

**Subject: RE: Election signs**

**Date:** Fri, 25 Nov 2005 09:51:49 -0800

**From:** "Ernie Crist" <ernie\_crist@dnv.org>

**To:** "Elizabeth James" <cagebc@yahoo.com>, "Mayor and Council - DNV" <Council@dnv.org>

**CC:** "James Ridge" <James\_Ridge@dnv.org>, "Corrie Kost" <kost@triumf.ca>, "Brian Platts" <bplatts@shaw.ca>, "Cathy Adams" <cathyadams@canada.com>, "FONVCA" <fonvca@fonvca.org>, "Darrell Mussatto" <dmussatto@cnv.org>

Dear Mrs. James:

The following information may be of interest to you as it pertains to the issue you have raised. Some years ago and prior to a previous election, I suggested that all candidates voluntarily refrain from using election signs. The candidates actually adhered to this gentleman's agreement. However, the voter turnout dropped dramatically compared to previous elections and during the following election, signs were once again displayed and voter turnout returned to "normal". This was taken as evidence that election signs DO stimulate voter turnout as had been claimed by some - I had to agree.

On another occasion I made a motion that all election signs be banned and that instead the District set up Bill Boards in strategic locations giving all candidates equal space with only their name and their desired position being listed alphabetically. I suggested that in addition, banners advertising elections be placed in strategic locations. These motions were not accepted either and neither to the best of my knowledge was there any public interest or support.

Also, since we are talking about signs and civic pride, if I understand you correctly, on several occasions I submitted motions that no signs of any kind be permitted on public property including real estate signs. However, these efforts too were defeated and to the best of my knowledge neither was there any public support.

There are indeed some municipalities where, mainly for reasons of civic pride, no signs of any kind are allowed on public property while signs on private property are severely restricted. This appears to be the case in municipalities who in addition to advertising their civic pride also respect the sensitivity of visitors and tourists much like the proprietor of a restaurant would wish to respect his clients by NOT permitting soiled Menu's to be displayed. This civilised attitude in turn appears to impact also environmental awareness with the result that such jurisdictions might as a rule also be reluctant to permit raw sewage to be poured into rivers oceans and creeks as we are doing, to use as an example.

In addition, I suggested setting up well designed and tasteful structures for the display of signs as is the case in jurisdictions where signs are not allowed other than on such structures and only under strict guidelines. These efforts too were defeated. I had also suggested that we charge the ARTS Commission or the ARTS Council with this task while recovering expenses from charges for advertising space on such structures thus making it cost neutral. This too is the case in other "more successful" jurisdictions. A spokesperson of the Arts Community actually agreed and saw no problem with such a potentially profitable task. Still it was not pursued by District Council. I strongly suspect that the real reason for turning down this practical solution was its potential negative impact on the display of real estate signs throughout the municipality. I mention all this only so you may see that the matter WAS addressed.

As for your comments that there was a great deal of misinformation given out by some candidates during the recent election. This surely is nothing new. Indeed, I found this comment somewhat curious for while it is undoubtedly true, it seems the public is not impressed by the dissemination of truth either. Indeed, it would appear that, generally speaking, those who lie the best also fare the best. It is this which prompted me at one of the all candidates meetings, albeit contrary to a pledge I had made to myself not to say anything during the election, to tell one of the prominent incumbents "You may not be the best Councillors we have ever had but you are certainly the best liar we ever had". This may not have been proper as the English would say but I am sure he will remember it.

Also, an event comes to mind about a previous election when an organised group of candidates meticulously collected evidence showing that the District was headed for the fiscal and other rocks. But it took only one ad by the incumbent Mayor one day before the election, to state that these charges were lies for both he and his selected "crew" to get re-elected. The situation appears to have been similar in this election when all incumbents, while denying that which was self evident to Mayor elect Mussatto, got re-elected in the District.

In the same vein it is equally curious that some candidates but particularly one, advertised her extremely limited accomplishments in her capacity as Councillor as great achievements when by any standard they were minuscule albeit it is a given that accomplishments including putting forward motions like beauty are in the eye of the beholder. Still, this is interesting since, this Mayoralty candidate while sitting on Council campaigned against making "too many" motions and initiatives. This is just by the bye.

Yours truly,

Ernie Crist

---

**From:** Elizabeth James [mailto:cagebc@yahoo.com]

**Sent:** Thursday, November 24, 2005 9:38 PM

**To:** Mayor and Council - DNV

**Cc:** James Ridge; Corrie Kost; Brian Platts; Cathy Adams; FONVCA; Darrell Mussatto

**Subject:** Election signs

24 November 2005

Dear Mayor and Council:

I have prepared this letter to ask that you ask Staff to prepare a swift amendment to the sign bylaw, which would prohibit the placement of election signs on anything other than private residential property.

Throughout the Lower Mainland and on several levels, the recently-concluded local election campaign was a less than elevating experience.

Name-calling and accusations of dirty tricks were the order of the day in several municipalities. On the North Shore, expensive misinformation was circulated freely without discussion by candidates, or challenge by the media. In the District, this wonderful democratic exercise of ours saw outright vandalism which surpassed that of any election in recent memory.

A particularly disturbing example saw three personal signs on private property of one candidate, ripped out of the ground and replaced by five new ones of an opposing contender. Just today, the signs of some candidates who were not elected, were still to be seen on the District median along Lynn Valley Road.

In general, there were so many election signs ripped up and thrown on sidewalks and medians, that anyone landing in the District from another country, could have been forgiven for asking whether we were undergoing a strike by garbage collection personnel. And no sooner has that mess been cleaned up, than we are threatened with yet another Federal election. Enough already!

Is this type of cowardly law-breaking is to be the order of the day? If so, a December-January election campaign conjures up nauseating visions of hundreds of Silver-Bells lying in the rain, mud or snow all over the District - not my idea of Christmas decorations!

For that reason, I beg you to ban election signs in the District - either in total, or at least restricted to private property. My rationale is that signs are an expensive waste of time. They cost scarce campaign dollars to buy and scarce campaign workers' time to plant - and replant. Shaw Cable covers candidate debates locally, as do the North Shore Outlook and News, and the papers enjoy the advertising revenue. Anyone who is actually interested in what the contenders have to say, can also attend All-Candidate meetings, so we can well do without the dreaded photos grinning at us from every corner of the intersection.

The only sign I want to see, is the one I plan to have on my bumper: Do away with politicians - Don't Vote!

Thank you for your consideration,

Liz James  
[604] 988-2066

---

[Yahoo! Model Search](#) - Could you be the next [catwalk superstar](#)? Check out the [competition](#) now