

# Sandy Hook Community Association

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DELIVERED BY HAND

Mayor and Council  
District of Sechelt

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

Re: Telephone Survey on Rentals

The board of this association wishes to place on the record its concern with respect to the timing, format and content of the recent telephone survey undertaken on behalf of the District and addressing short term rentals.

No announcement was made to the general public that such a survey was forthcoming. The public are therefore surprised by any calls and understandably reluctant to respond. More importantly no background information was publicized to assist the public in understanding any questions that might be presented or the importance of the issue on a personal level. With no background and no understanding why taxpayers dollars are being spent yet again on reviewing this subject (only 3 years ago there was a full public process) responses are bound to be confused and any survey results are bound to be distorted or invalid.

The format does not explain in any way the purpose of the survey nor does it attempt to advise what will be done with the results – how they will be used. This failure again can distort results.

Of even more concern are the questions themselves and the way they are set out. The issue is rentals in Residential areas yet this is not established at all. It is reasonable that even the most militant against short term rentals in an R1 or R3 community might accept rentals in a commercial area. The respondent cannot answer for rentals in commercial areas but against them in residential areas. Moreover the first question is a trick. To say no to short term rentals you must answer yes. Is this meant to take advantage of the auto response? More faulty results are inevitable.

If the questioning moves past number 1 then the queries are even more biased. They generate a mode where the rentals are allowed and it is only a matter of some regulations. This is in keeping with the ill advised '6 options' report and can only be seen as an attempt to perpetuate it. In any event the list of so-called restrictions is limited to those items that the supporters of the illegal operations feel can be dealt with by rules. No mention is made of community values and neighbourhoods, septic problems, tax fairness, and other matters too many to list.

In the interest of providing a positive suggestion, should council insist upon a survey with no announcement or background information then one simple question might suffice:

“Are you in favor of the house next door being rented out to total strangers on a night to night basis throughout the year - like a motel?”

Lastly, we recognize that by writing this letter we might be thwarting our own goals. Maybe the survey will return a result overwhelmingly against any short term rentals and you will at last proceed to enforce the laws you are responsible to enforce. In this case we would, of course, like to accept the result and have this letter ignored. In fairness, however, we think that if a survey is going to be held at all it should be one which generates an accurate reflection of the public opinion and not a distorted one no matter how desirable.

Yours truly,  
SANDY HOOK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Per:

Bob D’Arcy  
President

cc. G8 Representatives  
The Coast Reporter