

ITEM 14
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 55
COUNCIL MEETING 88/09/06

RE: LETTER FROM MR. REITHOFER, #1203 - 6152 KATHLEEN AVENUE, BURNABY, B.C.,
TRAIN WHISTLES - B.C. HYDRO RAIL / CENTRAL PARK

MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the recommendations of the Director Engineering be adopted.

* * * * *

TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER 1988 AUGUST 29
FROM: DIRECTOR ENGINEERING
SUBJECT: TRAIN WHISTLES - B.C. HYDRO RAIL
CENTRAL PARK LINE

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT a copy of Mr. Reithofer's letter and this report be forwarded to B.C. Hydro Rail.
2. THAT a copy of this report be sent to Mr. Reithofer, #1203 - 6152 Kathleen Avenue, Burnaby, B.C. V5H 4K8.

SUMMARY

Rescheduling of trains is an operational function of B.C. Hydro Railway and therefore Mr. Reithofer's first suggestion of a manner in which to minimize the effect of train whistles must be referred to the Railway. Signalization for the purpose of subsequently enacting an anti-train whistle bylaw would at this time cost in excess of \$500,000. There are possibilities that if signalization comes as the result of future traffic volumes meeting the necessary warrants, these costs may be shared, or that if redevelopment eliminates the number of existing customers the Railway may become uneconomical and be discontinued and/or train volumes reduced.

REPORT

Appearing on this evening's Agenda is a letter from Mr. Frank Reithofer, #1203 - 6152 Kathleen Avenue, Burnaby, B.C. V5H 4K8, regarding B.C. Hydro Railway train whistles.

Mr. Reithofer suggests two solutions toward eliminating the use of whistles by trains along the Central Park line of the B.C. Hydro Railway. The rescheduling of trains to more reasonable times, i.e. from early a.m. to late p.m., is an operational requirement of B.C. Hydro Railway, therefore one of our recommendations is that they be sent a copy of Mr. Reithofer's letter. Our concern here would be that the potential for a vehicle/train or pedestrian/train accident would increase if the trains operated at a time when there would be more traffic on the roads. This potential would probably result in more frequent and longer duration use of train whistles during this period.

./...

164

The second solution - the installation of flashing lights - would, if implemented, result in reduced frequency of train whistles but would not necessarily eliminate them. The Municipality may enact an anti-train whistle bylaw, such as Bylaw 8080 "Railway Anti-Whistling Bylaw" enacted by Burnaby Council in 1983 August 22. This Bylaw prohibits the use of whistles by trains using the Burlington Northern Line, except when deemed necessary by the train engineer. One of the requirements that must be met before such a bylaw may be enacted is that all at-grade crossings must be signalized. This requirement was met along the Burlington Northern Line but is not met along the Central Park line.

Those at-grade road crossings of the Central Park line not currently signalized include Kingsway, Patterson Avenue, Wilson Avenue, Nelson Avenue, MacPherson Avenue, Buller Avenue, Gilley Avenue, Rumble Street and Stride Avenue. With the exception of the Kingsway crossing, which may be more expensive, the current approximate cost of signalizing these nine crossings is \$60,000 each for a total cost of \$540,000. According to the Railway Act, Section 192(3), the Municipality would be responsible for all costs incurred in signalization required to enact an anti-train whistle bylaw.

It is felt that it would be very difficult to justify the expenditure of this amount of money for the following reasons:

1. Few trains - usually only one or two per day.
2. Trains usually operate during periods of lowest traffic volume - early a.m. as mentioned previously.
3. Whistles may still be blown if deemed necessary by the train engineer. We still receive complaints on the Burlington Northern Line of train whistles and our enquiries as to why usually disclose that there were circumstances that the train engineer deemed warranted sounding the whistle.
4. In addition to the flashing lights, railway signals also have alarm bells. These bells ring for a longer time than the whistle blows and due to the fact that the train detector is located in advance of the intersection, may even be set off when the train has no intention of crossing the roadway. These latter alarms can occur during periods of shunting cars into sidings. We have received complaints regarding the bells ringing on the existing signal on Willingdon Avenue.

It is possible that some of the remaining unsignalized crossings may require signalization in the future due to them meeting the necessary traffic volume warrants for signalization. The costs for these future warranted signals may be shared between the Municipality, the Railway and/or the Ministry of Transportation and Highways which would reduce the aforementioned costs of signalization for the purposes of implementing an anti-train whistle bylaw. It is deemed most appropriate to deal with each such instance as, if, and when they arise and each on its own merit.

./...

ITEM	14
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	55
COUNCIL MEETING	88/09/06

There is also the possibility that with redevelopment of the SkyTrain corridor, which includes the subject Railway, that the Railway may become uneconomical and be discontinued or train frequency may be reduced. For example, the Metrotown development has already seen the elimination of at least five spur lines, with one more earmarked for removal upon pertinent redevelopment activities. With this possibility and also that in time some of the costs may be shared with others, we feel that complete signalization of the subject railway is premature.

The contents of this report have been discussed with Mr. Reithofer.

DE:ka


DIRECTOR ENGINEERING

cc: Director Administrative & Community Services
Director Planning & Building Inspection
Traffic Supervisor

