an eyesore as it becomes full of airborne weeds. I have a gravel path way on my property that is my Alpine scree garden, and the amount of time I spend weeding this small area is about triple what I spend on other garden beds as the weeds are very difficult to pull out from between the pebbles. I would urge you to lay log shavings on this area of the path so occupants can easily keep the path free from weeds without resorting to chemical measures. I also believe that reducing the speed to 50 km from Owl to McFarlane would allow the residents of this populated area some peace of mind.
5. I believe this is too much money to spend without addressing the main concern for the proposal in the first place and that is to allow all to safely get to where they are going and enjoy the beauty that Denman has to offer.

In conclusion: Yes, I am in favour in a 1.2 metre path with no clearances between it and the road, although preferably not on the main throughfare but along the secondary roads of Lacon and

McFarlane. I would like to see the plan modified to include more of the path away from any roads so I could walk my dogs off leash without fear that they will be hit by a car and horses will not be so easily spooked. If the path must be along Denman and East Roads then treat it like a city and pave it like a sidewalk, otherwise leave our rural areas rural.

We will be away for the January 16th meeting and this is why I am sending you our comments now. Thank you for your attention in this matter.

January 9, 2013

I would like to provide my comments to you regarding the construction of the Denman Cross Island Trail.

We chose to retire to Denman Island and have lived here for just over two years. I recognize the value of green spaces, safe places to walk and cycle and I believe that there is no better place to be than the great outdoors. I am an avid walker and hiker and have walked on almost all the roads on Denman as part of my fitness regime.

On my walks I meet a lot of people who are out walking just like me, but it is not always a safe and stress-free experience. There have been many occasions where I have needed to quickly move off the road or narrow verge because of vehicles either speeding or passing by me too closely. When I heard about the Cross Island Trail project I was elated, because when it is constructed, I will be able to enjoy my walks without the constant worry of encountering traffic.

The Cross Island Trail will be a fantastic asset to Denman and will:

- Provide a safe route along a key corridor linking many points of interest,
- Be constructed with a low-maintenance gravel surface which can be used in all seasons,
- Retain the rural look of Denman roadways,
- Be a sufficient width for people to walk side by side or to pass comfortably,
- Accommodate a variety of users including pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians,
- Encourage residents and visitors to walk to various destinations rather than use a vehicle,

The residents of Denman have previously identified the Cross Island Trail as a top priority as stated in the Parks & Greenways Master Plan and the Denman Island Residents' Assoc (DIRA) members support the construction of this trail along Denman and East Roads. Denman Island currently does not have the trail network that many other Gulf Islands do, and this trail will attract users who may purchase items at the Craft Shop and General Store as well as benefitting other small businesses on Denman. This trail will be a wonderful addition to Denman and will provide a safe route for various recreation activities.

Thank you for your commitment and your hard work in obtaining funding for our Cross Island Trail.

January 10, 2013

It is unlikely that I will be able to attend the public meeting on the Denman Island Cross Island Trail next week and want to register my comments with you.

I fully support a Cross Island Trail on Denman. As someone who walks, runs and bikes along East and Denman roads, I welcome a trail which would offer me some separation and protection from the vehicular traffic along those roads. While I know that there are some who are opposed to such a trail as it will pass by or in front of their home, I live on East Road and if the trail were to pass along my side (the west side of East Road), I would have no objection whatsoever. As it is, this trail will be on

the legal rights-of-way, as I understand it, and therefore, I believe it is appropriate and its time has come.

Many thanks to all who have worked to make this trail come this far!

January 12, 2013

Following our meeting on Denman & conversation re the proposed trail, in particular the section currently planned for East Road from Owl Crescent through to Hornby ferry, I sought the opinions of a number of residents in the area, those frankly most affected by the projected destruction of their property frontage & its replacement with a gravel path.

Of 33 contacted by email, I received 18 responses (attached) of which 17 were negative & one supportive, though you may note this last mentioned a particular dangerous spot where there was nowhere to step off the roadway, which actually supports one of my suggestions below.

General opposition to the gravel path may be summarized as follows:

1. That before a project costing some \$1,000,000 is started, a business-like needs assessment should be undertaken - including canvassing bicyclist/horse groups, rationalizing the logic of sending walkers going from ferry to ferry along Corrigal etc (where they will not go), routing the trail along roads with the highest speed limit on the island
2. That consideration should be given to where this large amount of money could better be spent
3. That what may well serve an urban location, does not necessarily fit a rural one. In other words we do not have continuous, heavy traffic conditions & nowhere to step aside, but we do have green, often well-kept, grass verges that would be replaced with a (soon) weed-filled, gravel path
4. That certain places on the trail route are truly dangerous & should be made safer as a first step - Ferry Hill, Big Hill, Denman/East Road corner, rise on East Road before McFarlane, for example

The broad sense among those to whom I have spoken is that this has been a hastily conceived project, not thought through, embraced because it appears to be superficially benign, promoted & 'approved' by a tiny minority of the island community, lacking in consultation with those whose property is affected & welcomed because it "does not cost us anything".

Your upcoming planned meeting on Denman will answer none of these questions adequately.

It might be better to spend on the obviously dangerous places on the road, whilst taking time to responsibly assess the best uses for both Parks Tax money & Gas Tax windfall funds.

All the above in no way implies criticism of our Denman Trails Committee which does a wonderful job improving access to our parks etc, but which has found itself taking the heat for CVRD, the true initiators of this questionable project.

The fact that you were presumably unaware of much above until a few weeks ago surely points to the need for a rethink now.

Attachment to above note (resident names and contact information or original email sent to them was not provided to the CVRD):

1. Thank you for keeping us up to date. We are not in favor of this proposed path. The price tag does not reflect the value of the path. There may be some areas that are more dangerous than others but signage would help and certainly not costly.
2. As I said in my earlier note I think this path idea is sheer lunacy. However, I suspect there is a faction on Denman that think that it is the greatest idea since sliced bread became the vogue. Someone must have made this proposal to the Area Director or to the Regional staff touting it as sound environmental venture that would see stout hearted campers destined for Hornby stoutly carrying hundred pound loads between ferry sites.

3. We were not aware of the plan for a gravel path along East Road. It sounds like an idea that hasn't been all that well thought through...and the price tag of approximately \$1m sounds very suspect.
4. Thank you for your email regarding the a Trail along East Road, Yes, Both Mr X. and I definitely oppose the Trail. If possible we will try to make it to the meeting on January 16th at the Community Hall. Granted the road is scary to walk on at times especially during the Ferry Schedules especially from Hornby Island and return from Denman Ferry. I definitely feel there should be a posted speed limit sign on the whole East Road to the Hornby Island Ferry Terminal. Anyway that can be discussed at the meeting also.
5. I have talked to some of the Island Equines...the horsey group.... and they say they will never use the path as gravel is hard on horses feet. Also another comment was that most people who are walking from ferry to ferry are trying to get to Hornby and are looking for a ride and will not go anywhere other than the main road.
6. No, I don't like the idea nobody will use it the ones that are going ferry to ferry hitch hike so they will be on the road
7. I am against the trail. I thought it was not to follow the road but take another route which I couldn't understand. Something to do with parkland. To have a gravel trail is not good for feet or bikes.
8. Our property is at X East Road and I agree with you that a path is not only expensive but also unnecessary.
9. The idea is ridiculous. A gravel path will not take cyclists off the road or walkers for that matter. It will only take a few months for the path to be overgrown with weeds, broom and what have you. If the Comox Region wants to spend a \$1,000,000 instead of wasting a \$1,000,000 why not do something intelligent such as putting a green roof on the new regional hospital that construction will soon begin. The Regions tax payers have to pay about 40% of the cost for the new hospital and also contribute to its future operation once built. Thus a green roof would save much money over time and in doing so benefit all residents.
10. The cost is far too high for so little use, and mostly it will destroy the natural ambiance of this island. Yes... ugly gravel full of weeds. At the present time we notice the grass is cut only by our dear neighbors with their ride-on mowers. Who is going to pluck the weeds and rake out the ruts in the gravel? Not the RD, for sure.

We also agree on spending the money on the dangerous parts of the road.

11. Ridiculous.
12. We are definitely opposed to the ridiculous outrageous waste of taxpayers money on a gravel trail and completely agree with all the posted comments posted thus far! What kinds of nuts are trying to look like they are doing something and grasping at any kind of a hair brained idea and for what end? Unbelievable!
13. "While we are encouraged to see that there is an interest in investing and improving elements of the infrastructure on Denman Island, we are surprised that there hasn't been any real "needs assessment" or "business case" in support of the estimated \$1M expenditure on the proposed cross-Island gravel path. As a result, we are not supportive of proceeding with this initiative."
14. "she said... that she questioned the usership of the X-Island trail as virtually no one walks from ferry to ferry...and the fact that she has been a horsewoman all her life, felt that you would have to be crazy to trust riding a horse for any distance at all along the proposed trail...unfriendly surface for horses and extremely dangerous and nerve wracking for a horse with cement trucks etc."
15. "...said that she felt the proposed trail construction and destruction of foliage would certainly impact the lovely rural look of Denman as you drive down Denman Road and would visually widen the road thus encouraging speeding."
16. Personally I love trails, but they have to be well thought out. I have been part of trail building on Hornby Island where there are trails going all over the island. Some are well used, others are hard to find. Some are

used by walkers only, some by bikes and horses, some only bikes. The trails along the roadside are used only by pedestrians. The soft narrow trail is unsuitable for mixed uses and bikes and horses prefer the road. As for cost, almost every single trail on Hornby Island was built for free. Some of the trails have had some financial assistance for materials, but labour has always been free. If people really want a trail, they can get together and build trails. If the CVRD and the Province, have set aside money for trails, let them build a million dollars worth of trails connecting the various parts of the island to let us use our whole island not just the roads. That's my 2 cents worth.

17. We do not WANT or NEED a gravel path along East Road!!

- i. We are diametrically opposed to such an expenditure..
- ii. Islanders know the Ferry traffic pattern and thus avoid those busy times for walking.
- iii. The Path would NOT be a real asset to Denman.

18. I think this trail idea is great. I live on East Road, and love watching the people pass by on their journey to Hornby with their bikes and backpacks and dogs. I always see them stepping to the side to let the traffic pass by. I should tell you that I almost lost most of my family to this narrow dangerous roadway. My daughter, my son in law and two of my grandchildren, walking to McFarlane Beach, pushing a baby buggy, a curve in the road, Ferry traffic meeting in both directions, no room to get completely off the road, frightening. I see many people walking to the mail, walking their dogs, jogging, or camera shooting, or just going to visit the neighbours. I cannot see anyone opposing such a wonderful improvement to our quaint Island.....It will only make it safer for everyone, tourists and residents. Lets not wait until someone dies before we act. We have a chance to do something worthwhile here. Let's get it done while we have this opportunity in front of us. Let's do it!

January 13, 2013

My wife and I have owned a recreational property at X Y Rd. Denman since 1975. As part time residents our taxes have assisted our island full time residents and neighbours for any services they and we may have received. In the main for all those years the majority of reasons for spending our taxes and those of other Denman Island residents have been reasonable. This walking trail proposition is without doubt an exception.

Our Denman neighbours are keeping us up to date on the upcoming meeting on the trail. A meeting which it appears has been deliberately organized to limit the recreational property owners, hence part time residents, but tax payers notwithstanding from attending. Scheduling the meeting in the middle of the week in the middle of January may appear clever to some, likely those that favour the trail idea, and/or be designed to minimize taxpayers participation. It might also have something to do with the annual budgetary process with the CVRD but who knows. For whatever the reason by scheduling the coming meeting, at a most inconvenient time, thus limiting participation, you will definitely encourage active resistance to the idea.

Over the years, I have seen many creative ideas originate on Denman. Most of the ideas involved gaining public funding or grants in some form but were usually designed to favour the common good. Indeed, most of the ideas have had a purpose or were reasonable however this trail idea is by far and away the exception. It is simply beyond the pale. It is unique and an extreme example on how to set about to deliberately waste public funds to satisfy a self-serving minority faction. The projected cost is \$1,000,000. Most of us, undoubtedly including yourselves, could identify easily any number of sound community projects on Denman Island where that sum of public money could be well spent. The illusion of free money coming from the infamous Gas Tax Rebate to cover at least a portion of the cost of the trail is unfounded. Every time we all fill our cars or boats with gas or add oil we all pay that tax. Thus the rebate is simply giving us a tiny fraction of the taxes we paid on the gas and oil products back to us. It is not free money!

Assuming this poorly scheduled meeting proceeds and it is stacked by those that favour this strange idea thus it gains approval how, will the \$1,000,000 be raised? Gas Tax's rebate perhaps for say \$100,000 but it would be an extremely hard sell at the UBCM, the source of the rebate even assuming

that the CVRD would support it. Coupled with either an AAP or referendum to have the Denman Island taxpayers fund the balance, let us say optimistically \$900,000 but that is an optimistic figure because as we all know whenever public funding is involved cost over runs are the norms. Then there are the AAPs and referendums and neither are cheap besides needing approval of the CVRD. Results of referendums when higher taxes are at stake and secret ballots employed are unknown until the ballots are counted. The bottom line is how much will this trail cost the Denman Island tax payers annually and likely for ever more?

As an aside what is the Ministry of Transport's [MoT] reaction to this idea of seriously encroaching on the road allowances on Denman Island's major roads for the trail's development and use? Usually the MoT will not permit any surface encroachment whatsoever on its road allowances because it restricts future road improvement, maintenance, snow clearance et al. However, I assume that clearance for this encroachment has been already secured if not then I suggest before you proceed with the planned public meeting it be secured. Good luck in your dealings with the Ministry of Transport.

In conclusion this trail idea, besides being strange, strikes me as a prime example of how to deliberately set about wasting public funds on an unnecessary, unwanted, and unjustifiable project.

January 14, 2013

I wanted to take a minute to write you to show my support for the Denman Island Cross Island Trail. I realize that the idea of a multi-use trail that would go from one ferry terminal to the other was identified as the number one priority by islanders in the Parks & Greenway Plan developed by the Regional District a couple years ago. Since then the concept has been discussed at DIRA General Meetings and adopted by the membership.

The Cross Island Trail will be a real boon to Denman. It will attract more tourists to our island and encourage them to use an alternate form of transportation at the same time. It will make walking safer for islanders. It will also be an economic benefit to Denman as visitors will buy goods from artisans, restaurants, and the General Store. It may even help reduce the use of fossil fuels which would be a benefit to all of us concerned about global warming and climate change.

During the past summers I have observed groups and families of bicycle riders travelling our roads to get to their next destination. I have worried on many occasions for the safety of these groups as they are often made up of riders of various ages and tend to take up a good portion of our roadways. The Trail will make travel safer for all users, a great benefit as far as I am concerned.

I understand the Trail is a long term project that will be built over a period of several years. Although I want it to be completed quickly, I realize it will be well worth the wait.

Thank you for your work on this valuable project.

January 16, 2013

I wanted to enthusiastically add my name to the list of Denman residents who support the proposed Cross Island Trail and also state how much I appreciate the effort and enthusiasm you have and hopefully will continue to place with this project.

Having served on a number of committees on Denman I am aware that yours is not an easy task because there will always be a wide variety of views and it is important not to let a vocal minority disproportionately skew the general impression. I have read many, possibly all, of the concerns expressed to date by those who oppose the plan, and they are certainly entitled to express view, but I do not see any concern of what I consider substance that would cause me to think that the proposal should be altered or withdrawn.

Certainly those I have discussed the plan with believe it is a project that has merit, it will contribute to the overall benefit of many residents and visitors to Denman and will only grow in popularity and use over time.

January 17, 2013

To restate what I said to the assembly at the end of the day, you have done an excellent job in managing and presenting the Ferry to Ferry Trail (FTFT) project. The Parks and Greenway Masterplan has become its guiding document and the community is very much aware of its evolution, content and aim. After all it is added to the OCP.

I reject, along with many others, the argument that only some 57 Islanders provided written input and that only 40 of them gave full support to the FTFT as being an invalid number of Islanders to take directions from. The usual participation of Islander interested and willing to participate in community development processes in community affairs, measured by DIRA meeting attendance, is less than the written submission you have received.

Written submission are like icebergs they have many supporters who do not get around to write them. This gives you a valid basis for planning; and planning is all that you are doing with continued consultation. Monthly reports are made by the Trails Committee for opportunities in dialogue.

There is no better practical way to obtain community input than to invite the community to come to the events to learn about projects like this and to give their constructive input, views and visions.

I support the CVRD initiatives to create the trail system as you outlined.

Even if only a percentage is accomplished every part of it will contribute to a better quality of life for residents allowing them to step off the pavement and out of the hazardous traffic to walk or ride safely from point to point. If we could turn the clock back in community planning, would we not all, suggests to have safe trails along the roads. This is not revolutionary - imagine having cities without sidewalks.

Thank you and the Trails Committee for a task well done!

January 21, 2013

Dear Regional District Representatives,

I am writing to you in regard to the proposed roadside gravel path alongside Denman and East Roads. I have several concerns in regard to this proposal. They can be divided into two categories, with a concern for the legitimacy of the public consultation process, and with a concern with many of the assumptions contained in the proposal including the design and route itself.

In regard to the claims and assumptions presented at the public meeting, the meeting was described as an opportunity for discussion whereas time did not allow for a serious discussion, and especially since there was no advance information provided before this meeting for residents to consider. Further, the CVRD presentation claimed the overwhelming support of Denman Island residents by citing 41 of 54 respondents in support of a vaguely worded question, again with no details attached to it. That question was in regard to supporting the connection of existing trails and "Greenways", and was not specific about a 6ft. wide gravel path along the roadside. The presentation supported the route along Denman Rd. in part because of an assumption that most heavy commercial vehicle traffic uses the Lacon-McFarlane route. This is not only false, it is not even close to being true. The other assumption that was widely shared was that this is a bike path. If we look at the Hornby Island trail, we know that most bikes do not use these gravel paths, and in canvassing Denman Island bikers, many will continue to use the pavement.

In this case, the CVRD has completely failed in public consultation on Denman, and instead has relied on the biases of an unelected DIRA sponsored Trails Committee. The process in no way is a fair

representation of Denman Islanders views on this proposal, and the claims made to the contrary are provably false. If the CVRD was sincere in involving Denman residents in a consensus building and information process, the design of this process would have been entirely different. Advance information and details would have been provided before inviting the public to comment (the information on the proposal was posted on the CVRD site the day of the meeting). The questionnaire that was used would have involved more advance details with a specific question and additional canvassing of residents both in person and online.

In regard to the proposal itself, I oppose most of the route and design, with the exception of the Corrigal -Mallard off road connector, and upgrade of existing trails in "Downtown Denman". The safety issues that exist on the ferry hill and the "big hill" are largely a Highways issue as is the budget to deal with these issues. Money from the "Parks and Greenways" budget should go to support real trail expansion and connections on Denman which I full heartedly support. This 6ft. gravel path is neither a park nor a "greenway". Further, it is not clearly supported in the recently updated Official Community Plan, section D, transportation guiding principles and objectives. That is as a result of a legal and democratic process and has jurisdiction over planning issues. The DIRA Trail Committee has no legitimate authority to represent the interests of Denman Island and the CVRD had no authority to assume that it does.

The primary reason cited for this proposal is increasing safety on Denman Roads. The number one complaint for safety on Denman Roads is cars speeding. The current policy of sharing the road has a traffic calming effect. Removing some non automobile traffic from the road will not slow traffic, and possibly lead to increased speeding. There are some places along the proposed route (the 2 hills, for instance) that may benefit from a broader shoulder, and again, this would be a Highways responsibility. The gravel path proposal is a suburban solution, or a solution for a community that is based on tourism. Denman Island is neither. The rural character of our roads is a valuable shared value. Once it is lost, it is gone forever.

Share the Road, widen the shoulder (where necessary)

January 26, 2013

I worked on the DIRA Trails Committee until early 2012 when I became convinced that

- a) Denman Island tax dollars as managed by the CVRD are 90% ear- marked for recreation - either directly or indirectly via tourist services. I could find no guarantee that more tax dollars would not be spent on this particular project (which proves to be the case).
- b) Islanders were not involved in the planning process of the Cross- Island Trail and that involvement should have occurred regularly throughout the process, not simply at the conclusion.
- c) Support to keep elders and the working poor in our community via affordable housing was suffering in favor of recreation.
- d) While some spot safety measures could improve non-motorized access to Denman roads, the Cross Island Trail sounded more and more like a successful tourist travel brochure item.

Over my years on Denman, I have supported interconnected island trails (primarily off-road) and preserving narrow, rural roads. The CVRD proposal may do more harm than good to this effort.

All roads on Denman would be considerably safer and much more inviting for everyone (residents and visitors alike) if folks drove the speed limit. A consistent speed limit of 50 k would allow the use of electric conveyances, which would slow the speeders and invite a rural life style experience of visitors.

The DIRA Trails Committee worked hard on this project (as well as contributing effectively to alternative access trails). I appreciate the many hours in the chill and rain. However, I do not support what is unfolding.

January 28, 2013

I was recently speaking with a DIRA Parks & Trails Committee Member, in order to provide feedback on the Denman cross-island trail. I requested that consideration be made regarding the pathway surface, to be a material that is accessible to wheel chairs, walkers, and those with mobility/balance issues. Gravel is not an easy surface to maneuver wheel chairs or walkers on & is often difficult for anyone who has balance issues walking on an uneven surfaces. I have received this feedback from island residents for whom this issue is relevant regarding other gravel pathways/ uneven surface pathways on-island. Could it not be a concrete, hard packed dirt, or grass surface which would provide a smooth walking, wheel chair/walker use and/or biking surface?

As well, I've attached a draft letter from the Denman Health and Wellness Focus Group we plan on submitting to the Denman Island Residents Association (DIRA) in February regarding having an accessible pathway for elder residents, as well as other islanders, running from the Denman Health Clinic through the Denman Village, connecting around the corner to the restaurants. I informed Ralph of the letter when relaying my concerns regarding the cross-island trail. He recommended that perhaps the cross-island trail could be extended to make this pathway part of the cross-island trail project and was quite enthusiastic about it. Ralph requested that I pass my feedback on to you as well given that you are currently receiving public comments. I sincerely hope that serious consideration will be made to include a pathway from the Denman Health Clinic through to the downtown area under the cross-island trail plan. This would be to address the mobility needs of our current and future senior residents and hopefully the cross-island trail will be built in a manner that will be accessible to all Denman islanders.

January 31, 2013

I just wanted to let you know I appreciated your presentation at the Denman Hall a few weeks ago and all the work that you have obviously put into it. I think it's a great idea! The only section I wondered about was the gravel road section...as by taking this one would miss out on the fabulous ocean views of that section of road.

However, because the ferries don't operate on a reservation system there will continue to be a Ferry Dash of traffic and being on a trail will be so much safer and more pleasant. I understand you must work in concert with road crews, but I stress the hills are the most important parts of the trail to complete, again for safety reasons.

If the surface of the trail could be that product of gravel etc. that compacts to form a firm surface, or as in France on the Loire a Velo trail, they used what I think was a recycled tire product, that was then rideable on road bikes, well Hey! that would be ideal! The problem with regular gravel is that it needs to be replenished, same with cedar chips.

Well, you have your work cut out for you, I will leave you to it. And once again I appreciate all the work you have put into this, don't let the naysayers get you down!

Thank you.