

# north shore news

## LETTER: West Van simply losing its serenity

North Shore News

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### Dear Editor:

West Vancouver is losing its serenity and tranquility.

Sirens: For some strange reason, from early hours in the morning to very late at night, loud sirens of all kinds can be heard in West Vancouver - fire engines, police cars, ambulance sirens etc. fill the air at full blast creating the loudest possible noise. You can be walking on Ambleside beach early in the morning and you will hear sirens as far away as Dundarave driving east, or sirens on Taylor Way, and the same in Dundarave. Especially around city hall on 17th and Esquimalt it never stops. I met some visitors this summer from New York and they told me, "Gee you guys must have a lot of crime here, I thought New York City was bad but you guys are right up there with them." Perhaps the assumption is that as West Vancouver is composed of mainly seniors, who are "deaf in one ear" and possibly "can't hear out of the other one," the powers that be have decided to scare the bejesus out of everyone, just to be sure. Or maybe it's the testosterone of the various drivers. Whatever it is, it is very excessive and unnecessary, and someone should do something about it.

**Bicycles:** Argyle between 18th and 13th is the new bicycle speedway, as riders race to get to the new bike lanes behind Ambleside beach starting after 13th going east. If you are walking there watch out, your life is in danger. This used to be such a quiet spot to walk before the new bike way was built at Ambleside.

Pedestrian crossings are not honoured by cyclists, especially the one at the bottom of 17th at Bellevue. Crossing there when bicycles are on the move especially in groups, is hazardous to your health. I was walking there this summer with my very obviously pregnant daughter and we barely escaped with our lives intact. The ticket revenue from stationing a bylaw officer there would probably balance the West Vancouver municipal budget. Other crossings on Bellevue are equally dangerous due to cyclists.

Believe it or not, cyclists actually can be found riding on the seawall despite all the well posted signage. Perhaps signage should be 10 times the small signs that are obviously ignored.

**Dogs:** The west side of Ambleside beach around 8 a.m. in the morning is a good place if you are lonely and want to meet a dog. **Dogs roam all the areas of the beach** that they are not supposed to, and reminding the owners that they could get fined is totally ignored. **Bylaw officers haven't been seen here on this beach since the last millennium.** Once again, bigger signage and better enforcement is needed. I don't know if dogs carry ebola, but maybe that is what we need to get people's attention as E. coli doesn't seem to scare anyone.

**Float planes and helicopters:** Recently starting about 5:30 a.m. in the morning there is a constant stream of helicopters and float planes leaving downtown Vancouver probably heading up the Sunshine Coast, at 15 minute intervals for several hours. At this time of year it could be salmon fishers going to fish, but for all the noise it could also be a fleet of Russian attack helicopters. (I feel) sorry for all those who live in the most expensive buildings on the shoreline; they are right in the flight path of air traffic, as well as close to railway train traffic.

In the old days, this air traffic would be flying out in the middle of the ship channel, away from the West Vancouver shoreline, but no longer. Perhaps they save fuel by hugging the West Vancouver shoreline, but it's getting worse and they should be forced away from inhabited areas and out over the sea.

**Trains:** Well maybe it is my imagination but recently the railway freight trains passing through West Vancouver **seem to be about three times the length of what they were years ago,** and time-wise they move through slowly with lots of tank cars. What is in those cars is left to the imagination, and perhaps West Vancouver residents don't want to know, but hopefully it won't take another Lac-Megantic to wake us up. I assume if the pipelines to the coast are all blocked and never built, more oil and other mysterious cargo will go by rail, maybe even through West Vancouver.

**So, West Vancouver municipality - you might be building all kinds of new parks, gardens, amenities etc. but unless you fix the basic problems, some of which are enumerated here, it will all be in vain.**

If there are any other West Vancouver citizens who have noticed my observations noted here, they should communicate as well with the municipality.

**Trevor L. Gibbs**

**West Vancouver**

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