



Voice of the people

Sun. Mar 30 - 4:46 AM

Avert truck traffic

In reference to noise pollution, emission pollution and traffic tie-ups: One huge step in reducing these is to take the Halterm truck traffic off Hollis and Lower and Upper Water streets. This is an absolute must, as anyone who has to encounter this traffic every day will attest to.

The constant starting and stopping, engine-assisted brakes and steady noise from 75 to over 100 trucks a day is getting ridiculous. The solution? A road alongside the railway line through the cut to Highway 102 is the most feasible.

The Department of Tourism in Nova Scotia works very hard and spends a lot of money yearly to attract more cruise ships and tourists to the boardwalk area of the city, and the first thing walking tourists have to put up with is trying to cross the street between the steady flow of 18-wheelers. Not too brilliant. If the harbourfront wants to attract business, tourists and residents, then the traffic tie-ups, the noise and the exhaust emissions must come to a halt!

I am absolutely positive the truck drivers echo these concerns as well. It must be a nightmare negotiating the downtown traffic and they would relish a straight run to the city's edge.

I do not believe the noise of truck traffic going up the railroad line would cause any more noise for south-end residents than the trains, as the truck noise is loudest when the trucks have to stop and start, not when they're driving along unobstructed. However, the noise

generated is deafening for the 400 to 500 families who now live on Hollis, Lower and Upper Water, and north Barrington streets.

This has been studied and discussed to death and it's time the city and province took a big green step in this regard.

Dave Hayes, Halifax

Sunday, April 6

NIMBY at work

So, Dave Hayes (March 30 letter) is sick of the truck noise and pollution on Hollis Street and he wants to shift the problem to another neighbourhood.

Perhaps he should have realized that these trucks made noise and emitted pollution when he and his neighbours purchased their condominiums along Hollis Street. When we purchased our south-end home, we didn't "bargain" for a highway next to our home. Neither did anyone else in the neighbourhood. Mr. Hayes does not want the problem "in his backyard," so he wants it shifted to "someone else's backyard."

He claims that these trucks would make no more noise than the trains currently make, so south-end residents shouldn't mind the noise. Trains pass by only about five times a day. One hundred trucks a day would add significantly to the noise and pollution, and they make a more irritating type of noise.

He finally claims that a shift to the rail cut would be a "green step." I'm not sure how he can make this statement. Trucks still have to use fuel to move. Any fuel savings would be negligible.

There are more creative ideas that would solve his problem, instead of simply passing it on to someone else. He should move if he can't stand the noise.

Don Dougherty, Halifax

Idea off track

I feel like I'm living out a chapter of Alice in Wonderland every time I hear talk of building a transport truck/emergency vehicle highway through the heart of Halifax's south end. Has everyone lost their minds?

As one of the many, many people who live near the railway in downtown Halifax, I can assure you that the noise of the trains is minimal. The prospect of hundreds of transport trucks and emergency vehicles running through my backyard, however, is distressing.

Has anyone considered the exhaust fumes, the noise, the devaluation of real estate on the Halifax peninsula? The sheer cost, effort and chaos associated with building a major highway through downtown Halifax should be enough of a deterrent.

The trees, historic buildings, and neighbourhoods in Halifax's core must be preserved if we are going to continue to draw business, tourists and new residents to the city. These are the elements that make our city unique. A multi-lane highway slashing through its centre runs contrary to common sense, esthetic appeal and ultimately our goal to attract people to our beautiful province.

It's time to put some careful thought into our growth strategy before we lose the city we love.

Holly Dunn, Halifax

Mon. Apr 14 - 6:18 AM

Practical problems

Stephanie Sodero and Tim Crabtree (April 9 opinion article) are right on the mark with their criticism of the proposal to create a roadway through the CN Rail cut into downtown Halifax.

As the Port of Halifax grows with the advent of more Far East container traffic, we will need the second rail track to handle traffic at the south-end Halterm container port. Rail freight is three to six times more efficient in terms of fuel consumption and lower pollution. As reserves of oil soon begin to decline, efficient use of scarce reserves by shifting freight from truck to rail will be essential. The rail cut proposal does the opposite.

Commuter rail for passengers to downtown using a second track in the rail cut will be essential for the same rationale.

There are some practical problems facing the proposal to pave over the existing single track for joint rail-truck use. Rail lines need to be open to frequent inspection to ensure adequate drainage through the rock ballast and to replace wooden ties.

Electrical signal lines and switches must also be monitored and repaired, especially if salt is used to remove ice on the proposed roadway. Concerning the proposed single-lane road replacing the track already lifted by CN a few years ago, federal safety regulations require more separation of road traffic (especially that involving people) from heavy rail freight operations. This would require significant widening of the rail cut and heavy modification of the many street bridges over the track. The \$50-million cost estimates for this project do NOT include the major costs to do this.

John Pearce, Newport

COMMENTS

POST YOUR COMMENT

Billp wrote:

People who do not want the trucks go through the rail cut have to be deaf to trains because a train is a lot louder than a truck

mejp wrote:

The following extract from this source begs to differ on the issue of noise from freight trains versus diesel trucks:

http://www.dangerousdecibels.org/teachers_guide/DDB_TRG_Appendices_3.pdf
Appendix C Decibel Scale of Common Sounds EXAMPLE NOISE LEVELS IN DECIBELS
Noise Source -- Decibel Level -- Noise Effect
Busy urban street, diesel truck, food blender -- 90 -- Hearing damage (8 hrs)
Garbage disposal, dishwasher, average factory, freight train -- 80 -- Possible hearing damage (15 M)