

Subject: request for meeting space at the hall
From: Cathy Adams <cathyadams@shaw.ca>
Date: Wed, 28 Mar 2007 11:56:08 -0700
To: james_ridge@dnv.org
CC: fonvca@fonvca.org

Request for meeting room space at District Hall
Thursday, March 29th 7:00 p.m.

Good Morning James

I regret to say that I have been getting what can only be described as the run around in regards to booking meeting space at District Hall for tomorrow evening. I should point out that my first request was made on March 15th. Most of the reason for this delay was due to the fact that the staff person everyone wanted to refer me to was absent, but in hindsight, such a simple matter should have been handled by someone else in her place.

I have now been told by Sue Mitchell that she has been instructed by you not to permit our group to use a meeting room, and hence this email.

District policy states that "community groups" may book space at District Hall, under certain criteria surrounding availability issues. District Hall was specifically planned and the meeting rooms were located so that they could be used by community groups, especially in the evenings.

The background is this:

The Planning Department gave my name and number to a developer who is planning a project on Marine Drive. Two other Lower Capilano contacts were also given out. In discussions with that developer, it was determined that an early meeting to explore different options for the site would be beneficial. A meeting is planned with members of the Marine Drive Committee, and would include representation from most of the neighbourhoods in Lower Capilano. The use of a coffee shop or someone's living room would not be appropriate, so we need to find a place to meet.

I probably don't need to point out that there are no District facilities in Lower Capilano that can provide meeting space. For Lions Gate Neighbourhood Association meetings, for instance, we usually have to book a meeting room at the Grouse Inn. That can cost \$100 and up, depending on length of meeting, etc. This means frequent meetings are cost prohibitive and our ability to meet is impaired. This situation would be addressed with the provision of the Lower Capilano Community Centre.

I am aware that a wide variety of groups make use of the meeting rooms at the hall. This list includes such organizations as FONVCA, Toastmasters, Save Our Shores, Streamkeepers, meetings between developers and "other area" groups, as well as groups using the foyer and meeting rooms for receptions, etc. There was a GVRD reception there a couple of weeks ago. With such a diversified list of groups being welcomed by the hall, I would like to know why I, as a community leader and the chair of a couple of community groups, has been refused a room for this meeting? I don't believe the Planning Department wishes to be involved in this meeting, but if I invited a Planner, would that make a difference? As I said, this meeting came about through the Planning Department's referral.

I have also been asked by some community members why we are even having to describe and justify to the District the particulars of this meeting, since the variety and number of community groups using space at the hall is well known.

Cathy Adams
Chair, Marine Drive Committee
President, Lions Gate Neighbourhood Association