

Comments for May 25 SSI Trust Committee Meeting

Town Hall – Please arrive at noon

List of Speakers (What a Team!)

Speaker 1: 1 minute – Jessica Beck

Speaker 2: 1 minute – Brian Nolan

Speaker 3: 1 minute – Sivalla Lin

Speaker 4: 1 minute – Naomi Singh

Speaker 5: 1 minute – Nowick Gray

Speaker 6: 1 minute – Todo Journey

Speaker 7: 1 minute – Jenny McLean

Speaker 8: 1 minute – Nomi Lyons

Speaker 9: 1.5 minutes – Marla Nolan

Speaker 10 - 1 minute – Callie Kares

Speaker 11 – 1 Minute 40 seconds –Chris Anderson

Speaker 12 - 1 minute – Elizabeth Gay

Speaker 1: 1 minute – Jessica Beck

Framing

This is a Rogers Tower.

- In the minutes of the April 27 Salt Spring Trust meeting, this project was referred to 3 times by elected representatives as the CREST tower. This tower is being built by Rogers. It is the Rogers Tower.
- 95% of this tower will be used by Rogers for commercial cellular. 5% will be used by CREST.
- If this land use application was from a large corporation that wanted to build a single use plastics manufacturing plant, with 5% of the facility being allocated to a CRD plastic recycling center - would this structure be called a CRD Recycling Center?
- **I urge you to please write a letter of non-concurrence for this project.**

Speaker 2: 1 minute – Brian Nolan

Emergency Services

This tower will not make us safer.

- The Rogers portion of the tower will not improve emergency services on our island.
- The only emergency services Rogers will provide from this tower is 911, which may be dialed using any provider, even with a cell phone that does not have a plan.
- If topography prevents us from accessing 911 through the TELUS tower already at this site, we will **not** be able to access it through Rogers.
- Once a tower is in place, Rogers can and has said they will invite other commercial providers to add antennas to it with no further public consultation required.
- Several studies show that living near cell towers is harmful. There is a home 50 metres from this site and 30 more within 500 metres.
- Rather than making us safer, this tower may actually increase our need for 911.
- Twenty years ago, the SSI Trust implemented, by Resolution, the most protective radiation exposure guideline in the country. You may be required to defer to Safety Code 6, but you are also obliged to champion your policies.
- **Please continue to provide the visionary leadership we deserve and write a letter of non-concurrence for this project**

Speaker 3: 1 minute – Sivalla Lin

Peaceful Rural Quality at Risk

This Tower will jeopardize the peaceful rural quality of our island home. It will benefit Rogers, not us.

- Last fall, TELUS strengthened the emissions of their Salt Spring towers. They also plan on adding 5G to them. Once a cell tower is in place, we have no say about what gets put on it.
- 5G will add another layer to the 3G, 4G and public WiFi we are now involuntarily exposed to.
- There are a dozen + cell sites servicing Salt Spring.
- Roger's coverage maps show almost full 4G and 5G coverage here already. And yet, Rogers is telling us their service in the North End is unreliable. Why then is Rogers luring customers with maps that are wrong? And why are we putting ourselves at risk to line Rogers' pockets?
- The Rogers' portion of this proposal is not fulfilling a need but creating one through induced demand - "If you build it, they will come".
- The Trust has a mandate to preserve the peaceful rural character of our community. Supporting this tower is supporting unneeded commercial development.
- **For the sanctity of our island, please write a letter of non-concurrence for this project**

Speaker 4: 1 minute – Naomi Singh

This Tower & 5G

This tower lays the groundwork for 5G on our island.

- Rogers will transmit two out of the three frequencies they are using for 5G from this tower.
- 5G is wireless Internet. TELUS uses their 4G network here to provide home internet through “Smart Hubs”. This Rogers tower could also be used to provide home internet, competing directly with community owned fiber optics that might be implemented through the Connected Coast.
- Many providers are now removing wires connected directly to homes and spewing 4G and 5G signals from small cell antennas instead.
- Rogers is rolling out 5G in rural areas across Canada. There are several neighbourhoods on Salt Spring where homes are close enough to support small cell antennas that may be used for millimetre wave 5G.
- These small cell antennas can be installed with no further input from you or us. We may wake up one day to find a cell transmitter in front of our home, and there will be nothing we can do about it.
- **But you have a say now. Please write a letter of non-concurrence for this project**

Speaker 5: 1 minute – Nowick Gray

Non-Concurrence is justified

The Local Trust Committee has ample, land use-relevant reasons to refuse this tower.

- There is no proven need for or community benefit from the Rogers portion of this project.
- Siting a 2nd cell tower in a residential neighbourhood at a site that borders a nature reserve, a popular recreation area, and a sensitive watershed that

provides much of our island's drinking water is a poor land use practice. A "Utility Corridor" is not meant to be a health hazard.

- 5G networks consist of small cell antennas and macro towers.
- The Trust has no input into where small cell antennas are placed, but you do have a say when it comes to macro towers. Given that this project will lay the foundation for full 5G on our island, we must make our voices count. As the Land Use Authority, you have the power to say no to this tower and to limit the amount and type of development on our island.
- **Please exercise your right and responsibility as LUA and write a letter of non-concurrence for this project**

Speaker 6: 1 minute – Todo Journey

Not Cost-Effective

This Project does not make Environmental or Economic Sense

- In an age of rampant tech addiction and resource depletion, how much wireless infrastructure is enough?
- Numerous studies show that wireless signals from mobile telecommunications sites harm plants and trees, wildlife, and pollinators.
- This in turn threatens are local food resilience.
- This project is not cost-effective. Although partnering with Rogers may save CREST money in the short term, models show that the liability and health care costs, as well as the environmental costs of wireless infrastructure are high.
- CREST is funded by us. Our tax dollars should not be used to benefit a huge, for-profit telecom like Rogers.
- We support CREST in building their own tower in an appropriate location with no commercial antennas allowed.

- Limiting the amount of wireless infrastructure on our island will bring economic benefits. Many visitors would come specifically to spend time in a place with low levels of radiofrequency radiation.
- **The costs are high; the benefits are few. Please write a letter of non-concurrence for this project**

Speaker 7: 1 minute – Jenny McLean

Energy Use & Climate Change

Cell Towers are not Green.

- This project directly contravenes our island's Climate Action Plan.
- 4G consumes 23 times more energy than wired connections do.
- A typical 5G base station uses twice as much energy as a 4G base station does.
- 5G will use two to three times more energy than 4G.
- Major environmental groups like the Sierra Club of California have issued warnings about the effects our growing wireless dependence is having on climate change.
- The largest environmental group in Spain, "Ecologistas en Acción" has called for a moratorium on 5G and warns that the digital economy - with its e-waste and the excessive amount of energy used in manufacturing and usage - has an immense ecological footprint.
- The Shift Project - a French non-profit created by energy-climate experts - has concluded that if we are to stop climate change we must practice Digital Sobriety.
- **For the sake of our planet, please write a letter of non-concurrence for this project**

Speaker 8: 1 minute – Nomi Lyons

Risk Management

This Rogers tower is a liability risk for the Salt Spring Trust

- There are currently several class action lawsuits underway due to wireless exposure .
- Insurance companies see wireless radiation as too high a risk to insure and refuse to cover wireless companies like Rogers for health claims related to exposure to RF radiation. This means liability for this tower could fall on the Islands Trust.
- In its 2019 New Emerging Risks SONAR Report, Swiss Re, one of the world's largest insurance companies, classified 5G as a "High Impact Liability" risk and predicted that claims would increase with time.
- The City of Malibu, California just passed a new set of rules requiring telecom companies to fully insure their wireless facilities, not just against damage incurred should a tower fall or ignite a fire, but also against electromagnetic pollution created by the towers.
- **For our protection, please write a letter of non-concurrence for this project**

Speaker 9: 1.5 minutes – Marla Nolan

Health

The ability of wireless radiation exposure to cause serious illness has been firmly established.

- In 2018, the US National Institutes for Health completed the largest study ever conducted regarding the potential impact of cell phone RF radiation – the same kind of radiation that will be emitted by Rogers from this tower.
- Top scientists who reviewed the results from this groundbreaking NTP study found clear evidence of cancer, heart damage, reduced birth weights

and DNA damage at exposure levels that Health Canada's Safety Code 6 considers safe.

- The American Cancer Society said: "The NTP report linking radiofrequency radiation to two types of cancer marks a paradigm shift in our understanding of radiation and cancer risk. The findings are unexpected; we wouldn't reasonably expect non-ionizing radiation to cause these tumors."
- Building another cell tower on our island is going against the tide of science.
- Families with young children should not live by cell towers.
- Neither should women who are or would like to become pregnant.
- People with implanted medical devices or compromised immune systems or sensitivity to radiation should also avoid them.
- **For our children and for generations to come, please write a letter of non-concurrence for this project**

Speaker 10 - 1 minute – Callie Kares

Safety

Cell towers are fire hazards and are vulnerable in disasters.

- Cell towers don't hold up under disaster conditions. They failed in the tornadoes in Ottawa, the fires in California, and the hurricanes in Puerto Rico and Texas.
- They get knocked down, ignite or collapse. Their power back-up systems are unreliable.
- Telecom equipment was responsible for the last 2 major fires in Malibu, California.
- Placing a fire-prone cell tower in a forest on an island that often has a high fire risk level is extremely dangerous.

- Cell phones are not the best way to communicate in natural disasters.
- In the October 2017 fires in northern California, residents with copper, legacy landline phones received the reverse-911 warnings to evacuate. Wireless alerts failed to get through.
- Both cellular networks that use wireless line of site and those that use fiber to connect towers are vulnerable to earthquakes and extreme weather. If one tower or the fiber goes down, you lose the entire network.
- **For our island's safety, please write a letter of non-concurrence for this project**

Speaker 11 – 1 Minute 40 seconds –Chris Anderson

Monitoring of Site

Rogers and Telus – not ISED – will monitor the safety of this site

- Health Canada leaves it up to the proponent to measure and test RF Radiation levels
- Rogers is relying on computer modelling to reassure us that the cumulative emissions at this site from Rogers & Telus combined conform to Safety Code 6.
- A computer program is not a mind reader. Rogers has no way of knowing what Telus has planned. When Cyprus tells us that “the RFR output will remain “around these levels” regardless of new antennas being added” we have to question their honesty, their accuracy and their integrity.
- More antennas = more transmissions = more RFR
- At complex sites like this one, ISED requires that real, at site measurements be taken. But ISED does not have the person power to enforce this policy.
- Given how cellular signals travel – distance from a tower does not always mean safety. In fact, the area closest to the tower has the lowest RFR as signals are designed to travel outward.

- A recently published study from Spain measured radiation levels inside and outside homes and found that most of the radiation came from cell towers and that the intensity depended more on the direction of the beam than the distance to the antenna.
- The peak exposure levels in many homes was much higher than what is permitted under Safety Code 6. Health effects like headaches, dizziness, fatigue and sleep disorders were prevalent in those who lived as far as 200 meters away from a cell tower.
- **For our wellbeing, please write a letter of non-concurrence for this project.**

Speaker 12 - 1 minute – Elizabeth Gay

Fiber Optics

Use cellular when we are mobile, Fiber wired to the premises when we are not.

- 80% of cellular activity occurs indoors
- Fiber connected directly to the premises is the fastest, safest, most secure and energy efficient way of transmitting data
- The SRD-launched Connected Coast is bringing open access fiber to four ports on our island over the next 2 years.
- All wireless devices - even smart phones - can be wired with the right adaptors.
- Fiber could be used as an adjunct to emergency radio signals, linking sites like the hospital, the RCMP and our fire stations with each other and connecting CREST sites on our island.
- This would provide a much faster, more stable and cyber secure way of sending and receiving messages than wireless transmissions.
- **Choose safe technology. Please write a letter of non-concurrence for this project.**