

west vancouver

ENGINEERING AND TRANSPORTATION

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(6)

March 23, 2009.

File: 1785.09

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Dear ()

RE: District of West Vancouver Snow Clearing Program

I have been asked to respond to your letter and that of the residents of 1770 and 1800 Blocks Rosebery Avenue concerning the District of West Vancouver Snow Clearing Program. I trust that the following will provide you with some assure that the Program has been reasonably thought out.

The District's Snow Clearing Program - given its constraints (budget, man/womanpower, equipment) – seeks to focus on ensuring all major roads and bus routes are functional. Providing access along arterial and collector roads for emergency vehicles and transit provides basic access throughout the entire District as well as a viable transportation alternate for the interim. Only when these roads are made operational does staff redirect their efforts to local roads - typically two to three days.

This past winter was very unusual in that the snow storms were intense and successive. Consequently, staff were committed many times over, to concentrating their efforts solely on those routes mentioned above. During those short breaks between snow storms, staff did their best to tackle as many local roads as possible. Again, by my account, most roads were operational within two to three days.

In closing, I would note that staff are committed to reviewing the Snow Clearing Program this fall seeking efficiencies and refinements. Staff are also committed to communicating better with residents as to the Program and expectation. A brochure will be made available in this regard. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 604.925.7157 to discuss further.

Yours truly,



Brent A. Dozzi, P. Eng., PTOE
Manager, Roads and Transportation

BAD/bw

cc: Mayor and Council

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1785-05

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March 5, 2009

Open letter to the Mayor and Council,
District of West Vancouver

On January 31, I delivered a letter signed by 25 of 31 residents of Rosebery Ave. between 17th and 19th St. So far I have had a postcard acknowledging receipt of our letter. I believe it was turned over to the director of Engineering.

As you might tell from the enclosed photos and our original letter, the situation is out of control. We deserve an answer, but more importantly, we expect some serious thought and action as to how the response to snow will be improved in the future.

What is my next step? Should I come to a council meeting? Will someone be in touch?

Sincerely,

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cc. block watch members

January 31, 2009

1785-05
(7)

To: The Mayor and Council
District of West Vancouver

From: The residents of 1700 and 1800 Rosebery Ave

Re: Snow clearing.

The unusual snow burden over the past holiday season has revealed a number of serious flaws in the planning and execution of snow clearing in the district. The problems are so serious that it is difficult to know where to begin but we have to try.

I first e-mailed you on Dec 16th because snow was anticipated and I observed the District's plan for the steep hill on 18th st. between Queen's and Rosebery in action. 2 men were observed filling a large salt bucket at the top of the hill.

Over the subsequent 3 weeks the bucket was refilled several times but there was never enough salt because the bottom 2/3 was always full of cement like salt that could not be used. One time my wife spoke to 2 crew members and asked if they could put some on the hill while they were there but she was told that wasn't in their job assignment.

We are considered priority 3. Accordingly a plow and salt spreader has been observed on Rosebery 3 times in 3 weeks. (I might have missed a day.) This means that 31 families have been stranded for days at a time. There has been a lot of cooperation with some of the younger residents shoveling the hill and spreading the little bit of available salt. Those with 4 wheel drive vehicles have run errands for some of those without.

I'm told that in past years residents of Rosebery would leave their cars on Queens and walk up and back down. This is not good enough because the hill has been too dangerous to walk on and the extra cars on Queens would hamper clearing there. Roughly half of the residents are pensioners and this creates undue hardship with food shopping, medical appointments and so forth. Clearly the situation is out of control and needs a rethink from square one.

This is not rocket science.

We drove through Squamish at noon on Jan. 4 and EVERY street had been plowed that day. On the Christy Clark show a caller phoned in to say that EVERY street in Pt. Coquitlam had been kept clear and sanded throughout this period.

We have many suggestions.

1. A task force needs to rethink this process including every step taken when we get snow in hilly West Vancouver.
2. Clearly more trucks and staff are needed.

3. Residents of West Vancouver should not be expected to shovel snow and spread salt by hand on our own streets. We are one of the wealthiest communities in the country, pay high taxes and can expect better.

4. We can't be expected to wait 3 -6 days to see a snow plow. Some one is going to break a hip. Broken hips carry a high morbidity and mortality in the elderly.

5. When there is snow on the ground, parking should be limited to one side of all secondary roads. Whistler permits parking on only one side of the side streets throughout the year.

6. The budget must be flexible. Some years it won't all be spent. Other years it will be grossly exceeded. During extraordinary years such as this one, there may have to cutbacks in some of the summer programs such as gardening.

7. Snow clearing could be included with water and garbage removal bills. In good years the bills would be low and in bad years they would be higher.

I have asked each resident of our cul-de-sac to sign this letter. I would be pleased to attend any meeting where this matter will be discussed provided I am in town.

Sincerely,

(29 Signatures)