



# NORTH SHORE HERITAGE PRESERVATION SOCIETY

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BC Society Registration No. S-49292

## DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER

### ELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE 2005: COUNCIL

1. What is your position on the value of heritage buildings in West Vancouver?
2. What might you do to help better preserve heritage buildings in West Vancouver?
3. Would you support increased funding for heritage preservation, for example through grant, tax or other incentive programs?
4. What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in West Vancouver, such as Pauline Johnson and Hollyburn?

## RESPONSES

### 1. MAYOR

*Note: The following candidates did not respond: Pamela Goldsmith-Jones, Ron Wood*

### 2. COUNCILLOR

#### **Louise Aird**

Louise Aird provided the following statement:

It's probably better if I answer all of these questions at once.

I am an enthusiastic supporter of maintaining heritage sites and structures. (I spent my formative years living in a 400-year-old vicarage in a tiny English village and have seen innumerable examples of the value of keeping old homes.)

However, there are several things to consider.

When I was editor of *Canadian Property Management Magazine*, I wrote an exhaustive article on this subject. At that time, there was talk of tearing down the old Vancouver Library

building at Burrard and Robson. This building is architecturally important, it is viewed with affection by the community, it is a significant visual component of its neighbourhood, it is sound and can pay for itself (it is now the home of CTV Vancouver).

Those points have to be addressed. Plus, we have to consider who owns the buildings and what the owners plan for them -- or expect to get from them.

We can't just say: "That's a heritage building and can't be touched" if it's in an area where few are seeing it anyway, or it is rundown and can't be safely used, it's of no value to the community at large and not all taxpayers would agree that the expense of maintaining and protecting it is reasonable.

So, when considering whether or not taxpayer funds should go toward protecting a heritage building, we have to ask:

- Is this structure historically and/or architecturally significant?
- Does it have the ability to help enrich its community?
- Is it structurally sound? If not, what would it cost to make it so?
- What would it cost taxpayers to buy it from the current owner?
- Can it pay for itself? i.e. Can it be used and/or marketed?

My idea for heritage homes in West Vancouver is to incorporate them into the Ambleside and Dundarave Revitalization Plan. If we have identified, let's say, four historical and architecturally-significant houses, the district could buy them, move them down to the villages, and pay for the physical upgrades.

But, in order for all of this to be practical, and fair to taxpayers (whose money Council would be spending), the considerable cost of saving those homes would have to be recouped -- by income generated from those houses. So what we would have to do is lease them to, for example, restaurateurs, advertising agencies, law firms etc. In addition to generating revenue, they would add to the ambience of area and make it more attractive to visitors and other businesses.

Two examples of the success of this idea are in Vancouver -- the row of heritage houses on Hamilton, between Robson and Smythe; and several of the structures on Granville Island.

Another example, farther afield, is the recent success of a group in New Jersey that wanted to save a gorgeous 200-year-old house. The situation is a familiar one to West Vancouverites. Developers were itching to tear it down and build a condo development. The house is now home to a large market research firm. The house has been saved, it adds to its community's ambience, it is occupied by a non-polluting business and it is generating revenue. Everybody's happy (except the developers!).

## **Sean Allan**

Sean Allan provided the following statement:

I am very interested in preserving heritage buildings in West Vancouver. They are the context for the character and scale of our neighbourhoods. I am particularly interested in the "modern" residential architecture that put West Van "on the map" around the world for our daring and beautiful homes.

I would like to see our Municipal Design Panel take a much more active part in this preservation and in using it as a roadmap for future development. They would be useful in the process of designating buildings as heritage for preservation.

There should be tax incentives and some municipal grants for people who are willing to take on the sometimes daunting task of preserving historic homes and buildings. I myself restored a 1920s bungalow when I lived in California.

We should be preserving the older school buildings - even if it is just preserving the facades if seismic and other upgrades mean extensive renovations of the interiors.

Keep up the society's good work. If we don't know where we came from, we can't tell where we're going.

## **Rod Day**

Rod Day provided the following statement:

I am the West Van Council heritage rep, since 2002, to the Heritage Advisory Committee. I also served as heritage rep during my earlier years on Council 1986-1996 and was chair of the Museum and Archives Committee. I have been a professor of history at SFU since 1966 and am now professor emeritus. We are presently doing a Heritage Strategic Plan (our consultant is Harold Kalman of Commonwealth) in order to find ways better to preserve our heritage buildings, businesses and landscapes. We are trying to achieve the goals stated in all four of your questions, so you can count me as highly affirmative to your questions.

## **Michael Evison**

For the past two years I have sat on West Vancouver's Heritage Committee. With all due modesty, I can honestly say that I have been one of a couple of people who have driven West Van to set up permanent Heritage policies. We just recently convinced Council to agree to a \$56,000 budget to establish a Strategic Plan AND an implementation plan. Stephen Mikicich, staff planner, and Jackie Gijssen, vice chair, will attest to my initiatives. My replies to your questions will come as no surprise!

*1. What is your position on the value of heritage buildings in West Vancouver?*

'Heritage' is more than simple physical structures. It embraces streetscapes, unique neighbourhoods even folklore.

*2. What might you do to help better preserve heritage buildings in West Vancouver?*

Continue to push planning, licences and permits and building inspection to recognize and how to protect buildings with elements of heritage values.

*3. Would you support increased funding for heritage preservation, for example through grant, tax or other incentive programs?*

Incentives rather than grants but anything that will work.

*4. What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in West Vancouver, such as Pauline Johnson and Hollyburn?*

Without question, though not at ANY cost.

## **Jean Ferguson**

### *1. What is your position on the value of heritage buildings in West Vancouver?*

I place great value on West Vancouver's heritage buildings. Our heritage buildings play a vital role in defining our community character and identity.

### *2. What might you do to help better preserve heritage buildings in West Vancouver?*

As most of our heritage buildings are private homes, we can provide incentives to home owners to preserve and protect them. One way to do this would be to allow a secondary dwelling to be built on larger lots, thus providing living space, a possible revenue source, and heritage preservation. Other ways could see tax exemptions or reductions for heritage homes, or a trust fund provided by a Community Benefits policy, to assist in the maintenance of our heritage buildings.

### *3. Would you support increased funding for heritage preservation, for example through grant, tax or other incentive programs?*

I would be willing to explore options such as those, provide information to the citizens and engage community discussion on such options.

### *4. What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in West Vancouver, such as Pauline Johnson and Hollyburn?*

It is my understanding that the Provincial Government and the School Board have the final decision in this regard. As a former School Trustee I encouraged the renewal and enhancement of those heritage schools when seismic upgrading took place. As a Councillor, I would encourage the School Board in maintaining those two buildings, and explore opportunities to support their efforts.

## **Doug Lang**

Doug Lang provided the following statement:

The preservation of West Vancouver's culture and heritage is often "missed" during municipal election fury. I am one of the "old school" types who appreciates history and our community culture! My position on the value of heritage buildings in West Vancouver is simply, I emphatically support maintaining a link with our past. If we fail we lose perspective of our future. I wish to create better harmony between those that support our heritage and those who govern. I would certainly propose review of current funding for heritage preservation with an eye to improving same. One could look to some sort of civic "match" funding or one time sponsorships, etc. for old heritage opportunities such as reclaiming the Hodgson House, Pauline Johnson, and many others. All in all, our heritage is our history and our future!

## **Carolanne Reynolds**

### *1. What is your position on the value of heritage buildings in West Vancouver?*

Of course they are of great value. For starters, as the first Council rep for heritage, I moved the motion to designate the Gertrude Lawson House.

### *2. What might you do to help better preserve heritage buildings in West Vancouver?*

For many years I have advocated incentives including tax relief, matching funds for maintenance and restoration, setting up a Heritage Fund. Most recently, in my submission to Council with reference to Community Benefits, I recommend the uplift be calculated with each application for upzoning or higher density, and that a portion be earmarked for heritage, the heritage fund, and heritage projects (as well as other things but want to make sure heritage gets a share).

### *3. Would you support increased funding for heritage preservation, for example through grant, tax or other incentive programs?*

Of course, see above.

### *4. What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in West Vancouver, such as Pauline Johnson or Hollyburn*

These require cooperation with the School Board. As a matter of fact when I discovered the heritage award a couple of years ago had been dropped by staff, I brought it to the attention of a totally unaware Council and was delighted they supported my efforts to have one -- it was held and awarded to Hollyburn School honouring its 75th anniversary. There is no doubt, based on my past experience, that cooperation can be strengthened. It would be great to encourage the School Board to fund their preservation so our funds can go on our structures (and theirs on theirs!).

## **Michael Smith**

### *1. What is your position on the value of heritage buildings in West Vancouver?*

I believe that we should preserve that which has been identified as significant to the history, uniqueness, and culture of our community. Once they are gone, they are gone forever.

### *2. What might you do to help better preserve heritage buildings in West Vancouver?*

Vote on Council decisions as per the above statement as well as encouraging the identification of those buildings that are significant and that are not now identified.

### *3. Would you support increased funding for heritage preservation, for example through grant, tax or other incentive programs?*

Yes. However, there must be a good case made for public funding. I would prefer to see incentives rather than tax increases.

*4. What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in West Vancouver, such as Pauline Johnson or Hollyburn?*

I was on the School Board from 1982-1990 when funds were committed to upgrade both of those schools. They are owned by School District 45 and there would be no reason to divest them. The capital dollars would go back to Victoria and would be lost to our community.

## **Hakan Telenius**

*1. What is your position on the value of heritage buildings in West Vancouver?*

I consider them vital in preserving both our community's historical context as well as character. I have lived in Europe for many years and so can well appreciate the importance of well-preserved heritage buildings for the creation of a community with roots. My core election platform is about preserving our community, so the question about heritage buildings is close to heart.

*2. What might you do to help better preserve heritage buildings in West Vancouver?*

Most importantly, by making sure that we really bring the issue forward. Secondly, by inviting people (such as your group) to bring new ideas on how we can provide greater protection for buildings (ie, beyond the current regulations). I want to hear more ideas on this.

*3. Would you support increased funding for heritage preservation, for example through grant, tax or other incentive programs?*

I am for the use of incentives to protect buildings -- this is only fair as we force limitations on owners of listed buildings. Beyond this general statement, I don't like to take particular positions (make pledges) without having done my homework first. (I would first want to understand exactly what are the present possibilities of getting assistance, and whether these opportunities are sufficiently well known to the public at large. Again, I would hope that you can help me with this information.) Fundamental to me is that we are efficient about the grants and incentives we provide, and that the process is fair.

*4. What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in West Vancouver, such as Pauline Johnson or Hollyburn*

This is important, as well-preserved school buildings teach important lessons about respect for our history, as well as create a terrific pride in people who have shared them over the years. At the practical level of how best to preserve them, and at what cost, we have the added complexity of requirement that public buildings must stand up to greater utility and safety concerns, than do residential houses. (Schools and other public buildings are not allowed to be as static as can residences, so the cost to the public purse is obviously higher.) In short, I am in favour of preserving schools and other public buildings, for the reasons cited, though I appreciate that public funding is an issue. We should consider expanding the possibilities and efforts at getting other types of funding/sponsors to help defray such costs.

## **Vivian Vaughan**

*1. What is your position on the value of heritage buildings in West Vancouver?*

I would like to see all good quality heritage buildings preserved, within reasonable cost.

*2. What might you do to help better preserve heritage buildings in West Vancouver?*

Their best chance of long term survival is to be fully used and at a cost that compares well enough with new accommodation.

*3. Would you support increased funding for heritage preservation, for example through grant, tax or other incentive programs?*

We have to be very prudent with the public purse. I favour incentives for the volunteer sector and voluntary donations. I would love to see your Society initiate a set of heritage awards, to recognize people for various heritage contributions and achievements. A good awards ceremony can get press attention. Why should we only be seeing awards for the new glass and concrete buildings, like our Gleneagles Community Centre. It is really just an expensive gymnasium. It would have been so much nicer to have the old Gleneagles golf clubhouse restored, as a priority.

*4. What is your position on preserving historic school buildings in West Vancouver, such as Pauline Johnson or Hollyburn?*

We should preserve them if they are in good enough structural condition and they do not become an endless municipal expense. Solicit funds from the alumni? Some of them should be old and financially successful by now!

*Note: The following candidates did not respond: John Clark, Gus Kroll, Rob Pellatt, Mehrdad Rahbar, Bill Soprovich, Tom Wardell*

## **ELECTION QUESTIONNAIRE 2005: SCHOOL BOARD**

The West Vancouver School Board trustees were elected by acclamation.