

CityClerk

From: Michael & Laura Brawn <mlgceb@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, 16 April 2018 15:12
To: CityClerk
Subject: April 16 2018 City Council Meeting - Hearing re Anthem Properties proposed rezoning - Steveston Highway

Dear Mayor Brodie and Councillors

We are writing to provide comments related to the proposed traffic signal in connection with this rezoning application.

We believe that it is unnecessary to install an additional traffic light at Swallow Drive. This light, and the proposed signal at Kingfisher, appear to present some significant issues in connection with the safety of residents as well as the smooth and safe flow of traffic on Steveston Highway. We have read the memorandum dated April 11, 2018 from the Director of Transportation to the Mayor and Councillors (the "Transportation Memo"). Although the Transportation Memo provides comments on some of the concerns raised by residents, it does not provide a clear description of any studies or facts relied upon to support the City staff's rationale for their approach.

Westwind Resident and Student Safety

The Westwind neighbourhood currently experiences traffic that use the neighborhood as a throughway to avoid the lights at Railway Avenue. We regularly see cars traveling through the neighbourhood at speed on their way to some other destination. This is a significant safety concern as there are many children in the area walking to and from Westwind School and park. We are very concerned that the number of cars taking this route will greatly increase if a signal light is installed at Swallow. These will include cars making quick left turns into the neighbourhood on amber lights to avoid the delay of a red light. This is a significant risk to the safety of Westwind residents and students at Westwind School.

The Transportation Memo does not provide an indication that current traffic patterns in the neighbourhood or the impact on future traffic flows have been studied in detail. Residents have observed short-cutting and expect that the installation of a new signal light will increase this behavior.

Traffic Disruption on Steveston Highway

Clearly, additional traffic signals will impede the flow of traffic on Steveston Highway. The proposal for five traffic signals between Railway Avenue and No. 2 Road (signals at Railway, Swallow, Lassam, Kingfisher, and No. 2 Road) appears to be excessive. It is surprising that City staff would view the potential convenience of the few residents of the proposed developments worthy of the disruption of the many users of Steveston Highway.

Even if the new signals are only to be triggered by North – South traffic or pedestrians, their operation will be disruptive to many drivers. Also, the inability to synchronize all five of these signals will result in additional delays. Furthermore, as noted above, it is expected that delays and frustration caused by additional traffic signals will increase the amount of short-cutting through the Westwind streets.

Consideration of Alternatives



City Staff do not appear to have fully considered alternatives to the installation of new signals and the use of the existing pedestrian signal at Lassam. Relocating the development's access point to the East may be a reasonable approach to avoid the adverse consequences of an additional traffic signal. Pedestrians can continue to use the existing signal to the East of Swallow at Lassam and traffic to the development could use a "right-in / right-out" access. It appears that the relocation of the access point to the east would allow for the continued use of the existing refuge lane areas on Steveston Highway. Many similar situations in Richmond involving residential and commercial developments are subject to right-in/ right-out access. It is not clear why this development should be given different treatment, particularly in light of the safety and other issues apparent in this proposal.

As residents of the Westwind area, we are very concerned about the impact of the proposed traffic changes on our community. We are also troubled that the City would consider such changes after what appears to be only a limited amount of engineering review and without notification to the residents. The Notice of Public Hearing that was circulated only described the rezoning application and did not provide any information on the impact to local traffic or that a new signal was proposed.

Thank you for considering our comments on this matter.

Sincerely,

Michael and Laura Brawn

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