

High-rise battle heats up

The Hastings highrise battle took a new twist last week after Burnaby's out-going council gave third reading to a proposal that would see a residential tower go up on the former Eagle Ford site.

Former Bill Lewarne, who is succeeded

By KAREN ROMELL

by Mayor Bill Copeland, said last week that council allowed the third reading because "we (had) to continue to act as if we were the government."

Ald. Doug Drummond argued unsuccessfully for the matter to be tabled until the new, Burnaby Citizens' Association-dominated council can review the plan.

In a parting shot, Lewarne

made much of the campaign statements made by several BCA candidates in the recent election that highrise development in Burnaby isn't desirable.

And he also claimed that a proposed residential tower development at Patterson and Wilson was withdrawn, in part because of fears that the BCA is anti-highrise.

But Ald. Doug Drummond says the former mayor has it wrong. Drummond said the BCA's stated opposition to highrises has been specifically levelled at the Hastings and Montecito areas.

Though he said he's personally opposed to the particular proposal for the Eagle Ford site, Drummond said it may yet be approved by the new council.

"If it's defeated I'd like the developer to come back with a different plan of similar density but more in keeping with the location next to a liquor outlet (the North Burnaby Inn)," he said.

"But we might talk it over and decide it's gone this far and we can't do anything about it."

But Lewarne said he was "surprised" by the position taken by Drummond and fellow BCA alderman Lee Rankin during the third reading debate.

"If you want modification you need an amendment which requires another public hearing," he said. "I feel for the developer because he's experienced considerable costs."

But Drummond said the BCA wants to develop Hastings Street so that it's different from Metrotown and other shopping mall centres in the municipality.

"We want something economically viable that reflects the wishes of the area," he said. "It's not anti-development."

The proposal, financed by General Equities of Canada Ltd. calls for construction of a low-rise commercial building backed by a highrise residential tower on the long-vacant site at 4161 Hastings. The planning department favors the proposal, but at a public hearing in October some area residents expressed violent opposition, saying it wouldn't fit in with the neighbourhood, would ruin the character of the area and create more traffic problems.

General Equities president Ron Downey said he is treating the matter as "business as usual."

He said his corporation is working towards fourth reading and final adoption, but he admitted he still has some concerns.

"It may be a ticklish situation, it may not be," he said.

Downey added that if the proposal is turned down again a new proposal will have to be brought forward, effectively doubling the costs.

Gerald Hamilton of Hamilton Doyle Architects, which is designing the project, expressed guarded hope that it would be approved by the new council.

"Burnaby has never reversed after third reading as far as I understand," he said. "It's not the way to go."

He added that if the new council calls for major changes to the plan it would no longer serve as a "catalyst" for other developments.

"The message is please, new council, trust your planners, they're very dedicated," he said.

GINGERBREAD CHRISTMAS



Rebecca Haar, 5, makes fine adjustment to roof of gingerbread house in class at Willingdon Heights Rec Centre last week, while 5 year-old Jennifer Thiel takes a short rest from endeavors.

Photo by Chris Helgren

Numbers change, but results still the same

The results of the final Burnaby election recounts are in.

In the aldermanic race, Jim Young retained his eighth place finish, with 10,002 votes.

Franca Zumpano finished ninth, with 9960 votes, followed by incumbent Vic Stusiak, with 9908 votes.

Although the final tabulations differed from those on election night, they did not effect the outcome of the election.

Municipal clerk Chad Turpin said he doesn't think there will be any requests for judicial recounts.

"It's almost too late," he said, citing a five-day period after the results are presented in which candidates can file a claim for a ballot by ballot recount before sitting judge.

No lucky numbers, Veitch warns

Burnaby Willingdon MLA and Provincial Secretary Elwood Veitch says there's no connection between the B.C. Lotteries Corporation and an organization called "Lottery Jackpot Ltd." which is advertising in local papers for "lottery sales distributors."

The scheme is based in Toronto, but a sales representative for the company was at Burnaby's Sheraton Villa Hotel on Friday "interviewing" people for distributorships at a cost of \$1,000 each.

David Sober said in a phone interview that, though the products are being sold under the name "lucky numbers," they're actually a computer-generated list of 42 random combinations of six numbers each which are derived from an initial set of 18 numbers from one to 49.

The lists sell for \$49.95 and are guaranteed to produce over 50 winning combinations of winning numbers for the Lotto 649 in a one-year period.

But in a press release Veitch said the B.C. Lottery Corporation doesn't endorse the system.

"There are no guarantees and no lucky numbers," in the lottery selections, the statement said, noting that all lottery draws are at random.

"We've never claimed we tie in with the lottery (corporation)," Sober said. "Generally when people start raising Cain it's because they're ignorant and don't know what they're talking about."

Sober said the system has been proven mathematically effective. But at one point, while trying to explain the

system, he bristled when he learned the information would be used for an article.

"If you don't get your facts straight we'll sue your butts off," he said.

John Thomson, the director of marking support services for the B.C. Lottery Corp., said there is a one in 56 chance of winning a small (\$10) prize when playing Lotto 649, with odds increasing as the prizes grow.

But Thomson said that no particular sets or combinations of numbers have any better chances of arising.

Thomson said that if there was any way of determining sets of winning numbers "we wouldn't be in business."

He said the corporation has had numerous inquiries about the Lottery Jackpot Ltd. scheme in the last few weeks.