

Participate Feb 21

by

Mayor Richard Walton



IT'S a well-known tradition to begin the new year with a resolution to do good in some form or other, whether for ourselves by exercising more, eating better, or spending more time with our family or, in some cases, resolutions take the form of pledging to do good for others. Next month the District of North Vancouver and Simon Fraser University's Centre for Dialogue will be co-hosting a community dialogue event to discuss parking and access issues in Deep Cove. I'd like to ask you to make a resolution to do good for yourself and others by circling February 21 on your calendar, and planning to participate.

The issues of parking and access in the Cove affect us all, whether it be the summer madness that the residents of Panorama Drive live

through, the pedestrian safety concerns of residents in Rock Cliff, the folks on boat access-only properties up Indian Arm and over in Belcarra who come in to the village by way of Seycove Marina, or the very real needs of the community's small businesses to have parking for their patrons -- their very life blood. As I said in my column last month, Deep Cove has become an international destination for visitors and they too have a part to play in the discussion.

Because there are so many competing interests and no silver bullet solutions, we must come together as a community and discuss needs, desires, compromises and solutions. We have a technical study that lays out the causes of the problems, where and when they are occurring, and proposes some possible technical solutions. Now it's time for the community to get involved, roll up its sleeves, develop its own ideas and decide which solutions it prefers. Your District Council wants just one thing out of this community dialogue process: a made in Deep Cove plan that features technically-sound and financially feasible solutions, which all of the

stakeholders agree upon, and that Council can endorse.

We've decided to partner with SFU Centre for Dialogue because they are uniquely qualified to help the community to create non-partisan and constructive communication around these difficult topics. The Centre's work involves exploring critical issues that impact the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being of our communities. They bring to the table an internationally recognized expertise in a process called 'deliberative dialogue', which I'll explain in greater detail in my next column which comes out in the January 28 edition of this paper.

Later this month you will start to see advertising and promotion in Deep Cove designed to raise awareness about the dialogue event and encourage registration to participate. I encourage you to ask your friends and neighbours if they have heard about the event, and I encourage everyone to register to participate. It is only by ensuring all of the community's diverse voices and interests are around the table that we can hope to reach a long term solution that works for everyone.

Find out more about the Centre for Dialogue's work at sfu.ca/dialogue and keep an eye on our web page at dnv.org/deepcove for updates on the process and a link to register for the event.

