

Wrong thing to do – Submitted by Julia Lucich June 12, 2011

George Ehring's defense of proposed bylaw 449 is that "it's the right thing to do". If, by that statement, Mr. Ehring is referring to the protection of fish habitat or drinking water, I'm in total agreement. It's absurd to suggest that anyone who has expressed opposition to the bylaw seeks to plunder fish habitat or pollute the watersheds. The question is whether the proposed bylaw is a reasonable, appropriate and cost-effective means to those ends.

The Public Information session of April 28 demonstrated that proposed Bylaw 449 should be scrapped. The inability of staff to answer questions with a degree of certainty is unacceptable. Reliance on guesswork and supposition is unprofessional. Attempts to placate the public's fears with inducements of expedited procedures and reduced fees are disingenuous. Proceeding in the face of acknowledged inaccuracies (i.e., the fish are **where??**) is outrageous.

Given the number of times the public was told that *your concerns are heard*, it would seem that substantive change would be forthcoming. That has been true, to an extent, though not in the direction the community had sought.

The June 1 issue of the Driftwood included a letter from someone who has been a respected member of the legal community for half a century...someone who has described proposed bylaw 449 as invalid and akin to a scene from *Alice in Wonderland*. Evidently this is an irrelevance to the trustees who, the following day, pushed the bylaw even farther into the realm of fantasy. They chose to amend the bylaw in a way that removes all reference to fish protection from the underlying definition upon which the bylaw is ostensibly based and, according to the trustees, *required by the Province*. Consistent with the arrogance displayed by the Queen in *Alice*, neither the trustees nor the staff deemed it necessary to inform the public that this **fundamental and material change** was part and parcel of the amendments. They have maintained the fiction that the amendments are merely administrative. If they admitted otherwise, it might be necessary to re-initiate the formal agency consultation process...one that would demand more time than the trustees are willing to allot in their determination to force this down the island's throat during their current term of office.

Instead, the trustees are taking the unconscionable tack of pushing through something that is over-reaching, ill-prepared, and whose inaccuracy will create collateral damage for thousands of people island-wide. What is, to me, even more reprehensible, is that the trustees are pursuing a course that is certainly going to result in disregard (and, hence, disrespect) for the law which is, ultimately, the **WRONG** thing to do.