

Thompson, Holly

From: Web NoReply
Sent: Wednesday, August 21, 2024 2:19 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Email - Request to Speak - Ted Hansen - Inaction on Stonebridge Whistle Cessation - CK 375-2
Attachments: Inaction On Stonebridge Train Whistles.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Submitted on Wednesday, August 21, 2024 - 14:18

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

I have read and understand the above statements.: Yes

I do not want my comments placed on a public agenda. They will be shared with members of Council through their online repository.: No

I only want my comments shared with the Mayor or my Ward Councillor.: No

Date: Tuesday, August 20, 2024

To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

Pronouns: He/him/his

First Name: Ted

Last Name: Hansen

Phonetic spelling of first and/or last name: Ted Hansen

Phone Number : [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

I live outside of Saskatoon: No

Saskatoon Address and Ward:

Address: [REDACTED] Veltkamp Cres.

Ward: Ward 7

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable): Standing Policy Committee on Transportation

What do you wish to do ?: Request to Speak

If speaking will you be attending in person or remotely: In person

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: Septmber 2024

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: new item - Inaction on Stonebridge Whistle Cessation

Comments:

No "comments" - see attached written presentation

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?: No

Subject: Inaction on Stonebridge Train Whistles

Please add this item to the September Standing Policy Committee on Transportation meeting agenda, and please also cc it to Councillors Loewen and Donhauer, and Tom Simpson, Customer Service Manager – Transportation.

I understand that this is within the 12 month period since the Train Whistle item was last discussed, however this is a different concern and I believe the 12 month limitation should not apply.

The discussion at the November 2023 meeting was about the regulatory requirements for whistle cessation. That discussion is complete.

The concern here is inaction, not the specifics of any work that might be needed.

The information provided last November clearly outlined the procedure that must be followed to conform to Transport Canada's requirements. I sent the contact information for Transport Canada's Railway Works Engineer (Winnipeg) to Tom Simpson by email on 10 July, 2023, so if assistance was needed in clarifying the regulations, that resource was available.

Since the requirements are known and other resources were available, that report should have only taken a couple of months. However, almost a year has passed and nothing has been done. Due to the postponement of committee meetings for the civic election period it now seems that it may be 2025 before this issue receives any attention.

This should have been a simple, straightforward and easily solved problem.

The only requirement for a crossing to qualify for whistle cessation is to have an automatic warning system conforming to Transport Canada's requirements. The engineering study done in 2019-20 confirmed that this crossing already meets those requirements. All that remained was coordinating the task with Corman Park.

However, it has been plagued by administrative delay right from the beginning.

It was first brought to the Standing Committee in August of 2018 – 6 years ago. Following that meeting, it was recommended that the City partner with the RM to do an engineering study of the crossing. A second recommendation was to “collaborate with the RM of Corman Park to develop a strategy on implementing the recommendations to mitigate the train noise concerns”.

The first recommendation was implemented, and the engineering study was delivered to the RM in 2020. The second part was never followed up, and no collaboration ever developed.

For unknown reasons, nothing was done to follow up on the engineering study. I do not believe the city was even given a copy of it, since they based their 2022 “action plan” on an excerpt from a presentation made by CN to the RM instead of the actual study.

Throughout 2019 to 2022, I partnered with a group of Corman Park residents to try to get whistle cessation enacted on all the crossings in the RM. We made multiple presentations to the RM council but were unsuccessful due to opposition from CN. This manifested itself in many ways – for instance,

the RM repeatedly asked for cost estimates starting in 2016, however the figures were not delivered until 2021.

Finally, in March 2022, the RM abandoned their whistle cessation attempt in response to a very polished but one-sided presentation from CN. The city then took over and developed their 2022 action plan. Unfortunately, this was based on their earlier experience instead of the current Transport Canada regulations.

It is now 6 years from the time this issue was brought to the attention of the Standing Committee and 2 1/2 years since the city “took over” from the RM, but so far absolutely nothing has been achieved.

Application for whistle cessation has not even been attempted, there is no active collaboration with the RM, and we are still back at square one waiting for an overdue report.

This is the proverbial “red tape” at its most red, and a new path forward must be found.

If the problem is shortage of manpower, the Town of Allen was faced with the same problem in 2016. It was solved by having an outside person (actually the initial complainant) handle the application. Working exactly to the Transport Canada’s written procedure, she arranged the necessary communications and meetings, negotiated with CN, and applied to Transport Canada for a ruling under Section 5 of the procedure.

She was able to have whistle cessation in place within 16 months – for absolutely no cost.

I will volunteer to do the same. I am totally familiar with Transport Canada’s Standards and Regulations, with the technical calculations needed for compliance and with their Procedure to Apply for Whistle Cessation. I do also have experience in applying regulatory standards as I spent 8 years as Boiler and Pressure Vessel Safety Inspector for the Provincial Government before retiring in 2005.

In the meantime, Stonebridge remains the only area of the city where residents are constantly subjected to train whistles at all hours of day and night.

Action Delayed is Action Denied!

Thank You

Ted Hansen