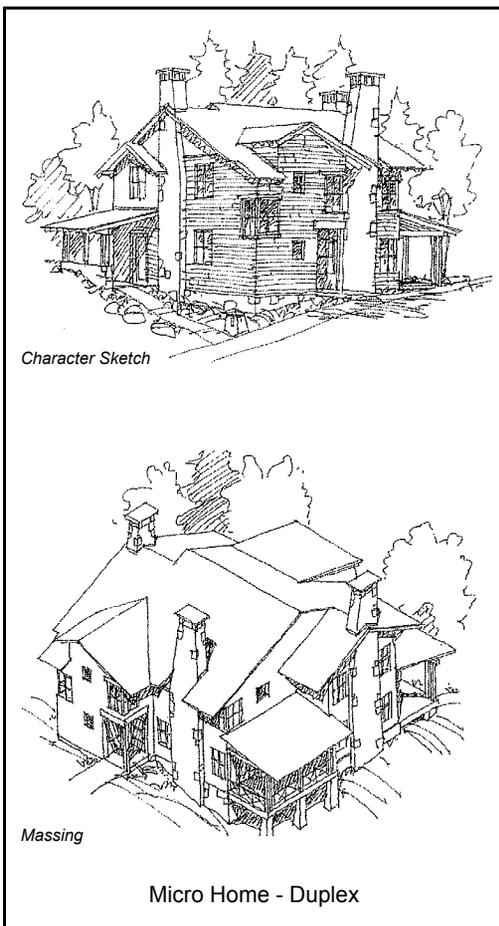


# Sustainability and the...

In 2009, any public discussion about land use planning will include, and be based on, the concept of sustainability.

The term "sustainability" started at the fringe of early enlightened social and environmental planning, and has since become the backbone for all responsible land use decisions by planners, professionals, consulting scientists, and civic leaders.

In 2007 the Municipality started a Sustainability Framework Working Group. Its purpose was to develop a draft report for Council on a proposed sustainability framework to enable Council, staff, and the community to make decisions that best support the Municipality's Mission Statement. The members included David Hocking (Chair, Council liaison), 13 community members, Tim Wake (consultant), Jason Smith (staff support), Bryan Kirk (CAO). Results of the Working Group's efforts are:



Character Sketch

Massing

Micro Home - Duplex

1. *Bowen Island 2020 Vision and Sustainability Framework* dated July 2008 (Draft), which includes *A Sustainable Development Strategic Plan for the Municipality of Bowen Island* prepared by Holland Barrs Planning Group (Draft).

2. *Bowen Island 2020 Vision and Development Assessment Tool* dated January 2008 (Draft).

3. *Sustainability Framework Working Group Final Report* (no date listed), presented to Council at the Committee of the Whole Meeting on October 20, 2008.

Most of the resulting findings and recommendations are as logical, far-sighted, and convincing as theoretical principles can be.

Unfortunately, theoretical principles are just that — principles in theory, but not necessarily in practice. As we all know, principles can conveniently be ignored if they are not in tune with political opinions.

What does that mean in the context of the future of Bowen Island?

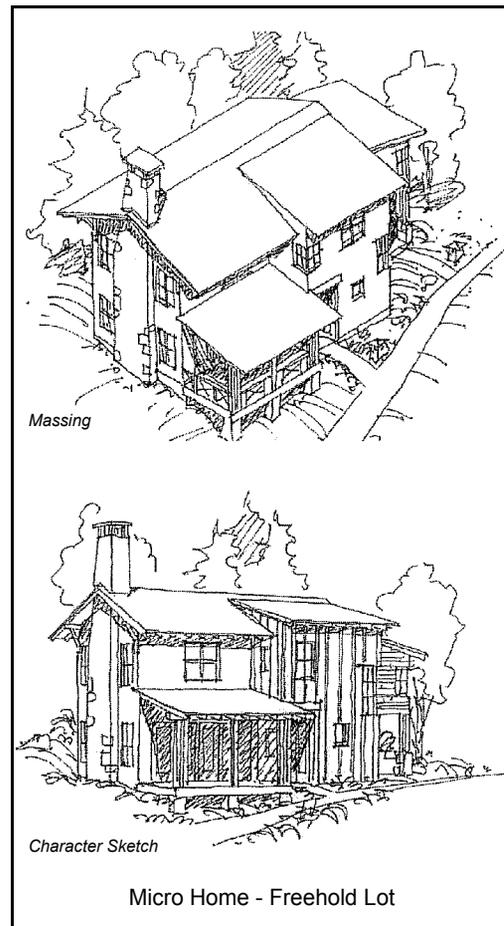
Let's start with the planning term "sustainability" itself. Most commonly, it is described as a three-legged stool. Each leg represents one of three fundamental elements: environmental, economic, and social well-being. If any of those legs is missing or is too short, the stool will topple.

**Environmental well being.** The need and desire to protect the natural environment on Bowen Island is not only obvious, but it is forcefully enshrined in the mandate and legislation of the Islands Trust, together with Municipal bylaws and regulations from numerous other governmental bodies. In addition, almost everybody who chooses to live on

Bowen Island is already more or less an environmentalist at heart, and takes comfort in the vigilance of Bowen Island's environmental custodians.

**Economic well being.** The most vital role for the social and economic well being of a community is played by its own local economy. Unfortunately the awareness and political recognition of that fundamental fact on Bowen Island seems to be sadly missing, notwithstanding the Municipality's own Mission Statement. What makes up Bowen Island's local economy? The three most obvious segments are the construction industry, hospitality, and retail — plus a widespread, but not very noticeable, assortment of home-based businesses. However, most of the income of Bowen Islanders is generated or derived off island, which is typical of bedroom and retirement communities. The current disparity between the size of the population and the locally generated income is not healthy, and over time will inevitably result in more social and economic distortions — just the opposite of what sustainability is all about.

**Social well being.** Despite a generally held view that Bowen Island is a warm and supportive community, the maintenance of a diverse community (diverse in the sense of age, income, lifestyle, etc.) is under siege. Anybody who has lived here long enough is acutely aware how poor Bowen Island has become in comparison to public services, facilities, and affordable housing in most other rural communities (even remote ones). The way we as a community look out for the needs and social well being of our seniors, teens, and young families is nothing to be proud of. The lack of decent public facilities for recreation, arts, and culture stands in stark contrast to the private wealth on Bowen. The lack of affordable and special needs housing violates all rules in the book of sustainability, and



Massing

Character Sketch

Micro Home - Freehold Lot

Cates Hill

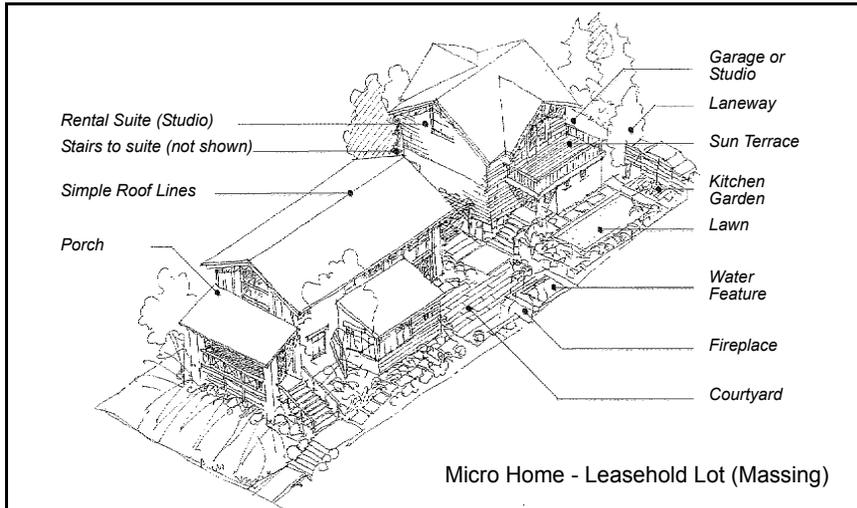
Cowan Point

has become a source of growing embarrassment and shame for many Bowen Islanders.

What makes us state all of the above? Quite simply, because in our position as local landowners, landlords, and developers, we are acutely aware of realities of life on Bowen Island which are far different than how a sustainable community should look. Therefore, in time we hope to create a broader awareness about the challenges to, and opportunities for, preserving and enhancing the environmental, economic, and social well being of Bowen Island.

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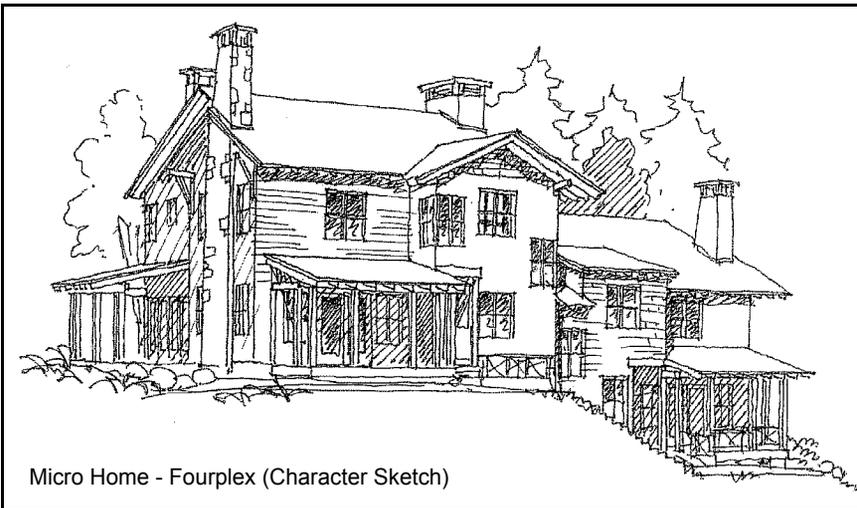
# ...Future of Bowen Island



**MISSION STATEMENT OF BOWEN ISLAND MUNICIPALITY:**  
**In carrying out its mandate, Bowen Island Municipality will work towards conducting operations in a way that:**

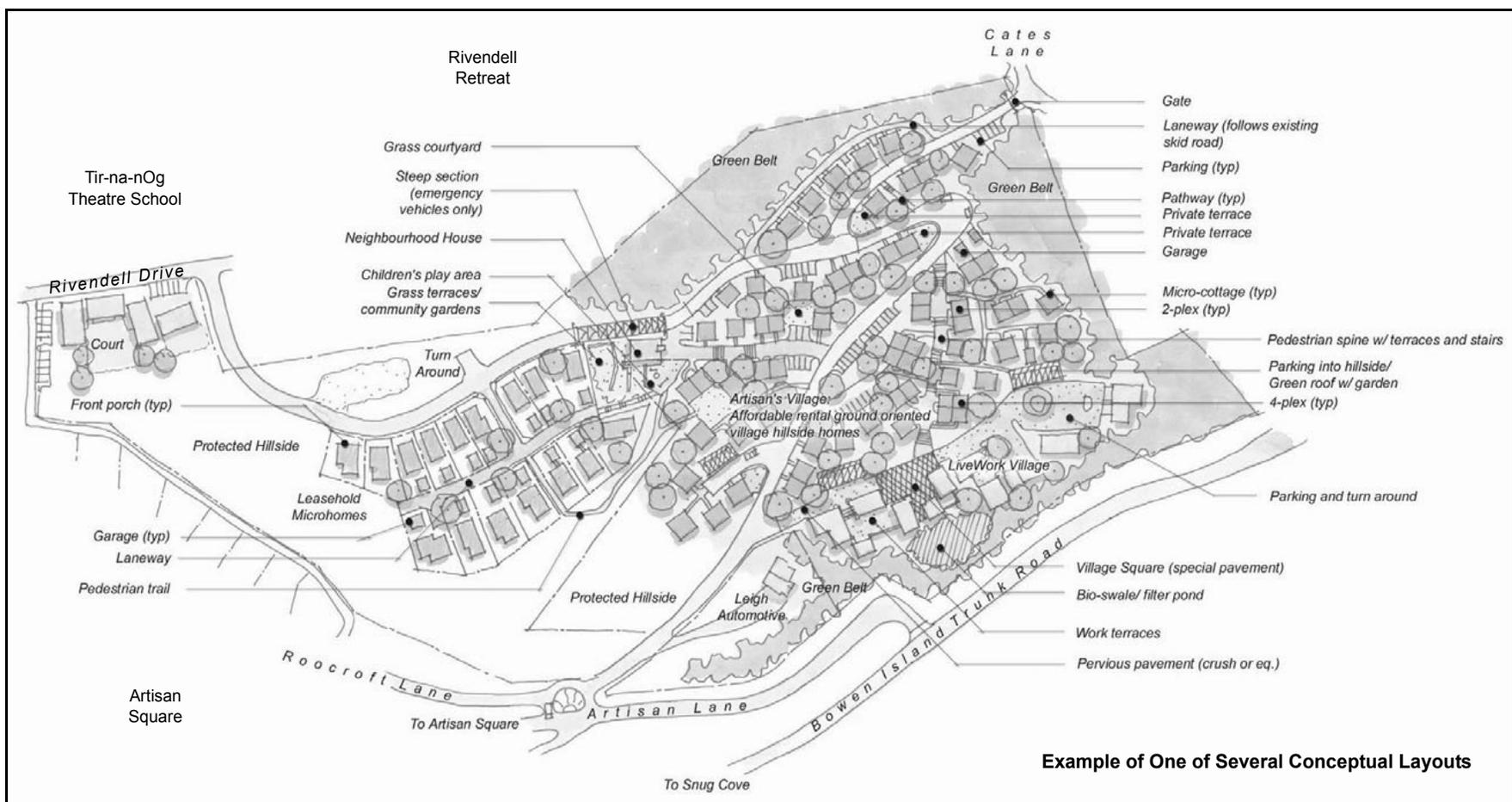
- 1. Improves the economic, environmental and social well-being for present and future generations;**
- 2. Encourages and fosters community involvement;**
- 3. Enhances the small, friendly, caring character of the community;**
- 4. Maintains an open, accountable and effective operation; and**
- 5. Preserves and enhances the unique mix of natural ecosystems and green spaces that Bowen Island possesses.**

Over the next 12 to 24 months, we intend to present ideas, planning concepts, and potential solutions to the community of Bowen Island for public debate, hoping for a reality-based transformation in the future. A possible first step will be our proposal to transfer density from the Park-view Slopes area on Cates Hill to the Seymour Landing area on Cowan Point, and related rezonings, as an example of a possible practical solution and to initiate public debate.



To get the process started, you are invited to a public meeting held by Cates Hill Joint Venture and Seymour Landing Joint Venture on Saturday, October 17, 2009 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Cates Hill Chapel on Carter Road.

We look forward to seeing you there.



Example of One of Several Conceptual Layouts