

Subject:**Date:** Mon, 18 Oct 2004 14:57:44 -0700**From:** "Ernie Crist" <ernie_crist@dnv.org>**To:** "FONVCA (E-mail)" <fonvca@fonvca.org>, <Cagebc@yahoo.com>**CC:** "Mayor and Council - DNV" <Council@dnv.org>, "Senior Management Committee" <managecomm@dnv.org>, <poetic_licence@hotmail.com>, <vimcallister@hotmail.com>, <m.bragg@shaw.ca>

A MESSAGE FROM ERNIE CRIST.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Ernie Crist



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