

Jennifer Lee  
4122 Hazelwood Crescent  
Burnaby BC V5G 2R1

SECTION 1  
COUNCIL CORRESPONDENCE  
City Manager  
Deputy City Managers (2)  
Fire Chief

November 3, 2015

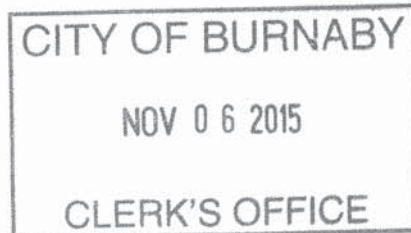
Mayor and Council  
c/o Office of the City Clerk  
4949 Canada Way  
Burnaby, BC V5G 1M2

Re: Suggestion to ban Burnaby fireworks and amend the bylaw regulations

Dear Office of the City Clerk,

Please pass the attached letter to the Mayor and Council.

Thank you,  
  
Jennifer Lee



NOTE: Each year the Fire Department reviews the Halloween/fireworks issues that arise, with the RCMP, City staff and Council to plan for the following year. At this time we will take your request into consideration when we review the 2015 year.

November 3, 2015

Re: Suggestion to ban Burnaby fireworks and amend bylaw regulations

Dear Mayor Corrigan and Burnaby Council,

On the evening of October 31, 2015 (Halloween), when we were returning from 'trick or treating' with our own children we noticed that there was a group of approximately 10-12 teenagers or youths (ages 15-18 years old) gathered at the intersection of Hazelwood and Barker, the teens were on just outside of the house of 4237 Hazelwood Crescent. These youths were setting off fireworks. There were many very young 'trick or treaters' around. I was upset that these youths did not have any regards to public safety as there were many young children around. So my husband and I went over to the teens and had a discussion with them. The discussion was heated in exchange.

Essentially, there was one youth who claimed that he was 18 years old and that he lived at 4232 Hazelwood Crescent (across from 4237 Hazelwood Crescent). This teen was wearing sandals and said that he did not want to set off the fireworks on his property because he did not want to get his feet wet. He did not want us to speak with his parents as they do not speak English. He does not see the difference on having the discharge of his fireworks on the street instead. We reminded him that there were lots of small children around with costumes that were flammable and that the fireworks' flares can cause burns and potentially cause other people's property damage etc. and that the street or sidewalk is public property and not his private property. The teen showed off his fireworks and asked us to pay him \$1000 if he cannot discharge the fireworks. I responded with him being "entitled".

We re-iterated that fact that they were not practicing any safety precautions, they did not have any sand or fire extinguishers nearby. Obviously this particular teen did not understand public safety nor does he care about it. Eventually, the teen's father came out and in broken English said that he sees nothing wrong with having fireworks being on the street; just like the teen, the father was very dismissive--We were beginning to understand where this teen's lack of public safety awareness was coming from. We decided to leave the situation.

Here's the lessons that I have learned from this night:

1. I should have called the RCMP instead of trying to talk to a bunch of teenagers who have not regards for public safety.
2. Some adults who do not parent their teens properly and these adults have complete disregard about public safety or public property.
3. Burnaby Fireworks Bylaw is weak.

We have lived in Burnaby for many years, many of our old neighbours have passed and new families have moved in. Every year, we get about 200-300 children coming to our block for Halloween. We get vans full of families who would drop off their kids at our block. Most of the neighbours still participate in the Halloween "trick or treat" part. We do embrace the new families with all of their diversities. However, as our city grows, I think we should put in some controls in place so that the new residents are aware of the best public safety practices.

My preferable choice would be to see the City of Burnaby ban consumer fireworks (sale, buy, discharge etc.) all year round (including Halloween). I don't want to see any innocent people getting hurt as a result of some other people's poor judgements.

If you cannot ban consumer fireworks, here are some my bylaw amendment suggestions,

- Users (person who discharges the fireworks) should use obtain city permits. Permits should be have a significant financial amount so that the extra city resources (fire fighters, police, city staff etc.) can be reimbursed.
- Fireworks can only be discharge on designated parks or areas. Users can pay for fire supervisors if needed. Of course, the users will need to provide a fee to the city.
- Private property owners must provide written consent to the city in allowing where the fireworks can take place.
- Users should be at least 19 years of age
- Users should have undergone a through training about fireworks and safety. Users pay for the course/training fee. Users should be certified and meet the fire chief's criteria on how to discharge fireworks safely. A simple internet fire safety course is not good enough.
- Dislodge of fireworks should be conducted in the back yard (not the front yard) of private property. This will mitigate the size of fireworks being purchased by the users/private property owners. Essentially, you are teaching the users to do some self-regulation.
- If fireworks needs to be conducted in the front yard, specified a specific measurement (? 18 to 20 metres) required from the curb.

Some might argued that maybe we can might be able to educate these new residents, from what I have seen with this incident, I don't think public awareness education on this group of population would be effective or economical.

I do understand that there might be resource concerns in terms of putting in the bylaw amendment suggestions/regulations in place, if that is the case then maybe banning fireworks would be the better option.

In closing I would like to say thank you for reading my letter and please consider some of my suggestions. I would like to see our Burnaby neighbourhood to remain friendly, safe and welcoming on Halloween and all year round.

Regards,

  
Jennifer Lee

