



May 31, 2016

Mayor Smith & Council
City of West Vancouver
West Vancouver Municipal Hall
750 17th Street
West Vancouver, BC V7V 3T3

Dear Mayor Smith & Council,

Boating BC Association represents the interests of the recreational boating industry across British Columbia; we are comprised of 300 member businesses from all sectors of our industry, 22 of which are located in West and North Vancouver. Founded in 1957, we own and operate the Vancouver International Boat Show and are strongly committed to increasing participation in all modes of recreational boating across BC.

We have recently learned about the Ambleside Waterfront Concept Plan and the removal of access to the public boat launch for small motorized vessels. We are writing to ask council to reconsider this decision – or to commit to a new location for this important piece of infrastructure before the plan proceeds.

West Vancouver has done an exemplary job of carefully planning its waterfront development; maximizing green space and creating a welcome and diverse community environment. As the City works to finalize this next chapter of its waterfront vision, it is not clear what is motivating the decision to limit access to recreational activities on our shared waterways.

This limited access also raises safety concerns given the few alternative boat launches in the area, and the alarming scarcity of public facilities. Increasingly, boaters will be forced to launch in neighboring communities – perhaps as far away as Sunset Marina, Cates Park or Vanier Park – and travel, unnecessarily, across shipping lanes or the more dangerous waters of Point Atkinson in order to enjoy the waters and fishing off of Ambleside.

For generations the waters off of Ambleside have been a spawning ground for extraordinary boating experiences; a place where families have grown up together, friends have forged lifelong bonds and countless fishing stories have been woven and shared time and again. For a community by the sea, it is puzzling why the needs of these stakeholders have not been acknowledged, and why the traditional recreational activities of boating and fishing are now being restricted.

The economic impact and participation in boating is very strong. Every year 43% of Canadians go boating. Nationally, our industry generates \$8.9 billion in sales and employs 67,000 people, and in BC our annual revenue is \$1.7 billion. Across our province, our industry continues to grow as we encourage people to unplug, get on the water with friends and family and enjoy the full splendor of British Columbia. For people to enjoy our waters, it is critical that we ensure public access in all of our waterfront communities. The result is a vibrant waterfront and revenue from local boaters and tourists who spend money on gas, supplies, groceries, launch facilities, parking, restaurant's etc. – all of which benefit local business.

Because BC is better on a boat!™

Boating has played a deep historic role in West Vancouver. I know this personally, having grown up there and learning to boat with my father from a very young age. My passion drove me to a career in the marine industry that started in West Vancouver and continues today. Public access to the water has slowly diminished over time to accommodate development and other activities. Too often we sit back and watch dynamic boating communities go quiet - creating barriers for people to enjoy our waterfront to its fullest.

Our natural environment is a gift - and the City of West Vancouver has both the privilege and responsibility of managing access to that gift, and the magical experiences it holds... not for a select few, but for everyone who wants to explore the water, and for generations to come. Again, we request that you reconsider this decision and commit to maintaining a public boat launch for all vessels in the beautiful waterfront community of Ambleside.

If there is anything Boating BC can do to help inform this discussion, I would be more than happy to speak with you directly at any time. I can be reached through the Boating BC office at 604.248.8906 or info@boatingbc.ca.

Sincerely,



Don Prittie
President
Boating BC Association

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