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July 27, 2020

Mayor and Council

Resort Municipality of Whistler

4325 Blackcomb Way

Whistler, BC V8E 0X5

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing with surprise and concern as a resident of Creekside for 30 year and a WHA resident for 19 years regarding the fact the Empire Club rezoning application for Alta Lake road was passed through 1st and 2nd reading by June 23rd of this year before the public had access to the environmental assessment and the traffic report.

I am concerned with the proposal for many reasons, a number of which I will outline here.

1. Environmental impact -There will be irreversible damage to the fragile ecosystems in this special little lake which has already met its maximum capacity. The RMOWs growth management plan aims to “protect Whistler’s natural environment.” This is not happening at this lake even now so how will it happen in the future?

2. Traffic- the traffic report is now public and I find it illogical that the day chosen to record the traffic flow was a WEDNESDAY IN EARLY OCTOBER?!

All the future traffic projections were based on these numbers which is very unrealistic.

The proposal claims that this will be a “walkable” community. This is misguided as it takes a minimum of 20 minutes to walk to Creekside at the best of times. Since there is no public transit servicing the area all residents will be forced to use private vehicles to drive to work,

school and services increasing the greenhouse gas emissions the current Mayor and council claim they will reduce by making “Big Moves” as stated in the July 9th Pique article.

We all value employee housing and as employees we value access to transit, services, schools and activities. This is not possible without driving from this location.

Why create new infrastructure for an isolated neighbourhood where services are unavailable when the community already has neighbourhoods that could be expanded that have infrastructure in place?

I know from the experience of bringing up a family as working parents in an ideal location in Whistler that we were forced to drive more than we would ideally have liked as transit did not get us everywhere we needed to go. We had access to bussing back and forth to the village or could walk to the mountain on weekends. This is unrealistic for the residents of this new development as there is not bussing available and it is much too far to walk with ski gear.

At a time when Whistler residents were socially isolating, trying to reimagine their own future and are concerned about the health and safety of themselves and their community, the Mayor and council passed this proposal through first and second readings.

I encourage you to Pause, Reflect and Reset as we all must do in order to meet the needs of the predicted new trends in tourism, housing and resort usage. Now is the time to slow down, reassess our priorities and look after each other and our delicate environment.

Creating new developments in Whistler does not make any sense at this time, especially ones that will have such a negative effect on the environment by removing forest, increasing traffic and density in an otherwise green space beside an overused fragile lake.

Sincerely ,
Susan Hamersley