

Parking space battle pitting North Vancouver residents against each other

Cones and buckets used to claim territory

Maria Spitale-Leisk / North Shore News

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Fernando Sanchez received a nasty note from his neighbour after parking his vehicle between some cones she routinely sets up to hold a parking spot in the 300-block of West 14th Street. photo Kevin Hill

A parking spot war has broken out in a Central Lonsdale neighbourhood.

A handful of residents have been staking claims to public parking spaces on their street by placing cones to prevent other drivers from stealing “their” spot.

Fernando Sanchez, who lives in the 300-block of West 14th Street between Mahon and Jones avenues, said the cones started appearing six months ago when a new neighbour moved in. Soon, other households on the block followed suit in what has become a “proliferation of reserved spots” with buckets and cones marking territory, according to Sanchez.

“I’ve been very, very patient. And I’ve been parking far from my house,” he said.

The parking war escalated when Sanchez parked his vehicle between the aforementioned neighbour’s cones two weeks ago, and returned to find an angry note taped to his driver’s side window.

“I have infant twins and a toddler and live on this street. Because you moved my cones in your selfish way, I can’t park on my street and haul three young kids 1½ blocks to their house. Thanks so much you jerk. Think next time,” read part of the note.

The City of North Vancouver is aware of the parking cone controversy on the street and has sent bylaw officers on numerous occasions to remove them.

But Sanchez said once they leave, the cones reappear.

“My point is, why (have) bylaws and regulations if you don’t enforce them? If guarding private spots on a public street is

allowed I'll go and buy cones or paint some lines immediately. The fact is, this is not allowed..." said Sanchez.

The street is made up of mostly single-family homes, however, Sanchez is part of a strata of three houses that share garage space in the back lane.

Many garages on the street are used for storage or laneway housing, said Sanchez. Also only one house on the block has a driveway to park a vehicle.

Sanchez attributes the parking crunch to a couple factors. It's the first block in the area where there are no parking restrictions, so people doing business on Lonsdale are using up the spots, along with some construction workers.

The city said it is investigating to find out who is responsible for the cones and will be addressing the problem.

Sanchez's block has been recently approved to become a Resident Exempt parking zone. Under the changes, 50 per cent of the block will have a two-hour parking limit between 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. Residents can purchase a \$25 permit that allows them to park for up to 72 hours.

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