

LETTER: Shipyards an inspired setting for museum

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Dear Editor:

The North Vancouver Museum at the Pipe Shop in the Shipyards created a vision of a new vibrant, innovative museum. Conceived as a transparent museum – open to the plaza, connected to the routes through the Shipyards, and with flexible programming space – it could have been the community heart on the waterfront, supporting a variety of programs for citizens and visitors alike.

This was also a unique opportunity to feature the heritage building as an important, living, refurbished artifact that could be enjoyed by all. What better venue for the museum than a cherished heritage building that tells many stories and celebrates the Shipyards – home to the shipbuilding industry on the North Shore for over a century.

As Martin Luther King said, “We are not makers of history. We are made by history.” The NVMA has spent many years developing a vision for their new location that weaves the history of North Vancouver with the threads of our lives today.

The museum’s goal was to honour its traditional foundations, while using the collection as a catalyst for creating dialogue, generating meaning and connecting the community. No longer passive places, museums today are becoming places of community engagement. In our digital society, public places to gather and learn are increasingly important. This heritage building on the Shipyard Plaza is ideal.

Our firm, Urban Arts Architecture, worked with the museum to develop their program and feasibility study for relocating the museum in the Pipe Shop. We were inspired by the passion and commitment of the museum board, director and staff in creating the vision for the museum. These dedicated individuals have spent years working on this project and have raised 89 per cent of their contribution through a concerted fundraising campaign that is ongoing. This highly successful campaign clearly demonstrates the citizens’ interest in a revitalized museum.

This was an incredible opportunity to retain an important building for public use shared and open to all.

Locating an important civic institution in the Shipyards, will create vitality, programming, and partnerships at the centre of North Vancouver’s public realm on the waterfront.

We trust that council will review their decision.

Shelley Craig, partner, Urban Arts Architecture

What are your thoughts? Send us a letter via email by clicking [here \(http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter\)](http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter) or post a comment below.

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