

**Subject: Re: Ward-No ward**

**Date:** Tue, 19 Oct 2004 18:44:35 +0100 (BST)

**From:** Elizabeth James <cagebc@yahoo.com>

**To:** Brian Platts <bplatts@shaw.ca>, Corrie Kost <kost@triumf.ca>

**CC:** Elizabeth James <cagebc@yahoo.com>, Ernie Crist <ernie\_crist@dnv.org>, "FONVCA \ (E-mail)" <fonvca@fonvca.org>, Mayor and Council - DNV <Council@dnv.org>, Senior Management Committee <managecomm@dnv.org>, poetic\_licence@hotmail.com, vimcallister@hotmail.com, m.bragg@shaw.ca

Good point about the Citizens' Assembly, Brian; I hadn't thought of that. Further on the subject of the CA, I was happy to read in today's Sun that the Province - as a body - plans to take a hands-off stance on the CA recommendations.....That will not stop individuals MLA's from wading in to protect their *status quo*.

Liz

**Brian Platts <bplatts@shaw.ca>** wrote:

Hi Corrie,

I am quite pleased the ward referendum failed. Vancouver is too small a city for wards. If Greater Vancouver was amalgamated into a large metropolitan area like Toronto, then I might agree, if only we could also elect "at-large" representatives as Liz suggested. Obviously you can't have an at-large voting system with up to 79 seats at the Provincial level.

Speaking of the Provincial "first past the post" electoral system, the Citizen's Assembly was formed because the "ward" system for the Province is undemocratic. So, why would Vancouverites adopt the very electoral system for their city that we want to jettison at the provincial level?

-Brian

Corrie Kost wrote:

Hi Liz,

I have heard all those arguments before. Do you think it is right for somebody to be able to talk and convince a majority of council to vote one way on an issue which impacts another neighbourhood? Also, when you vote for your ward "boss" (I dislike that biased word - reminds me of Capone / gangster era ) you certainly don't expect him/her to obey your every wish. He/she is expected to abide by the wishes of the majority in your community.

Try and think along the lines of influence, democracy, representation etc and you will find that the ward system is a fairer one. Forget about the minority groups - just think of them as people who have opinions and desires like we all do. Everyone has a better/fairer voice in a ward system.

This discussion is so hard to do by email and really should be done at a workshop.

Note that since nobody seems to have come forward why the provincial/federal government elections should be done at large, I rest my case. If it's good for the goose it should be good for the gander. To say it another way - if ward systems are not good for local governments, they should not be good for the current Provincial "wards" system either.

Corrie

Elizabeth James wrote:

Hi, Corrie:

Given our current politicians, I oppose a ward system for local government. I agree with those who say that, if your ward politician - e.g. a Don Bell or Janice Harris - does not like you or agree with your idea, you're sunk. Also, if your ward rep was a Bell, or a Sharp or a McCallum, again you're sunk.

At least one would have a chance that one of the seven would assist in carrying the point forward.

That said, a weekend letter to the editor put forward another third alternative. He suggested a system which would allow for, say, seven wards in Vancouver, each with a rep, and seven additional at large members of Council. That way a voter would have two votes - one ward and one at large candidate.

That I liked.

Regards,  
Liz

**Corrie Kost** <[kost@triumf.ca](mailto:kost@triumf.ca)> wrote:

I think a Ward system for big cities is a no brainer. Those opposed should examine why we do not elect provincial or federal representatives at large. Democracy requires it. Almost all big cities have it. So far all arguments I read that oppose a ward system have not yet convinced me to change my opinion. The debate is far from over. That said, I am not proposing a ward system for a population the size of DNV.

Corrie Kost

Ernie Crist wrote:

>A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST.

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>The recent controversy in Vancouver around the Ward system may be of interest also to the District of North Vancouver including the Federation of North Vancouver Community Associations FONVCA. The District is large and has distinct sections and like any municipality has special interest groups.

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>I do not agree that the Ward system for Vancouver is a progressive idea. I used to believe that, but not anymore. I believe that it is an idea whose time is past. I was part of the debate before I moved to the North Shore from Vancouver and when COPE was still a fledgling civic party. I was closely associated with Harry Rankin, Bruce York, Dusty Greenwell and other prominent COPE members at the time. I not only shared a common interest on civic issues with these people but in other areas as well. Most of these same people were also prominent in the fight against the Vietnam war as were many North Shore residents and churches including the Unitarians.

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>In Vancouver, COPE argued for a Ward system. Vancouver's Municipal Hall was dominated by the pro developer NPA much like the District in recent years was dominated by the Concerned Citizens Association (CCA). The CCA was a civic party representing a special interest group specifically formed to prevent the general public from accessing public owned waterfront in Deep Cove.

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>During the municipal election, the CCA, among others, endorsed and re elected Lisa Muri, Don Bell and Janice Harris. The CCA spent a great deal of money to defeat the sitting Councillors including Ernie Crist, Glynis Deering Robb, Pat Munroe and Trevor Carolan. The District had established a citizens Task Force to establish a long term policy for the use of the waterfront. It was made up of a citizens volunteer group. It recommended that over a period of 50 years a public walkway should be built along the foreshore. It also recommended that illegal structures on public land be removed.

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>As for the Vancouver Ward controversy - areas such as East Vancouver, it was argued at the time, would have better representation and more clout than in a system which was controlled by Vancouver's West End and the "rich" of Kerrisdale who controlled the NPA. You might say the NPA was partial in looking after certain areas while Vancouver East was neglected. Kerrisdale got

the sidewalks and the playing fields while Vancouver East did not. In such circumstances a Ward system, where all areas would have equal representation was indeed progressive.

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>However, in my opinion the situation has changed. COPE is now in power and represents the interest of all residents in Vancouver. Giving the neglected areas a voice is now a fact. But I do not believe it has sunk in, including by some members of COPE themselves who are still arguing for a Ward system.

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>For the time being, the Ward idea in Vancouver is dead but it may well be resurrected again. The best guarantee that all of Vancouver is represented in the Municipal Hall equally is to become politically active. The same is true for the people in the District of North Vancouver. If District residents want to walk on land which belongs to them, they will have to stand up and be counted just as their erstwhile elected Councillors Pat Munroe, Trevor Carolan and Glynis Deering Robb did when this issue was on the agenda. If necessary people will have to form their own civic party rather than allowing the CCA or any one of its changed name successors to once again mislead them.

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>Ernie Crist

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