



CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER BYLAW PROPOSAL TO CANCEL PUBLIC INPUT PERIOD AT START OF WEEKLY COUNCIL MEETING

On Monday, May 11th 2015, North Van City Council will vote on a bylaw which, if passed, will end the public's right to speak to council at each subsequent Monday night council meeting. The subject bylaw proposes to remove the current requirement to adjourn to a Public Input Period, at which time each resident is able to speak.

Many of you have used this right at one time or another, to bring forward an issue which you felt was important. If the Public Input Period had not been available, then you would not have been able to raise those issues directly, in your own unique way, ensuring your voice had actually been heard and considered.

Maybe you spoke about parking or a construction noise issue. Maybe your business was being harmed by development, or your taxes were climbing higher or faster than you could afford. Maybe your reason to speak was to praise the good works of staff. Maybe you wanted to support bike lanes, oppose traffic, argue for or against Harry Jerome or the Shipyards. Whatever the reason for your attendance, the fact is that you had an opportunity to speak on a subject which you believed important enough to cause your respectful attendance at council.

Now imagine that right was taken away from you. That is exactly what is being considered by council on Monday night! For what reasons? Essentially; because allowing you that ability to be heard comes with inherent difficulties.

Democracy is hard. It is often messy. It is often uncomfortable. But it is the best system we have. To take away your individual right to speak directly to your elected representatives is to cause democracy to suffer a set-back of immeasurable proportion. If you value this right, if you believe this right worth fighting for, then you are encouraged to attend council this coming Monday night and speak about your desire to have that right maintained. Ask your friends and neighbours to come and speak as well. If unable to attend, then we encourage you to send an email to kgraham@cnv.org expressing your opinion.

Your right to speak at council is an important and valuable tool of democracy, a principle which has caused many a nation to go to war. It is a principle your municipal council is now considering wrongfully taking from its citizens. Monday night will be **your one and only chance to voice your opinion. Do not allow this right to be lost with only a whimper. If it is to be taken from you, let it only be after a principled debate worthy of all those who gave their lives to preserve our freedoms and rights.**