

June 11, 2012

Mayor & Council
City of North Vancouver
141 West 14th Street
North Vancouver, BC V7M 1H9

Input With Respect To: Item 4. Update on North Shore Table Matters & Local Food Charter

My name is Karen Morton, I operate EcoUrbia Network, a local not-for profit, and reside at 147 East 1st Street in the City of North Vancouver.

- As a proponent & advocate for local & sustainable food, I would first like to thank Council for participating in the **All Candidates Meeting last fall** on the topic of sustainable food systems & for offering your support to the many local organizations & individuals in our community who care so very much about this important topic, and the many programs & initiatives that have “grown up” with respect to urban agriculture.
- **I’m here to ask you for your continued support**, and approval to proceed with the creation of a food charter & a joint municipal food advisory group.
- Most people do not fully understand **how broken our food system is**, and that local food truly is a ray of hope.
 - As David Tracey iterated in a recent column, “**our food system problems are the result of institutional forces making decisions far from our own neighbourhoods, and it is vital that local groups combine their efforts & work together**” - this is an opportunity for us to bring it back home, and enter into a policy agreement as to what that will look like for our community.
- From both a **human & ecosystem health perspective**, a food charter supports local, organically grown food, both within our city, and across our region & province. Simply put:
 - ✓ it plays a multifunctional role in terms of protecting our farmland, watersheds & wildlife;
 - ✓ it encourages soil fertility, soil conservation, and composting;
 - ✓ it minimizes environmentally-persistent, petrochemical contamination of our food, soil & water
 - ✓ it achieves a modest reduction of food miles & greenhouse gases
 - ✓ it provides for plant biodiversity, adaptability & open pollination
 - ✓ it increases the nutritional value of the food we eat; most nutrients are currently bred out of the hybridized varieties available to us in the marketplace where crops are bred to be “tough” for the purpose of transportation & “tasteless” because they are picked green & gassed with ethylene
 - ✓ it also ensures fair living wages for farmers & workers (it is little understood that food is priced in the global market, and it’s not the farmers whose earnings are increasing; offshore corporate interests are).

A local food charter is a powerful tool that fosters support for & promotion of farmers markets, farm gate sales, local food outlets, and local products, including within our food service industry & public institutions.

I thank you for your consideration,

Karen Morton
President & Founder
EcoUrbia Network

Attachment: *The Story of The Little Red Tennis Balls, a nutritional comparison; local food is a ray of hope*