

## Symposia Greek Restaurant - 1564 Lonsdale Another Venerable North Vancouver City Business Gives Up

For those North Shore residents who enjoy great food and entertainment, it is with much sadness that I inform you that Rod and his wonderful wife have called it a day, closed their doors, and sold their lease. The property, under new management, will become the newest entry to sell sushi on Lonsdale, as if we needed more of that.

Rod first began supplying great Greek food as the head cook at Paspalos Greek Tavern, located in the 100 block West 3rd Street, then operated by his friend Greg. Rod and Angelo, another long service Paspalos employee, left to start Mythos Greek Restaurant, situated in upper Lonsdale in the 1800 block West. Angelo and Rod operated Mythos for many years before selling to Bill Papandreou, a long service employee and the recent SD#44 candidate for School Trustee by the same name.

Rod, not wishing to retire, took his savings and began anew with Symposia Greek Restaurant located at 1564 Lonsdale, directly East and across from the HSBC bank. Initially Rod and his bride had a huge success on their hands. His well known culinary skills brought many long time clients back to his new door. Regulars included the brothers Brewer after whose family we named our new City Police headquarters building. Many other long time community names frequented Rods, including my wife and I. Each time we attended, Rod would arrive at our table, tell us what we would be eating, and then overwhelm us with great food, that just kept coming.

But fortunes changed for Rod and many other central Lonsdale businesses with the arrival of the Market Place and the Anthem development. During Anthem's construction phase, a contractor struck a water main causing a massive flood that hit every business on the East side of Lonsdale, all the way to 15th Street. Rod's Symposia was flooded, the floors ruined, and the restaurant was shut for 2 weeks while he and his neighbours tried to put themselves right. The City stonewalled, telling each of them to make insurance claims. Most of the affected businesses, including Rod's, did not have business interruption insurance, and the affects of filing a property claim would have caused next years premiums to skyrocket. Rod and his neighbours asked the City to put things right but the Mayor did the two step, and even those who were promised payment of their insurance deductibles say they never got the cheque.

When the Market Place opened, the street parking was beautified and more than half disappeared for 'Traffic Calming', cross walks, planters and driveways. The new underground parking at the Market meant Rod's customers, would now suffer a \$6-\$20 bill for the same period that used to be free when available as street parking.

The once busy Symposia restaurant began to slow, but Rod fought on, ensuring his clients knew he had lane-way parking for their needs. But that lane-way parking became inaccessible when the Market Place supply trucks, entering from 15th street behind Shoppers, began lining up facing north-bound for the lane-way loading docks, blocking access and egress to Rods rear parking. When Rod pursued the Mayor for resolution, Darrell kicked him out of his office and told him not to come back. Soon after his Mayoral dispute, the City Hall lunch trade that had come daily dried up. Rod claims the Mayor blacklisted his place due to his public complaints about the treatment of City businesses by his worship and the City Administrator.

So it is that we lose yet another long standing and wonderful business so that our new friends 'the developers' might satisfy their insatiable appetite for change. I myself am full-up on change and know that I will, like many of you, fondly remember the fun and food that was Symposia. On behalf of the City, I wish to apologize for how we have treated you and your lovely wife. We'll all miss you, and I wish the two of you the best of luck !

Kerry and Jerri Morris

