

Presentation to City Hall, January 29, 2018

Proposed Speed Hump Installation on River Road

Mayor and Councillors,

Seconds count.

That's the sign that hangs at a local fire hall and the worry that currently hangs over the heads of many affected residents in East Richmond who have unresolved questions as to how the proposed installation of speed humps along the length of River Road in East Richmond from Number 7 Road through to Westminster Highway will impact response times and overall access for emergencies requiring police, fire, or ambulance services.

Signs posted along the stretch of road indicate that the road should be shared. But apparently that sharing does not extend to inclusion in the making of major decisions that will affect all residents who depend on this road, for whom the road serves as

2

a sole point of access to and from our properties.

Numerous residents, including myself, have been completely shut out of the opportunity to participate and contribute our input to a process of significant change in our community, only finding out about it after the fact, when final approval had been given.

In my case, I found out through a chance copy of the Richmond News last fall describing the project, a paper of which very few of us ever see in East Richmond as it is not delivered to us on the same basis as other parts of the city.

It is my opinion that the survey process that was utilized last summer seeking feedback about this project was flawed by the exclusion of residents equally dependent as those who live on River Road itself. In addition, for those who were invited to participate, the process as I understand it was basically reduced down to whether or not those selected for participation were in favour of speed humps, with no other options provided, and

no information as to how this conclusion had been drawn.

As many people in this area have lived in their homes for very long periods of time, many for decades, one of the resources that I believe was overlooked in this process was inclusion of the personal first-hand observations and experiences from the residents themselves that could have contributed to help identify problems that have evolved over an extended length of time and possible solutions. For residents that did receive the survey, the opportunity to provide additional comments would have been more in relation to the project itself, rather than alternatives, as none were offered.

Therefore, the people who are the most familiar with this road and its challenges were left out of the equation until a lone option was decided for them.

In addition, in the letter that was sent out to selected residents on

4

July 17, 2017, as part of the survey, the letter specifically reads as follows: "Should there be support for the proposed speed humps, the city will proceed." However, when the results were tallied and it became clear that consensus had not been achieved with the majority of residents opposed. This opposition was deemed to be merely perception and the project was then given the green light to go ahead regardless.

It is my understanding that the proposal to install speed humps along River Road came about due to a horrific and tragic accident that claimed the life of a well-known and respected cyclist in late 2016. I would like to say at this time that I feel a deep sense of sadness and empathy for all those that this terrible loss of life has touched.

However, I also believe it is also relevant to point out that the police investigation into this accident, that was released to the public well after the approval for this project had been given,

5

attributed the tragedy not due to speeding, but to undue care and attention by the motorist involved.

I believe that these findings in part should form the basis for the measures to help improve road safety for everyone using this road.

I am encouraged to see that as a result of a presentation last month by my neighbour, Mrs. Lynda Parsons, that the city has retained an independent transportation planning and engineering company to review the road geometry, which I personally see as part of the problem, given that the road's narrow nature, especially when it follows the very edge of the riverbank of the north arm of the Fraser, as well examining road conditions, and crash history.

I respectfully suggest the consideration of additional measures such as the examination of traffic pattern usage, given that the

6

volume of traffic varies widely, with eastbound backups to turn onto Westminster Highway sometimes extending hundreds of meters back onto River Road during peak periods; I also would suggest that the crash history examination also take into account where specifically crash sites have been noted, given the mixed use of this roadway, from industrial, to residential, and agricultural portions of the roadway.

I also suggest that the study include an examination of how speed humps will impact stresses on the road itself, given that it serves as a dike, and given that the last major decision along River Road was to approve truck parks. How will the driving of heavy trucks over speed humps affect the dike?

As a side note, I regularly now find myself forced over to the side of the road as many of these trucks cross over the centre line when driving or turning. We now have the added feature of massive concrete footings installed directly next to the road, in

7

preparation for the speed humps, which further narrows, in regular intervals, an already narrow roadway, and creating a hazard in itself, again, in my opinion.

Further, as a resident dependent on River Road for home access, not included in any part of this process, I would like to add a few of my perceptions, or facts as I prefer, at this time.

-a fire can double in size every 30 seconds. The City of Port Alberni considers this such an important fact that they post it on their own website.

*Emergency*

-who assumes liability for delayed response times?

-what precedent has been set for the installation of speed humps over such an extended length of roadway?

-in medical emergencies, the term "golden hour" is used to describe the importance of the first hour after a traumatic injury in which treatment is critical in preventing irreversible internal



damage and optimizing the chance for survival. Yet this project seeks to regulate traffic to a fixed speed, including ambulances. *This is a concern to me,*

-B.C. ambulance recognizes three specific medical issues in which are time dependent, including cardiac arrest, respiratory arrest, and full respiratory obstruction. Residents living in the proposed speed hump area are already amongst the furthest away from our local hospital so installing a feature to limit speed, including in emergency situations, is a major worry. Would you want an ambulance to be forced to adhere to the speed limit or close to it in the case of a cardiac event, or in the case of someone choking?

In our community, we have had everything from major fires, including the bog itself catching on fire, train derailments, life threatening incidents requiring police response, and medical emergencies requiring ambulance attendance and paramedics.



9

Personally, I badly fractured my ankle a few years ago, and although I am extremely grateful to the first responders who came to help me, I can only imagine how much more difficult the experience would have been, riding out a series of speed humps in the back of an ambulance to get to hospital.

In a letter I wrote to the city about my concerns after hearing of this project's approval, the response received on November 21, 2017 from the city's Director of Transportation, Mr. Victor Wei, outlined the criteria for resident participation in the speed hump survey being directed to owners whose properties were adjacent the street who would be most affected as some of the speed humps may be in close proximity to driveways.

This letter indicated that there would be, and I quote, "no impact to road users, including area residents, as long as they are travelling at the posted speed limit."

10

For the reasons I have outlined for you tonight, I cannot agree with this statement. I also shudder to think how I would be able to explain this to my elderly mother who was previously med-evac'd to Vancouver from the Okanagan in order to receive emergency surgery to save her vision in one eye at St. Paul's Hospital.

Post-surgery follow-up required me to drive her back and forth for treatment from my home to the hospital, along River Road.

I can only be thankful that this incident happened long before the installation of speed humps, as every bump and jolt caused her heart-wrenching pain.

In short, many of us who are concerned but have been excluded from this process are affected, and directly so.

In lieu of all this, I am asking the city to reconsider this proposal, with a moratorium in order to address the concerns that have been brought forward, whether by those included in the survey, or

11

those who were left out, and consider the feedback provided.

Surely this is what it really means to share the road.

Thank you for your time tonight.

Solutions:

-increased police presence, has dismissed over recent years.

-examination of road geometry and of widely varied traffic patterns

-better road signage to mark physical road edges

-examine how double line from dotted line has contributed to speeding problems

-provide a means for resident input, more inclusive approach

with all stakeholders