

Derek's Masselink Opening Statement

Nov. 1st 2008 Pender Post All Candidates Meeting

Good afternoon. My thanks to the Pender Post for hosting this event.

My name is Derek Masselink. I live, farm and work with my wife Michelle, our two daughters, Everest and Quinn and my parents Jake and Joyce Masselink in Hope Bay. My and Mom and Dad have owned the former Welcome Bay Inn in Hope Bay for over 20 years. My family has been full-timers here for just over five years now but in this short time we have become hopelessly attached and connected to this place.

I inherited my love of nature and the land from my father who, as many of you know, was a senior public servant with BC Parks for many years. I am trained as an ecologist and landscape architect. I currently run an environmental consultancy business with Michelle out of historic Hope Bay doing land use, community and agricultural work in various communities around BC. Together we run an organically managed market garden – I recognize many of you from the Saturday market.

Though much of my work occurs off Pender including being hired to help develop community plans for Central Saanich and Smithers and an agricultural plan for Salt Spring Island, I have turned down lucrative job opportunities which would have required us to move elsewhere because as a family we have established deep roots and connections to a place and to a community. A community that we, and more importantly, our girls love.

I believe that I have skills and experience necessary to make a productive contribution as a Trustee on issues that will shape and influence the future wellbeing of N. Pender Island. In doing so I hope to carry on in the creative spirit of the dedicated and visionary individuals and groups who are responsible for the legacy of assets we currently benefit from: the Community Hall, Medical Clinic, School, Fire Halls, places of worship, shopping centre, Recycling Centre and service organizations.

I believe our society and our community are at a crossroads. We are facing serious economic, social and environmental challenges that will directly affect the nature and quality of our lives on Pender. Our community's ability to pull together to meet these challenges will largely depend on our ability to engage not in endless debate without resolution but in informed and open dialogue that focuses on our shared concerns, and musters our varied talents to achieve win-win solutions. We can do this. We have done this in the past. The recent and successful expansion of our Medical clinic is a shining example of our ability to set aside our differences and work together on issues that matter - that in spite of the odds, when we work together, we achieve amazing things.

My interest in becoming a Trustee is to lend my skills and experience in the areas of community and land use planning, and work toward finding ways to join together that will ensure the long-term health and viability of our island community.

I am committed to serving the diverse elements of our talented community in upholding the mandate of the Islands Trust. I will bring new energy, ideas and experience.

Thank you for taking the time to listen and participate in this important and defining community event.

Derek Masselink's Closing Statement

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I want to serve this community that I love. And I am committed to using my knowledge and experience to engage the community in an open and productive dialogue on issues that matter.

I understand the responsibility that comes with being a Trustee, and I will approach each and every decision that comes before me with the following questions:

Is this in the long-term interest of our community?

Does it support the object and mandate of the Trust?

Will it ensure our Island's future as a community and public legacy for our children and grandchildren?

I want to help bring our community closer together around areas of common concern.

Maintaining our quality of life, the beautiful rural ambience of Pender — that's the reason all of us are here, isn't it? We don't want to become like the city or a bedroom community, we don't want more crowded ferries, more traffic on our roads. We want what the Trust Act says we ought to protect and maintain: the Trust area, its unique amenities and environment - not only for those of us who are privileged to live here but for all British Columbians.

In particular I will focus on:

- Improving our understanding and participation in local land use decision-making;
- Protecting our precious drinking water and limited farmland;
- Encouraging local food production and food security; and
- Supporting affordable housing and alternative transportation choices.

This is the type of work that I am currently involved in with other communities around the province. It's my passion.

In closing, I would like to thank those who make it possible for me to take on this challenge. Michelle, Everest, Quinn, Mom, Dad, my friends and supporters. And finally a big thank you to you all for your insightful questions and interest in finding out more about us and what we stand for. I have thoroughly enjoyed this.

Thank you.