

**Subject: [Fwd: Congratulations!!!]**

**Date:** Tue, 07 May 2002 20:22:17 -0700

**From:** Brian Platts <brian\_platts@telus.net>

**To:** Corrie Kost <kost@triumf.ca>

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**Subject: Congratulations!!!**

**Date:** Tue, 07 May 2002 20:16:36 -0700

**From:** Brian Platts <brian\_platts@telus.net>

**To:** Bill Denault <bill\_denault@dnv.org>, Don Bell <belld@district.north-van.bc.ca>, Doug Mackay-Dunn <doug\_mackay-dunn@dnv.org>, Ernie Crist <ernie\_crist@dnv.org>, Heather Dunsford <heather\_dunsford@dnv.org>, Janice Harris <janice\_harris@dnv.org>, Lisa Muri <lisa\_muri@dnv.org>, NVD Council <dnvcouncil@dnv.org>, FONVCA <fonvca@fonvca.org>, NET <mediaroom@northvanelectorsteam.ca>

Mayor Bell & Council,

I am writing to congratulate each of you for rejecting the DVP for Grace Crescent in Sunset Gardens. Even though I witnessed your unanimous decision, I'm still not certain I believe it actually happened.

During Council's discussion of the item, Councillor Crist made the comment that, in general terms, applicants are emboldened to apply for needless variances to the Zoning Bylaw because they know that "this Council approves 9 out of 10." While Council's action in approving DVPs is undoubtedly a major factor in why so many come forward, his estimate of a 10% rejection rate is in fact much too generous.

In the years 2000 and 2001, there were approximately 75 DVP applications. Based on my memory, 2 of those were rejected by Council and in neither instance was it unanimous. Some of you have voted in favour of every DVP on the agenda -- until now.

I was particularly curious to see how you were going to handle the DVP on Grace Crescent. A similar DVP application was approved this year in the Pemberton Heights Neighbourhood Zone. Pemberton Heights wanted to preserve the existing neighbourhood character by having parking structures located in the rear yards, where those properties are served by a back lane. Even though staff recommended the application be REJECTED, and a representative from the Pemberton Heights Community Association spoke in opposition to the requested variance, Council predictably APPROVED it. Similar to the Grace Crescent application, the one in Pemberton Heights had no mitigating circumstances; it was a new house construction on a large, level lot. I offer this as but one example of many, many more that were approved despite local opposition, and in some cases, even staff advice.

Even though the DVP on Grace was unanimously rejected, the public once again heard the same flimsy justifications as to why variances are routinely approved. Mayor Bell stated, for example, that the provisions of Zoning Bylaw are mere "guidelines". Councillor Harris is fond of

saying this as well. The Zoning Bylaw is just that -- a Bylaw. "Guidelines" are voluntary measures that may, or may not, be adapted. Zoning Bylaws exist to protect the community's interest; guidelines are nothing more than friendly advice.

Just to be perfectly clear, I am by no means suggesting that all DVPs should be rejected. On the contrary, there are many instances where issuing a variance to the Zoning Bylaw is perfectly legitimate. But by any objective analysis, this Council's record clearly indicates that the Single Family Zoning Bylaws are not taken seriously. Last night's decision was a welcome change.

Sincerely,  
Brian Platts