

AN OPEN LETTER

Save Our Museum

Dear Fellow Residents of North Vancouver,

When transparency appears to be lacking in a decision-making process at City Hall, for democracy to work, the community must call to account those involved.

On January 25th, by a split vote, North Vancouver City Councillors cancelled the Museum at the Shipyards after years of planning and fundraising. The crucial, final deliberations in advance of the vote were held behind closed doors.

A majority of Council walked away from 30 years of planning for a new museum, recommendations of more than 25 studies, a campaign for a museum in the Pipe Shop that had raised \$3.9 million in just 17 months (including \$2.2 million in federal support), an unprecedented unity of public support including both the Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations, and a once-in-a-century location opportunity. And we're still without a new museum.

Rejection reasons don't hold up to examination

1) Fundraising deadline missed

The original fundraising plan called for a timeline of 42 months. The City arbitrarily imposed a deadline of 17 months within which its \$5 million pledge would have to be matched. The campaign raised 89% of the funds within 40% of the originally designed timeline.

Typically in capital campaigns, project approval is granted when 70% of the funding target is reached such as Council recently did with the Polygon Gallery.

We believe Council approval of the Museum in the Pipe Shop would have spurred further donations and put the campaign over the top.

2) BDO report claimed project not viable

BDO Consulting was hired by the City and countered previous third party study findings that the project business plan was sound. Analysis of the BDO report suggests it has serious flaws and there are questions about the firm's expertise in this area.

We are a Committee of Concerned Citizens who want to Save Our Museum and we're working with the Friends of the North Vancouver Museum & Archives – a not-for-profit Society. And we believe the evidence strongly suggests the decision-making process lacked transparency.

After providing \$250,000 of your tax dollars to launch a fundraising campaign and authorizing a team of volunteers to spend hundreds of hours raising money, the City did little to support the campaign and then cancelled the project.

We ask for your help in respectfully urging City Council to convene a full and public discussion of all the facts in advance of a formal reconsideration.

Please join our online petition at www.my-museum.ca.

Thank-you for your consideration of support.

Sincerely,

Save Our Museum Committee of Concerned Citizens



A transparent process? You be the judge.

- Council had pledged to match \$5 million raised by the campaign. But last spring, long before the Council-imposed fundraising deadline, a majority of Council voted to postpone the project and removed the City's \$5 million in matching funds from the City's Capital Plan – before the fundraising campaign even had a chance to succeed.
- In any other business or government situation where good faith is in play, the parties involved would sit down and attempt to address the issues and concerns raised before abandoning a project – particularly one in which so much had been invested. City Council did not do this for the Museum at the Shipyards project. The question is: why not?

For more information and to sign the online petition, please visit our website: www.my-museum.ca