

Subject: Less for more, or another District success story:

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A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST

Next week, Saturday May 28 there will be the ground breaking ceremony of the Lynn Valley Library and plaza. The building was originally to be a combination 5 story Library and people center. A meeting place for cultural and social activities including lectures, small scale performances, concerts and even plays - a place for seniors, community groups, young people and a place to play chess. A group of chess players, some of whom live in Lynn Valley, now have to scrounge for a place to play. They usually end up in West Vancouver.


A Library and community center is what we fought for. What the people in Lynn Valley will get is much less. This is a fact, even though the money for the whole project was already in place. Indeed, the total cost for the project was \$22 million - a large portion came from the Heritage Fund. However, enter people excelling in small town thinking, fiscal opportunism and just plain incompetence and the result is predictable. The project was scaled down and an opportunity lost, but not for lack of funding, but for lack of vision and plain common sense. The original 5 story building was reduced to 3 stories. My motion to use the adjacent building to offset the loss of space was defeated too.

Instead of a community center, there will only be a Library, more or less. Instead of \$ 22 million the cost will be in excess of \$ 30 million and instead of coming out of the funds already in place it will be added to the taxes. The chess players will continue to have to scrounge around for a place to play and Seniors will have to go to the Molly Nye house not even big enough to make lunches.

The present Mayor, then a Councillor, did much to nix the original idea. On Saturday May 28 she will laud the project as yet another outstanding community achievement. But for those who know, the platitudes from the platform (if there is one) will ring hollow. Those who know the whole story know better. It could have been much more than a Library, however needed, and for much less.

The bottom line is that the Lynn Valley Center will not be a people's center but a Library and cobblestone square only. Activities on the plaza will be confined to rainless days. If the community wants to get together they will have to find another place. I think the appropriate quoted for the occasion is "you can't make a silk purse ". I will leave up to the people of Lynn Valley to fill in the rest.

Ernie Crist

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