

Subject: Civic Democracy in the DNV

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Civic democracy and the right to access information without undue difficulties is once again on the line in the District of North Vancouver.

Whenever I use the word banana republic in describing the District, some people claim it is not appropriate in this civilised environment. But I say, if it walks like a duck, looks like a duck and quacks like duck, it certainly is not a song bird.

The most recent example of my characterization is in connection with a liquor store outlet in Edgemont Village in the District.

Mr Jeremy Dalton, a District resident, has been trying to get to the bottom of this controversy for some time. The District knew since 2002 that legislative changes allowing liquor outlets were coming. If you don't want such outlets in specific areas, said Victoria, you better get appropriate rezoning bylaws in place before the legislation comes into effect. District staff too sent comprehensive reports alerting Council.

But the District did nothing. However, when the legislation was put into effect and a store, over the objections of the local residents, was opened in Edgemont, both Mayor and Council claimed that the Province had let them down. Don Bell the erstwhile Mayor of the District even addressed the multitude claiming that the Liquor Board was unreasonable and bureaucratic and did not listen to the people.

To get to the bottom, Mr Dalton recently requested relevant staff reports to determine not only whether the District knew but also what Council could have done to avoid the controversy.

However, Mr Dalton was told by the District Clerk he would have to pay \$ 130 for over 400 pages of material when all he needs is the material which proves or disproves that the District is guilty or not.

I made a motion that he be exempted from having to pay this exorbitant fee since, in my opinion, he is providing a service to the community. The motion should have been put on a public agenda for everyone to see. But instead, it turned up on an In Camera Agenda. The results were predictable - Council refused. While I have stated in public that Council could have avoided the controversy by providing timely leadership, the community has every right to find out for itself. It so happens that Mr. Dalton is providing this service.

The question now is whether the community will allow the District to give Mr. Dalton a hard time or come to his assistance.

If his reasonable request is ignored who will be next?. If he gets the run-around, it may come back to haunt the community for such is the nature of things that what goes around comes around.



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