

## Adam Zack

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**From:** Naomi Aldort <naomi@aldort.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, December 20, 2018 4:39 PM  
**To:** DL - Council; Bill Watson; Rick Hughes; Jamie Stephens; Erika Shook; Linda Ann Kuller; Adam Zack  
**Cc:** planaheadsanjuans@gmail.com; editor@islandssounder.com  
**Subject:** Keep the islands rural: limit vacation rental permits... more

Hello San Juan county council members and other officials,

In the book, *The Little Prince*, there is a story about a man who sells pills that quench thirst. When the little prince asks the seller what these are for, he says that it will save two hours a week, not having to go to the well to get water. The dismayed child responds that if he had two hours, he would love to use it walking leisurely to the well to drink water. Likewise: If we had the money, we would buy the quiet and rural nature back. We don't need economic growth. We have the money but abolishing greed. We must protect these beautiful islands from the harm of economic growth and already too large tourism.

Recently I have been very alarmed by what I hear about the redoing of the comprehensive plan. The island's people wish (as in the vision statement) to stay small, rural, wild and quiet is being hijacked by greed. With seemingly best intentions, some of our officials sound like victims of some forces stronger than them. Your job is to account for the people, not for money. We are not living here to let forces beyond us turn the islands into a city suburb, nor to have the 1% dictate our fate. For example, allowing unlimited number of permits for vacation rentals is absurd. Our family has been here for 25 years and the recent years' increase in tourists is *not welcome!!* It destroys our quality of life and increases the rate of growth when a percentage of visitors move in permanently. We need fewer, not more tourism. We need a cap on vacation rentals and on growth in general. Keep it rural!! Don't shove growth down our throats against our will as though it is unavoidable. It is in our hands and is up to you to represent the people's will and stir in line within the vision statement and with the will of the people (not the 1% who hog the shorelines and are often absent.)

When I am told that the tourism brings in much money, I can only say: Cut the greed. Money doesn't buy us the quiet and beauty we want. 25 years ago we lived nicely without so much money. When fewer people live and visit here, we need less money and have a better life as a community and individuals. Growth and profit are the wrong goals. The numbers as they were five years ago worked just fine with less money and less need for money... more rural. Instead of focusing on getting more money and turning the islands into a privileged retirements community with empty homes, off shore service people... and all that nightmarish destruction, let's work on generating income for local people through local farming, arts, services for local year around residents. Create more open spaces, more wilderness protection, more marine protection, more bike trails, walking paths and trails, more *affordable housing* for young families, less tourism and more satisfaction what what is. Again: If we had the money, I would buy the quiet and wilderness back. Greed can only drive away the best qualities and people on our islands. On Orcas we have attracted some amazing young teachers and organizers of the arts, dance, music, theater... all that will not be here for a geriatric community (sorry, no offense, I am old myself.)

Let me remind you that the vision statement of the San Juan islands says that it "...recognizes the rural, residential, quiet, agricultural, marine and isolated nature of the islands." (Hello). Other phrases in the vision statement talk about "stewardship and preserving pristine environments." (hello again). Our family moved here 25 years ago with three children, to enjoy these qualities of wilderness, quiet, and rural feel with low population density. I am concerned that we may lose these qualities that are in the vision statement and in the hearts of island residents, something that has happened all over the country to beautiful small rural communities. When

updating the comprehensive plan, ensure that it supports the [Vision Statement](#). Listen to the people, not to greed. We are not victims of some powerful unavoidable plan. We are creators and stewards of the islands nature and tranquility. I ask that you represent the people and protect our islands from greed and growth.

Thank you,  
Naomi

“To be a parent-leader is not about controlling, but about setting things up such that no control is needed.” - Naomi Aldort

To discuss your parenting and other concerns with Naomi: <https://naomialdort.com/index.php/call-naomi>

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