

From: Joyce Area Residents Association "s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"
Sent: Monday, September 19, 2016 11:13 AM
To: Correspondence Group, City Clerk's Office
Subject: Opposition Letter to Proposed Joyce Station Precinct Rezoning

Dear Mayor and Vancouver City Council,

In response to the "REZONING: Joyce-Collingwood Station Precinct Plan and Related Rezoning", the Joyce Area Residents Association (JARA) would like to offer our comments in opposition to the proposed rezoning in our neighbourhood.

You may recall a group of passionate community members, from youth to seniors, who came down to City Hall to offer comments on rushed development in our community in June this year. Rapid growth inherently conflicts with Vancouver's goal to become the greenest city. We urge City Council to carefully consider the following before making a decision about the proposed mass rezoning.

High Renter Population/Current Affordability

The high renter population in the neighbourhood must be considered. As indicated in the plan, 46 percent of 6,300 home dwellings are rented by individuals and families. Many have chosen to stay as renting has always been a more affordable option. However, with the current state of growing unaffordability in the city, unprotected and displaced renters will be left with no other options for housing. Many renters are currently spending somewhere between 30 to 50 per cent of their income on rent. As a result, new development does not guarantee that current renters will be able to afford the units. There is an urgent need for more non-market rentals, especially in a neighbourhood with such high percentages of low-income, immigrant families and seniors.

Transit Convenience & Services

The City of Vancouver has already found that Renfrew-Collingwood area has a higher representation of low-income and immigrant residents compared to the city-wide average. In addition, the neighbourhood is also home to one of the highest proportions of seniors.

As you may recall, JARA conducted an extensive neighbourhood survey where we knocked on the doors of over 100 homes in the affected rezoning areas. These are not just families that can simply pick up and go. They have built roots and community in our neighbourhood. Many have told us that they cannot afford to stay in the neighbourhood without renters or extended family. Many have also said that they are unsure about where they could find other housing even after they've searched for housing elsewhere in Greater Vancouver. A great number of homes are multi-generational and their current dwelling is able to accommodate low-income families that want to live together.

The City of Vancouver insists that density is necessary because thousands are expected to flock to our neighbourhood. While our neighbourhood has always been a chosen area for newcomers and non-English speakers from a wide variety of backgrounds to settle, approving the rezoning may jeopardize that. Townhomes and apartments will not necessarily be able to house as many as the Single Family Homes for affordable rates.

JARA supports transit-oriented development that is equitable for long-term, current and new residents. We ask City Council to make a point of prioritizing affordable housing for low-income, newcomer families, youth and seniors in this community as opposed to adding it as a potential afterthought. Plans say there is potential for more affordable housing. What is the timeline? How long with the most vulnerable in our community have to wait?

Consultation Still Inadequate

While the City of Vancouver cites the 2004 Community Vision for the neighbourhood, it is clear that recommendations in the document are being ignored. Planners are veering from more collaborative and democratic engagement and consultation methods to more cherry-picking tactics. This is clear in the cryptic documents attached to this agenda item and the staff's refusal to conduct household surveys in the affected areas and intensive months long community workshops as done for the Community Vision in 2003 and 2004.

At the very least, homeowners should be given an objective explanation of how these rezonings will impact them. There is a great deal of unrest and confusion among homeowners that intend to stay in the neighbourhood. City Council should provide unbiased staff to consult with homeowners in their mother tongues as 73% of our neighbourhood is ESL. Homeowners are being told they are able to stay while they are getting pressured by developers and real estate agents to sell. Homeowners are also being pushed out due to the threat of living in a highly congested construction zone for many years. Further, our small businesses are already feeling the crunch. As you know, the small businesses around the station are primarily immigrant owned. The majority are not in favour of the re-zonings and fear that it could mean their long-term businesses are at stake due to increased rents and business taxes. City Councillors mentioned protection of small businesses is a concern on June 28, 2016 at City Hall. What are the safeguards in place to protect these businesses as bigger chains pop up in the area?

Further, since the new General Manager of Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability, Gil Kelley is just easing into his new position, JARA urges City Council to put a pause on the rezonings to hear input from Mr. Kelley. With his new responsibilities having a strong emphasis on housing affordability, it is important to hear more about his findings in a Vancouver context.

Once again, we urge City Council to deny the proposed rezonings of single family homes in the Joyce Station Precinct Plan, and come up with solutions that add density without destroying perfectly good homes and displacing families.

Sincerely,

Arielle Yip, Chanel Ly, Cassandra Ly on behalf of
Members and supporters of the Joyce Area Residents' Association (JARA)

Castro, Maria

From: Correspondence Group, City Clerk's Office
Sent: Monday, September 19, 2016 12:59 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: FW: Opposition Letter to Proposed Joyce Station Precinct Rezoning's

From: Crezien Bencio "s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"
Sent: Monday, September 19, 2016 12:27 PM
To: Correspondence Group, City Clerk's Office
Subject: Re: Opposition Letter to Proposed Joyce Station Precinct Rezonings

Dear Mayor and Vancouver City Council,

In response to the "REZONING: Joyce-Collingwood Station Precinct Plan and Related Rezonings", I, as part of the Joyce Area Residents Association (JARA) would like to offer our comments in opposition to the proposed rezonings in our neighbourhood.

I have been closely involved in the Joyce-Collingwood Station Precinct Plan and I have been part of this neighbourhood for over 10 years. Renfrew-Collingwood is the largest local area in the City of Vancouver with 50,000 residents, and despite the large and rapidly growing population of the area, it has few cultural facilities. Renfrew-Collingwood deserves more arts and culture infrastructure. It does not have a single dedicated performance venue even though it has a large population, and is taking a large amount of new density. Investments in dedicated neighbourhood cultural spaces are imperative to fostering diverse and creative intercultural activities that allow for healthier, more connected and vibrant experience of community life. I also urge the Mayor, Vancouver City Council, and the Planning team to consider the Renfrew-Collingwood Arts and Culture Infrastructure Plan, attached with this letter. The creation of the document was made possible through funding from the City of Vancouver, and Collingwood Neighbourhood House, and the generosity of local artists, residents, organizations, and supporters.

In addition to advocating for more cultural facilities, I urge City Council to advocate for more meaningful opportunities for neighbours in Renfrew-Collingwood to be part of the planning process. I ask that City Planners be responsible to facilitate democratic, accessible and collaborative engagement for the residents of Renfrew-Collingwood.

I also want that the precinct review consider the unique characteristic of Renfrew-Collingwood, and acknowledge how our neighbourhood is rooted in community based advocacy. Our neighbours want to be involved, and they want to have a say in the community where they live, learn, work, and thrive. I hope that you consider my comments, as well as JARA's recommendations on your decision on the proposed rezonings in our neighbourhood.

Kind regards,
Crezien Bencio
"s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"

Castro, Maria

From: Correspondence Group, City Clerk's Office
Sent: Monday, September 19, 2016 1:30 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: FW: Letter for noise remediation inclusion in Joyce-Collingwood Precinct Plan RTS 11440
Attachments: Brooks_Letter_for_noise_remediation_RTS11440.pdf

From: Denise Brooks "s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"
Sent: Saturday, September 17, 2016 9:45 PM
To: Correspondence Group, City Clerk's Office
Subject: Letter for noise remediation inclusion in Joyce-Collingwood Precinct Plan RTS 11440

Please find my letter to Council attached.

Denise Brooks, PhD
"s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"

Summary: Because the SkyTrain is already causing unhealthy levels of noise pollution in the Joyce-Collingwood neighbourhood, we should not approve rezoning for increased density until current noise pollution is remediated to healthy levels (according to the levels set by the World Health Organization).

Noise pollution from the SkyTrain is already at unhealthy levels in the Joyce-Collingwood neighbourhood. So it is important that the noise pollution issue has been addressed in the Livability section of the Joyce-Collingwood Station Precinct Plan and Related Rezoning document:

Livability

This Precinct Plan and other planning initiatives across the city will add more housing near rapid transit stations, along SkyTrain guideways and major streets where residential use could be impacted by environmental noise. The current regulations were adopted from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) regulations developed in the 1980s. **The current acoustic regulations are being reviewed to ensure livability.** Updated regulations and guidelines that reflect World Health Organization (WHO) advice on environmental noise exposure and a specified methodology for acoustic assessments will be developed and presented for Council consideration in fall 2016. Should Council adopt the updated requirements, new housing at JC Precinct will need to meet the updated requirements (RTS 11440, pg. 11.)

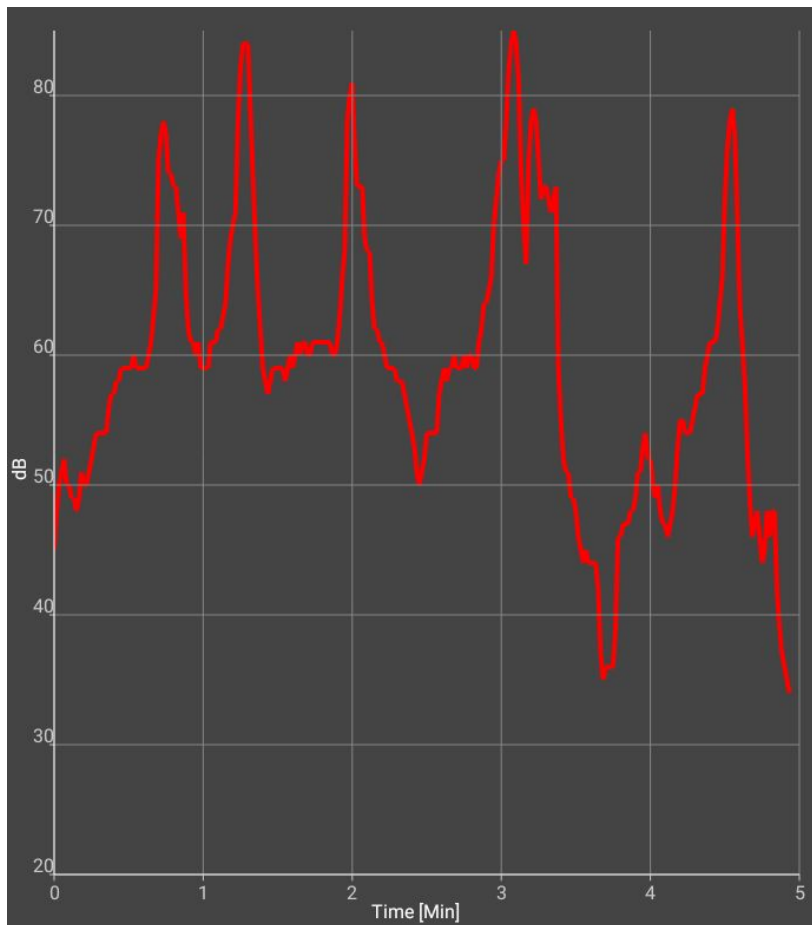
While it is unfortunate that the “current” acoustic regulations were adopted in the 1980s, there seems to be some recognition that current regulations are not ensuring livability. Also, the statement that “a specified methodology for acoustic assessments will be developed” indicates that we do not currently have one in place. Unfortunately, there are quite a number of people living in SkyTrain-adjacent housing that was built under the current acoustic regulations and the current (possibly non-existent) methodology for acoustic assessments.

Noise pollution is not just annoying; it is dangerous to our health. The World Health Organization has published extensive documentation of environmental noise contributing to disease. In a recent publication, they estimate that in Western Europe, at least one million years of healthy life are lost every year from traffic related noise alone (Health effects of noise pollution: Burden of disease from environmental noise, Quantification of healthy life years lost in Europe, 2011).

This rezoning plan will increase noise pollution. With the adoption of this rezoning plan, according to RTS 11440 Background section 1.5, pg. 7, we can expect to see longer trains to accommodate the increased ridership from higher residential density. Longer trains mean an increase in the already-high average noise level. And worse, longer trains also mean an increase in the completely unmitigated, episodic noise generated when the SkyTrain hits features such as crossover switches or curves.

To help illustrate what longer trains and the unmitigated, episodic noise generated by them means to the residents currently living along the guideway, I present an example from my own living room. (I am living on the 22nd storey of a high-rise four blocks east of the Joyce-Collingwood SkyTrain station.)

The episodic noise in the decibel (dB) plot below is triggered when trains pass the crossover switch east of the Joyce-Collingwood station. The plot shows data recorded from my living room over a five minute period on a weekday evening. Six full trains passed the switch during the five minutes (both the Expo and Millennium lines pass through our station). Each triggered a distinct decibel spike when hitting the switch. Three trains generated spikes in the high 70's and three generated spikes in excess of 80 dB, one reaching 85 dB. Note that with current train frequency and train length, there are already periods of time when background train noise is constantly near 60 dB.



To put this level of residential noise pollution in perspective, the World Health Organization Guidelines for Community Noise, 1999 (the very guidelines that the Council may be reviewing as a possible replacement for our current ones) specifies that healthy background noise levels inside living spaces should be on the order of 30 dB LAeq (averaged noise) for continuous noise and 45 dB L_{Amax} (noise spike) for episodic noise. Also, keep in mind that

the dB scale is logarithmic. The spikes in the above plot represent noise levels 100 to over 1,000 times greater than the background noise levels that preceded the spikes. Try to imagine that every minute for hours every day someone is turning on a garbage disposal about two feet from your head. That would be similar to the level of noise we are experiencing every day.

This shocking level of episodic noise is not new in Joyce-Collingwood. This switch was in place long before the current high-rises were built. And as mentioned before, there is absolutely no noise remediation of any kind for any of the high-rise residents living adjacent to this very noisy feature. I have to conclude, therefore, under the current acoustic regulations either this level of noise is considered acceptable, or there is no system in place to ensure compliance with existing regulations.

I expect it is the latter because I cannot believe any city would ever have a noise ordinance that allows an enterprise to generate this level of noise at three in the morning. But TransLink routinely shuffles trains around during the night, at full speed, hitting that crossover switch and sending 80-decibel spikes rocketing into my bedroom. I have to believe that there is currently no system in place to ensure compliance with even the modest noise regulations that we may currently have in place.

Yet according to the stated plan in RTS 11440 we must first approve rezoning for increased density (with the concomitant increase in train ridership), and then wait to see if the Council approves the improved noise exposure rules. But even if these new rules are approved, they appear to only benefit residents of new construction. There is no mention of any plan to mitigate the existing unhealthy noise levels. I find this situation very disappointing and worrisome.

As an alternative to simply hoping that Council approves the improved noise exposure rules that may, or may not, address the current unhealthy noise levels at Joyce-Collingwood. I propose that we need a process of discovery where real data is collected and reviewed transparently (because this is 2016, after all). An excellent example would be the process followed in Portland, Oregon. The entire report is freely available online, and I have included a link and some details from the noise and vibration section in the appendix below. (There is a very nice section in the report detailing the methodology used for the standard assessment, in case that helps).

The current residents of Joyce-Collingwood deserve to live in a healthy environment. And we currently, demonstrably, do not have that. We deserve a transparent, fact-based remediation plan for the ongoing unhealthy levels of noise pollution. And we deserve proof that the new rules will be enforced, and that mitigation will be carried out. Otherwise, we cannot in good conscience approve a plan that puts the lives of families and children at further risk.

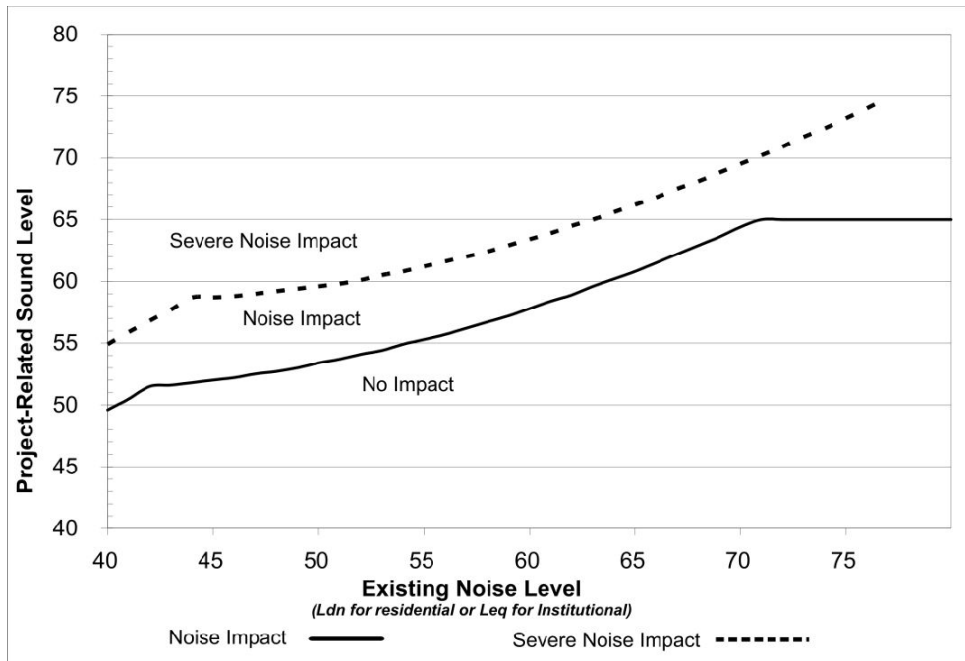
Denise Brooks
Statement against approval of RTS 11440
17 September 2016

Appendix

The following are details from a Portland, Oregon light-rail noise and vibration assessment process:

http://www.oregonmetro.gov/sites/default/files/5_ch3_environmental_analysis_and_consequences.pdf

Noise pollution metrics used for the assessment are clearly stated in the figure below.



The below table demonstrates their process. Existing noise levels in the affected residential areas are assessed, light-rail related noise is projected, appropriate mitigation for the affected areas is proposed, and the expected mitigation results are modeled.

Summary of Noise Mitigation Measures for Light Rail, Bus, Streetcar, Warning Bell, and Traffic Noise

Rec. # ¹	Area Description ²	Impact Type ³	Noise Levels		Criteria FTA/FHWA	Mitigation ⁶	Exterior Level with Mitigation ⁷	Residual Impacts ⁸
			Existing ⁴	Project ⁵				
Downtown Portland								
TR1	Village at Lovejoy Fountain 2 nd & 3 rd floors	Traffic	65	67*	65 (FHWA)	Sound Insulation	67	Interior (0) Exterior (17)
TR1a	Village at Lovejoy Fountain 4 th & 5 th floors	Traffic	65	66*	65 (FHWA)	Sound Insulation	66	
TR2	American Plaza Ground & 2 nd floors	Traffic	65	68*	65 (FHWA)	Sound Insulation	68	
TR2a	American Plaza 3 rd , 4 th & 5 th floors	Traffic	65	67*	65 (FHWA)	Sound Insulation	67	
D1	Digital One/Mission Control	LRT/Bus	66	63*	62	Sound Insulation	63	Interior (0) Exterior (1)
East Bank Waterfront to SE Powell Boulevard Overpass								
No noise impacts in this area								
SE Powell Boulevard Overpass to Tacoma Station								
TR15	2-SFR on SE 17 th Ave. at SE Rhone St.	Traffic	65	67*	65 (FHWA)	Sound Insulation	67	Interior (0) Exterior (2)

Castro, Maria

From: Correspondence Group, City Clerk's Office
Sent: Tuesday, September 20, 2016 9:27 AM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: FW: Joyce-Collingwood Station Precinct Plan and Related Rezoning's

From: "s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"
Sent: Monday, September 19, 2016 5:47 PM
To: Correspondence Group, City Clerk's Office
Subject: Joyce-Collingwood Station Precinct Plan and Related Rezoning's

To Mayor and Councillors:

Further to the above noted subject and the meeting scheduled for September 20, 2016, I would urge council to be receptive to the concerns raised by residents in the Joyce Collingwood area and by our community residents association, JARA.

I would hope that Council has read and heard all the feedback from the community and appreciates that for residents who have deep, valid concerns, a response and acknowledgement from Council would be appreciated in the form of more consultation of higher quality, that is to say available and accessible to the multi-cultural profile of our community. Additionally, with a new Planner, Mr. Kelley, joining the team, I would expect some explanation of how this project fits into an overall plan for the area and the city, considering the many school closures proposed and the decision of Westbank to add more family housing of 3 bdrm apartments. Would it not be poor planning to give up several schools but then try to encourage sales and families to stay in Vancouver when they have no infrastructure nearby to warrant it? Does the city want the sales of these units to fail or become investment only stock? The strategy, if there is one, is not apparent and it seems like a classic case of different units within the same government being siloed and not working in concert.

In sum, Council has not addressed the problems nor presented solutions that allays our community's concerns with respect to height profiles and infrastructure for the increased density, existing traffic issues and the fact that proposed towers will have cars/parking, lack of additional green spaces for the influx of pets and kids (the "bump" zones do not count), narrow streets with a trucking route reducing safe walkability, the supposed "greenest city" living where community gardens should be accessible to citizens and local, small, family owned businesses can thrive and continue to be important social and cultural connections for immigrants.

There is no need to rush this rezoning and development. Careful planning and engaging residents is important for successful growth of this neighbourhood. If the city's goal is to support communities, families and sustainable livability in Vancouver, consideration of the impacts of this project and our feedback is essential.

Jackie Barone

"s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"