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North Vancouver city council stays hands-off in hedge fights

[Brent Richter](#) / North Shore News

May 20, 2015 12:00 AM



File photo North Shore News

It was probably the first dispute between neighbours after the invention of the hedge — and it remains perennial suburban annoyance.

The City of North Vancouver has had a number of complaints in recent years about unreasonably high hedges that are blocking views and casting shadows. But rather than rewrite its nuisance bylaw and send out enforcement officers with tickets or run to the courts for the unruly topiary, city council has voted for “enhanced facilitation” between neighbours to resolve hedge fights.

“The city has limited authority to regulate landscaping, particularly trees and hedges,” a city staff report notes.

“Furthermore, this limited authority the City is further compromised by the challenges of enforcing that authority.”

Council rejected more heavy-handed options, preferring not to make matters of private property between neighbours an issue for city bylaw staff.

“It needs to be worked out. I think what staff has brought forward is a process for mediating these things and how to be a good neighbour,” said Coun. Craig Keating.

But, Coun. Rod Clark noted, be careful what you wish for when asking for a lower hedge, reflecting on his experience when he first bought a home.

“Low and behold, there was the hull of an unfinished ship on the other side of the fence, so you never know what you’re going to get,” he said.

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