

Geller is sweller

When I endorsed Vision Vancouver's Andrea Reimer for city council some time ago, the buffoons in the blogosphere went berserk: "Tsakumis is a Conservative turncoat!", "What strange bedfellows!", "What's Tsakumis drinking these days?" Pimm's, frankly, and I recommend it.

But what idiotic lather! I suppose I should stick to endorsing only those of my own political pedigree, because that will somehow make for a more enlightened and functional city?

I think not.

Andrea Reimer received my endorsement because she will be an inspiring figure in Vancouver: Young, intelligent and knowledgeable.

But there is one name no Vancouverites should miss when marking their ballots, regardless of political beliefs.

There is one name, who above all else, including Reimer, will be altogether transformational, because there has never been another candidate for city council whose talents and credentials are so perfectly suited to address the ills that plague Vancouver.

Let me introduce you to NPA megastar Michael Geller.

I met Geller through mutual friends in the Jewish community, and notwithstanding his effusive kindness, treacherous humour (I promise, at some point, you'll have to beg him to stop telling jokes) and infinite charm, he is, by far and away, the most impressive candidate running for council.

Never before have we elected someone who not only completely understands issues related to social housing, but also is an internationally regarded expert in the field. When there will be discussions about how to infuse the greatest amount of care into any initiatives from sheltering the downtrodden to making Vancouver more affordable, Geller will be first in queue.

Density issues for the rest of us? Not a problem: Geller's contribution to UniverCity at SFU, an innovative, sustainable community, was the bedrock of that plan. Budgetary constraints? Sure. As notoriously frugal in business as he is personally generous, if



**REBEL
WITH A
CLAUSE**
ALEX TSAKUMIS

there is any way of not only providing a flatline to your taxes, but getting them lower, leave it to Geller.

For more than years, Michael Geller's pioneering and novel ideas have inspired people to think with their brains, but, execute with their hearts: An infrequent and atypical quality in a politician of any stripe, running for any level of government.

It also speaks volumes of Peter Ladner, too, who has taken the lead, ever so slightly, in the mayoral race, that he was part of the NPA group that sought Geller out and urged him to run. And it says a great deal about Geller himself that he would make such a sacrifice at a time in his life where he might rather be off travelling, enjoying the fruits of his labours.

"I absolutely hate standing still ... it bothers me, frankly," he said to me not long ago. "I prefer to be out there building consensus on how to make Vancouver better for everybody, but with ideas that work ... you can't do that if you're standing still."

What you need to remember on Nov. 15 is that Michael Geller's candidacy for a seat on council, is, thus far, the single timeliest event in the history of modern municipal elections in Vancouver.

No one, not once, has ever brought more pertinent experience to the proverbial table, at a time of greater need. Electing him will be truly transformative.

Geller brings the plumpest, wealthiest resume, yes, but it is, however, imbued with decades of invaluable, real life experience and all delivered with the comportment of the kindest of country doctors. He will disarmingly, yet willfully, reach across the political divide, and be an ambassador of goodwill and co-operation, as much as a facilitator of positive public policy initiatives.

Just don't ask him to tell you a joke ...