

THE CITY'S UNDEMOCRATIC 'POLITICAL-BULLIES'

By: Kerry Morris - January 12, 2016



BC NDP president and North Vancouver City councillor Craig Keating exhibited some decidedly anti-democratic tendencies during the City's January 11th 2016 Council Meeting. Keating refused to support a motion which would have allowed all speakers at this night's Public Input Period. The process was scripted by the Mayor and Keating together, with the Clerk playing a part in the sham. What is certain is Democracy is under direct attack by the president of the New Democratic Party! Is this what we can expect from J.J. Horgan's government, staffed by Keating and cronies?

For those who have never held political office, it seems to be of infinite surprise to us just how low a politician will stoop to protect against a disclosure of truth or bad news, or to stifle a competing opinion. Today in the City of North Vancouver was no exception. But it is the first time in the City of North Vancouver's history, and this Mayor's mandate, that a resident has been denied the opportunity to speak to council during what was once a weekly 'Public-Input-Period'. Such a fall from grace is worthy of investigation because like Harper's Pro-Roguing of parliament, a government trick once played successfully will certainly be played again. But the question is why?

There are many possibilities that could have driven the Mayor and Keating to run this anti-democratic game. It could be the fact the City has recently suffered a massive financial loss in a privative court matter that has exposed taxpayers to millions of dollars in penalties and legal costs, a fact the City is working double-time to conceal from taxpayers, but they've just run out of luck on that front!

It could be the fact that City residents have just received their annual 'Property Tax Assessments', which in turn is anticipated to lead residents head-long into yet another tax-grab through what our Director of Finance lovingly refers to as 'Tax-Roll-Growth'. This is a term he's coined to describe the capture of increased value from all forms of investment and development, from railways to grain silos, coal terminals to commercial & residential structures.

It could be the fact that the recent increase in our property values is in a large part a by-product of the City's new OCP, pushed through by this Mayor and his 'Slate', with massive density increases designed to satisfy the development community at the expense of residents. To say nothing of the endless traffic jams we have now come to take for granted, because the mayor is dead set on adding density without first putting in place the necessary infrastructure, remembering always he wants your butt on a bike seat, and not in a car seat.

It could be the fact that, in a year where RS-1 homeowners will see their tax bills increase upwards between \$1,000-\$2,000, the Mayor is pushing ahead with a new \$2,000,000 bike lift that he himself nearly fell off, or so his YouTube video suggests. Why not scrap the bike lift and translate those monies into a 5% reduction in our taxes?

It could be the fact that by all appearances, he and his fellow 'Slate' members consistently vote like they have sold their support of various development projects in exchange for campaign donations, or so the theory goes. Or it could even be the desire to stifle rumours that he will once again bring a proposal to lift the gaming moratorium.

All these various matters could have been the catalyst for denying me my right to speak to council tonight, a first in the City's history that spans more than 100 years. Or it could simply be that Darrell and company don't care what you and I think? How could that be you ask? Well that's the easiest question of the night to answer. In Darrell's own words, which he has regularly employed in closed door sessions; "Because I have 4-Votes" .

So much for free speech and democracy in the City of North Vancouver!