

Seven reproses to Denise Blackwell's article that appeared in the Jan 16, 2008 Goldstream Gazette

Interchange will expose Bear Mtn. deal making

January 23, 2008

Re: "Misinformation mars interchange project," Guest Comment, Jan. 16, 2008.

Langford Coun. Denise Blackwell bewails the nasty ingrates at the tree-sit, which is blockading her mega-project with the Bear Mountain developers. Her petulant statements lend credence to the maxim: first they ignore, then they ridicule, then they insult — and then we win.

Blackwell has good reason to be perturbed. Nobody is fooled by her denials that the only beneficiary is the sprawling blast-and-smash development, which will double in size if the interchange goes ahead.

Recently, Blackwell chaired a meeting to put Langford taxpayers on the hook to lend \$25 million to Bear Mountain. This after Mayor Stew Young and Bear Mtn. No. 2 Les Bjola promised that developers would finance the interchange.

The tree-sit has also exposed the Golder Associates Archaeological Impact Assessment.

Golder missed all the show-stopping features of the site. The numerous karst sinkholes indicate a subterranean cavern system which could yield important archaeological and paleontological resources. Bulldozing cannot commence without a proper assessment.

Blackwell makes the baseless accusation that the tree-sitters are poaching deer and rabbit.

Sure, they may eat roadkill being slaughtered on the highway, but most of the food is received by donation, and from Langford's overflowing dumpsters.

The tree-sit offers a standing invite for a sumptuous tofu dinner to Blackwell and Mayor Stew Young, neither of whom has ever bothered to visit the camp.

If Blackwell and Young find the Bear Mountain tree-sitters so offensive, then they should order the RCMP to start making arrests instead of waiting around for a court injunction. Arrests would allow the tree-sitters to open the large can of worms which include collusive backroom deals and other sleazery associated with Bear Mountain. So chalk up getting a court injunction to the many obstacles now standing in the way of the Bear Mountain interchange.

Ingmar Lee

Coalition to Protect

Goldstream Watershed

Interchange a regional concern;

January 23, 2008

Re: "Misinformation mars interchange project," Guest Comment, Jan. 16, 2008.

I was interested to read Denise Blackwell's comments on the protest in Langford.

In her attempt to discredit the tree-sitters I believe she has left out many Langford and Greater Victoria citizens who oppose the interchange development.

For example, recently in one afternoon there were more than 400 signatures collected in a petition to oppose the interchange. There have also been many people who have turned up to interchange opposition rallies from all over the Capital Region to support Langford residents.

People everywhere including internationally are joining the campaign against Langford's "build now plan later" style.

Furthermore, Ms. Blackwell should think twice about making claims against the tree-sitters.

She is acting without decency in her claims that the tree-sitters and other protesters are committing criminal acts. The tree-sitters are preventing another poorly planned development that clearly serves only the Bear Mountain development.

Bear Mountain is now well know as an example of suburban sprawl at its worst.

Langford is referred to at public lectures and other land-use meetings as one of the worst offenders of allowing developers to plan communities and rail-roading over citizen concerns. When will it all stop?

Pamela Tudge

Saanich

Support the tree-sit activists

January 23, 2008

We are writing in support of the Spencer Road Interchange protesters.

We now realize, as the Langford municipal government insists upon pushing through their pro-development agenda, we should have spoken up sooner, written more letters and gone to the protests and stood in solidarity. We hope our effort isn't too late.

We don't live in Langford, but we have seen this municipal government continue to put development over the environment.

We hope locals will kick Langford's pro-development, anti-environment government to the curb in the up and coming municipal elections.

Trevor and Valerie

Williams

Salt Spring Island

Spencer EA ignored

January 23, 2008

Re: "Misinformation mars interchange project," Guest Comment, Jan. 16, 2008.

Nobody has explained how it was possible to make the decision about the Spencer interchange route one month before the environmental assessment was finished. Not that the EA would be any good, it just swept all the environmental problems under the carpet.

Adolf Ceska

Saanich

Blackwell ignores native rights Spencer activists not harming trees

January 23, 2008

Re: "Misinformation mars interchange project," Guest Comment, Jan. 16, 2008.

Langford Coun. Denise Blackwell's letter demonstrates the lack of transparency and accountability. I am sure many people will be responding to Blackwell's opinions. One issue I would like to address is potential conflict of interest.

Blackwell fails to mention that she is the administrator assistant to Justin Batten, director at the B.C. archaeology branch.

How is conflict of interest managed when a bureaucrat is a politician? Over a year ago, I met with Batten to discuss this issue.

Batten informed me that Blackwell remains silent when a politician on anything relating to archaeology. She does the same at the branch on politics. I asked, how does she fulfill her mandate as a bureaucrat without conflict of interest? I was told with silence.

Blackwell loudly states there are no sacred native sites near the interchange. Well, it sounds like she has broken her silence. Who said something similar in 2006? Yes, it was Len Barrie and Les Bjola.

Why would she express cultural interpretation and moral stance in her letter when she is not indigenous and doesn't hold any family knowledge of land?

How can the province, cities, developers and others apply these morals when infringing on indigenous rights and title? Where are these principles when she declares the site as not sacred to natives?

My grandmother shared our family history with me. My grandfather spoke of our connection to the land and sacred sites.

I connect to this land in a way settlers never will. Yet, my ancestors and their remains are continually disrespected and displaced and our sacred sites and homelands are continually desecrated.

If this behaviour is based on morals of civility, integrity and honesty — what is a heathen?

Cheryl Bryce

Songhees Nation

Re: "Misinformation mars interchange project," Guest Comment, Jan. 16, 2008.

I was surprised and offended to see your guest column about misinformation that contains so much misinformation.

Environmental climbers do not use "spikes." We climb clean and have used perfected techniques to build platforms that do no harm to the trees. Nor do we "poach rabbits and deer."

Blackwell should listen to the voice of her constituents instead of the developers.

If she really believes the interchange and insinuation of another subdivision in the watershed is good for the community, let her put it to a vote.

Jim Erkiletian

Nanaimo

