

1785-02
(6)

From: ()
 Sent: September 4, 2008 3:04 PM
 To: MayorandCouncil)
 Cc: ()
 Subject: Re: truck and traffic noise

Dear Mayor and Council

() has forwarded me a copy of a letter he recently sent to you regarding excessive highway noise, and particularly truck engine brake noise, in the Eagleridge area.

I must concur completely with ()s remarks. Not only have we in the Eagleridge area been subjected to excessive construction noise (often until 2:00 am in the morning, with a drastic increase in late hour operations during the last 3 months) as well as increased traffic noise, but the additional noise by decelerating trucks in this area has become ridiculous.

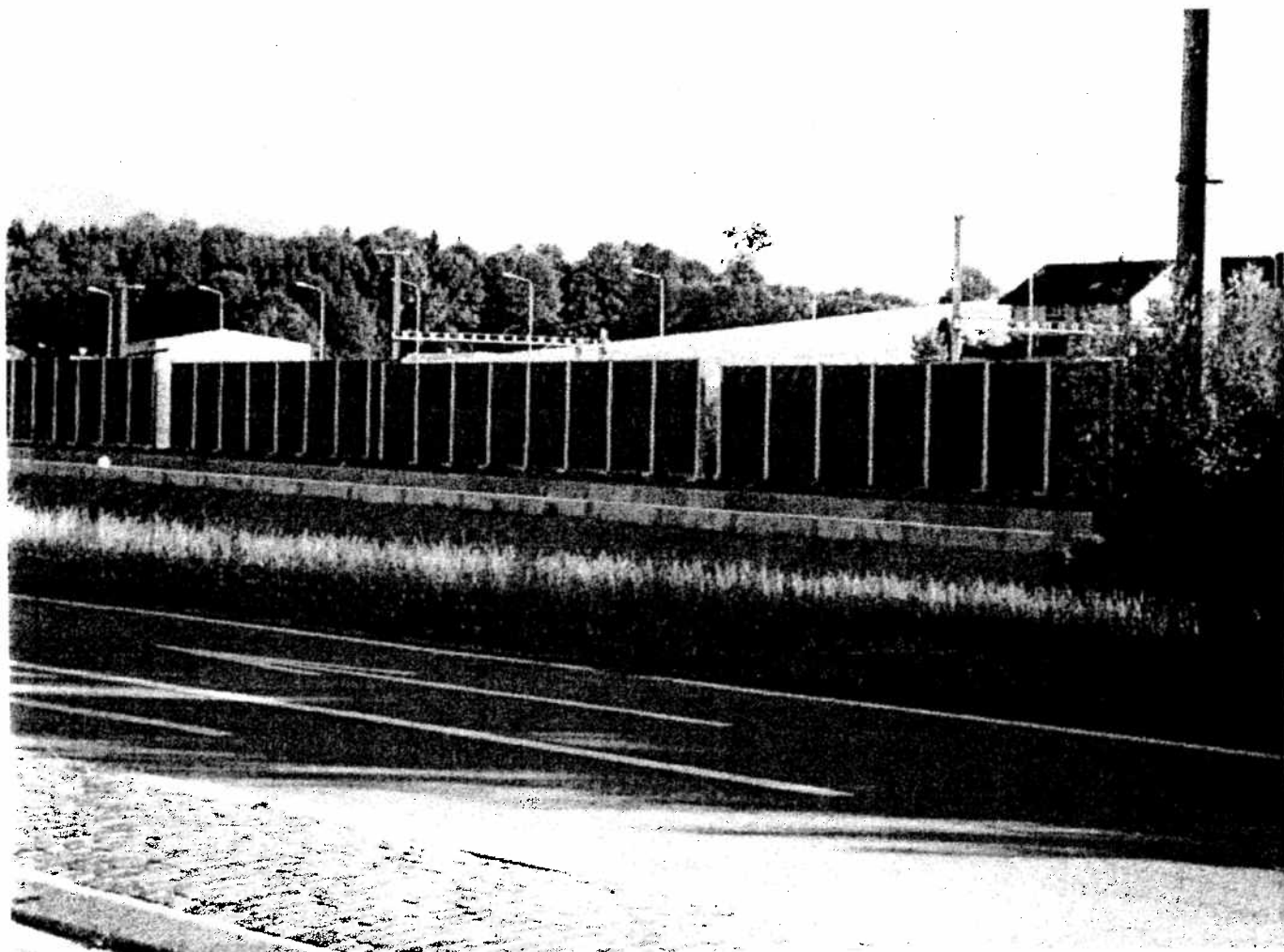
I am a former professional truck driver, and speaking from experience there is no reason that engine brakes (commonly referred to as "Jake brakes") need to be employed in this area. In fact, it is supposed to be illegal in residential zones, but as the monitoring by public safety officials appears to be effectively non-existent, truck drivers display a blatant disregard for the law and for the peace of our neighborhood by activating their engine brakes.

I attended the highway public information meetings, and at one argued vehemently with John Cavanagh that this would indeed happen. He assured me it wouldn't. Two years later, John was brought to our neighborhood and witnessed first-hand exactly what he said would not happen—an exceedingly high number of trucks deploying their engine brakes in the Eagleridge area. Although John was dumb-founded as to why, the answer is really simple: no enforcement. Employing engine brakes makes it easier to drive a large truck more aggressively. If the "cowboy" drivers know they won't get caught, using engine brakes means they can drive faster. And believe me, they do! The result is a cacophony of staccato truck farting that blasts through the area, often in the early hours of the morning, making the quiet enjoyment of our neighborhood impossible.

I travel to Europe often and notice through almost all the western European countries the standard use of high noise retention walls (I have attached a shot of one erected recently near Zurich - attractive, inexpensive and effective. Of further note, they have realistic noise laws that result in truck exhaust noise, and all vehicle exhaust noise, is kept to sane level. Unlike here.). Sound walls exist along the rest of the Upper Levels through West Van, but in one of the areas where they would be most effective, they aren't used. Why is this?

I also must complain about the increased ambient traffic noise. The changes in the highway and bluffs area as definitely increased the amount of traffic noise reflected from the cliffs into our neighborhood. The roadway is now closer due to widening, a sound buffering bluff has been reduced in size, and the bluff itself has been steepened—all adding to an increase in the amount of noise from the highway.

We in western West Van look forward to you spearheading a program to reduce the traffic noise in our area through effective law enforcement and mitigating the increased highway noise by constructing noise limiting fences and/or structures.





On 3-Sep-08, at 4:55 PM, () wrote:

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please accept this letter regarding the ongoing traffic noise on the new section of highway from Nelson Creek to Eagleridge.

Western residents knew there was going to be construction noise even if MOT failed to mention it in any of the "consultation meetings". Sort of bending the truth through omission. However in the same "consultations" MOT was emphatic that new highway grades connected to the Sea to Sky highway expansion would not result in increased engine brake noise. Well, without putting too fine a point on it, this was an outright lie. The use of noisy engine brakes has increased a hundredfold on the highway between Nelson Creek and Eagleridge. I have spent two years on the phone and in meetings with John Cavanagh from MOT with absolutely no success in remedying the situation. Cavanagh himself acknowledged the flagrant use of engine brakes but is in a quandary as to why. Well the reasons are obvious despite MOT's denial throughout the consultation process. The highway widening has brought it closer to the residents below. The highway is confusing resulting in truckers using their engine brakes in response to their confusion. The grade is higher at the Eagleridge area thus resulting in south bound trucks braking when before it was not necessary.

Does the Municipality have any power over this issue? It is tax paying West Van residents who are affected by this issue yet the Municipality seems either too busy or not interested. Are we to expect that engine brake use is now part of the fabric of Western West Vancouver? At the very least where are the police in regards to enforcement of laws regarding the flagrant use of engine brakes.

All of this while the rest of the highway between Caulfeild and Taylor Way enjoys new or rebuilt sound walls including a ten foot cement wall at the Westmount brake check. Why noise mitigation for everyone but Western residents?

West Vancouver must have some ability to enforce laws that provide for the peace and quiet of its residents. Your assistance regarding this increasingly serious issue would be appreciated.

Yours truly,

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