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West Vancouver Masonic Hall Society

1763 Bellevue Ave. West Vancouver BC V7V 4S1

September 30, 2009

Mayor and Councillors
The District of West Vancouver
750 17th Street
West Vancouver, BC V7V 3T3

Dear Madame Mayor and Councillors

This letter is a further submission to our letters dated January 28, 2009 and June 25, 2009 requesting property tax exemption for the Masonic Hall property located at 1763 Bellevue Avenue, West Vancouver.

Historically the property was John Lawson's barn and barnyard which were willed to the Freemasons of West Vancouver upon his death. The former barn was used as the meeting Hall for some years until it was replaced by the present structure in 1950. It is owned and operated by the not for profit West Vancouver Masonic Hall Society, whose membership consists of all the Masons whose Lodges meet in the Hall. John Lawson was an active Freemason belonging to King David Lodge No. 93 which continues to meet in the Hall and has met in West Vancouver continuously since 1921.

The site is community oriented and made available for private functions at reasonable cost. For many years this use was recognized by being zoned "Community Use" and taxed at a low rate. With the present assessment and taxation system, property taxes have become unaffordable for a property that is simply an occasional meeting hall. We would consider offering the property as a day care facility, should a request be made and regulations satisfied.

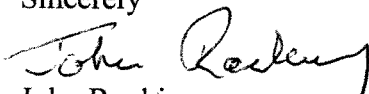
Accordingly, we plead hardship and request at least partial tax relief for our property. Other municipalities provide such tax relief ~ particularly the City of North Vancouver for the North Vancouver Masonic Temple Association property on Lonsdale Avenue.

As we have pointed out previously, Freemasons are active in charitable pursuits and members of the West Vancouver Lodges participate in programs including:

- Vancouver Cancer Car transportation ~ over \$450,000 per year
- Shriner's transportation of children to BC hospitals and for treatment provided in Portland, Oregon, all at no cost ~ over \$1,300,000 per year
- Christmas hampers for needy North Shore families.

Therefore we request council to please consider our request for tax relief.

Sincerely



John Ranking
President

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