

LETTER: Developments should reflect community values

North Shore News

July 15, 2016 04:30 PM

Dear Editor:

Re: [Sewell's Project Withdrawn at 11th Hour \(http://www.nsnews.com/news/sewell-s-project-withdrawn-at-11th-hour-1.2295061\)](http://www.nsnews.com/news/sewell-s-project-withdrawn-at-11th-hour-1.2295061), July 6

The decision to revise the development project in Horseshoe Bay provides a pivotal opportunity for North Shore residents to not only consider the approach to this particular project, but the overall mindset when generally dealing with real estate development.

Jill Killeen, the spokesperson for the development, stated that it's important the project "is totally in step with the desires and needs of the community." That is a timely statement which reflects an increasing concern for North Shore citizens when faced with the rubber stamping of successive high density developments which consider monetary aspects at the expense of affordability, livability and environmental sustainability.

The result is a vicious circle of ad hoc amendments to official community plans which, ironically, are originally intended to democratically reflect "the desires and needs of the community."

Most importantly, residents are faced with a process where the very nature and livability of their communities is essentially being sold off by politicians who are failing to represent and serve their best interests. One need only look at the increasing traffic gridlock on the Upper Levels Highway and in other areas of the North Shore to witness the deterioration in the livability of one of the most beautiful places in the world — which includes the impact on the environment and the capacity to find affordable housing.

While a smart housing solution is to decrease the square footage of our living spaces, it should not become a pretext to stuff even more units into highrises which do not reflect the character of a community such as Horseshoe Bay.

If developers and politicians truly wish to serve "the desires and needs of the community," they need to respect the community plans which are there to fulfill that purpose, and to place the priority on serving the people in the community in a comprehensive manner. Above all, if we are to be responsible stewards of our uniquely beautiful environment, we cannot continue the mindset of milking it until it is no longer sustainable.

As we have done with great success on Bowen Island, the way for North Shore residents to ensure that "the desires and concerns" of their communities are met is for them to mobilize their efforts in standing up for their communities, and for the integrity of their community plans in democratically reflecting their objectives and aspirations for themselves, their children and their children's children.

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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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