

1805-14
(22)

Subject: FW: Traffic Islands on Westmount Avenue

From: Brent A. Dozzi
Sent: August 4, 2009 9:33 PM
To: ()
Cc: Mayor & Council; Grant McRadu; Raymond Fung; Stephanie Kiernan
Subject: Traffic Islands on Westmount Avenue

Good evening ()

Thank you for making the time to express your thoughts and comments. Public input and feedback is extremely import to our processes. For clarity I have responded to each query within the text below.

Sincerely,

Brent A. Dozzi, P. Eng., PTOE
Manager Roads and Transportation

From: ()
Sent: Mon 09/07/20 9:29 AM
To: Stephanie Kiernan; Brent A. Dozzi
Subject: Traffic islands Westmount Ave

TO: Her Worship, Mayor Pamela Goldsmith-Jones and all Councillors of West Vancouver
CC: Mr. Brent Dozzi, Manager Roads & Transportation

I am writing to you in the matter of road work, namely traffic islands, round-abouts etc.in progress on Westmount Ave. I was given Mr. Dozzi's name as the person responsible for such projects.

Amongst thousands of daily users of this major corridor from Marine Drive to and from Upper Levels Highway, I must admit that I and everyone I talked to, who is using Westmount Ave. is equally upset about the "island fever" on that corridor. On a stretch of less than 1 km (from the Westmount Gas station south) there have been constructed, or are being indicated on the pavement for construction, no fewer than 10 traffic islands and one completely over-sized round-about at Rockview Place, a cul-de-sac with hardly any traffic emanating. I and others cannot see any valid reason for these islands and round-about nor their intended benefits. They are, however, infuriating and inconveniencing motorists to no end. Remember: Westmount Ave is not just a local road, but a major connector from Marine Drive onto HWY 1. As such, the prime purpose of road planning should be to facilitate traffic, making the flow smooth, safe, reducing noise and danger to motorists and pedestrians. **Traffic calming along Westmount Road was initiated at the request of local residents ... vehicular traffic travelling between Highway 1/99 and the local neighbourhood was travelling at unacceptable speeds. In addition, several near misses and crashes were noted including two fatalities involving children.**

What has been done is the opposite of all this and, in my view, is not demonstrating sound and sensible planning and is a waste of taxpayers' money because:

a. there is already a speed limit of 50km in place and I have never in the last 22 years of living on Mathers Ave. seen an accident on Westmount Ave. **Upon receiving the request staff followed up on the information provided by performing a speed survey and a crash search. The speed survey confirmed 85 of every 100 vehicles were**

travelling at speed of 67KPH or less and 15 of every 100 vehicles at a speed greater than 67KPH. ICBC also confirmed a significant crash history along the corridor to the extent that they are contributing financially to the project through their Road Safety Program.

b. the islands, usually built to accommodate a safe place for pedestrians on crosswalks, serve no purpose as there is only one sidewalk on the north side and no crosswalks to homes. **The traffic calming as designed is intended to modify driver behaviour such that the majority of motorists travel at speeds closer to the to posted speed (50KPH) along the entire corridor. The centre medians must therefore be placed at regular intervals in order to discourage motorists from accelerating beyond the posted speed limit between successive centre medians. Follow-up speed surveys are planned to confirm the success of this project.**

c. the distance between the new islands and the sidewalk has now become VERY narrow indeed, making the negotiation especially for fire trucks, buses and commercial trucks (like 40-ton monsters) difficult and, yes indeed, more dangerous for pedestrians on the sidewalk as now traffic is much closer to the curb than before! I wonder what the bus and truck drivers think of this whole thing! d. what about the snow plows in winter, who may not be able to see the curb or perimeter of these islands under the snow? How often will the islands be damaged, as happened several times to the very first island last year? **All centre medians as well as the roundabout were designed as per the *Canadian Guide For Neighbourhood Traffic Calming*. All accommodate bus and fire truck movements - staff had the design bus track through the corridor noting its wheel path. Lane widths are perceived to be narrower hence the traffic calming effect. They are actually well within Transportation Association of Canada *Design Guidelines for Canadian Roads*. Vehicles are traveling no closer to pedestrians however they are traveling much slower!**

e. the round-about at Rockview Pl. serves absolutely no sensible purpose either as there is not a junction with continuous traffic from all sides and again makes negotiation by trucks VERY difficult. As well, the swerving curb lane constructed going north will surely make it very difficult for buses and trucks to avoid damage to the curb. **Installation of the roundabout is consistent with a strategy of defining local neighbourhoods in proximity to Highway 1/99. They provide a transition point at the interface, signalling to motorists they are travelling in a non-highway environment. The roundabout at Rockview Place will also house a community sign paid for by residents and the Westmount Chevron. The sign provides a further clue to motorists to/from Highway 1/99 they are travelling through a residential neighbourhood. I would not be surprised to see a lot of damage to that round-about over time. All centre medians are delineated by a hazard marker. The roundabout provides for a mountable apron over which larger vehicles might travel.**

f. What about the added cost to maintain the new flower beds on the islands, watering, replanting, signs etc? **Landscaping of the roundabout and centre medians has two benefits: it draws attention to the residential character of the road and the area of impervious surface along Westmount Road is reduced. Landscaping is an important element of traffic calming for those reasons. Many of the residents have volunteered to maintain the centre median closest to their home. Similar programs have been implemented on Eagle Harbour Road and Sprucefield Road.**

I am sure more grievances could be listed about these islands which do not slow traffic, in case this was your major intention, but I am expressing the views of people I have consulted and who are also upset that our community would engage in this sort of useless work at great expense at a time of severe economic and fiscal difficulties, while there are much more pressing traffic problems, for example:

1. creating a third lane across the bridge into West Vancouver across the Capilano river by Park Royal. **This project was identified by staff through the North Shore Trade Area Study by Transport Canada and Port of Vancouver. The project is currently awaiting a balance of funding by others.**
2. creating a few left-turn lanes and left-turn signals on the major intersections on Marine Drive in Ambleside in order

to stop the nonsensical lane-changing of cars because of either left-turners being blocked by oncoming traffic (there are only few left-turn green phases) or cars wanting to park. Why not create roundabouts THERE or at least short left-turn lanes with left-turn signals, for example on Marine Drive & 13th, Marine Dr. & 15th, 17th, 21st etc. In the last few years, West Van traffic has increased dramatically but you seem to do your best to frustrate, rather than facilitate traffic with such things as going on on Westmount Ave. I am sure there are similar items going on elsewhere in West Vancouver. **A full traffic signal with WB to SB left turn lane is currently being constructed at the intersection of Marine Drive and 24th Street. In addition the intersection of Marine Drive and 15th Street is being re-designed to include left turn storage and signalization on all approaches. Its construction is proposed for 2010.**

3. making Bellevue Ave a one-way street, etc. **Interesting proposal! The same was proposed by Hamilton & Associates in their 1998 study of traffic in Ambleside.**

And lastly: the cost of the above mentioned projects. Every year West Vancouver is raising taxes and I would submit that the scarce funds available to the roadworks department should be employed in more productive and beneficial ways for motorists, rather than useless traffic islands, such as on Westmount Ave. Work simply cannot be done when there are no funds at hand. We must stop mortgaging our kids future once and for all as West Vancouver is, I believe, at the top of expenditures per capita of all Lower Mainland municipalities. **Traffic calming is a valuable tool for retrofitting rather than rebuilding existing roads as is evident in every community throughout Metro Vancouver. To date, the DWV traffic calming program has essentially been focussed on those roads adjacent to/approaching schools and at the road interface between Highway 1/99 and local neighbourhoods. A reasonable budget is established for this work and approved annually.**

As a taxpayer of West Vancouver I wish to motion that any further work on things that are not absolutely and urgently necessary shall be postponed. Also, I wish to receive from you a complete report on the reasons for these Westmount Ave. measures and intended benefits AND a summary of the cost for these structures. **Please refer to the rationale as noted above. The approved budget for this project for 2009 is \$40,000. ICBC, Westport Chevron and local residents are contributing an additional \$13,000.**

I thank you for giving my request your full and prompt attention and look forward to your written response.

Very truly yours,

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