

August 12, 2020

To: Mayor and Councillors

Resort Municipality of Whistler

Re: Rezoning Proposal No. RZ001157 5298 Alta Lake Road

Dear Mr. Mayor and Councillors:

I am once again writing you about the effects this new development will have on the traffic and safety for Nita Lake Drive, Alta Lake Road, and the intersection of Highway 99 and Alta Lake Road. I have now been able to read the Traffic Study that was done (finally released to me on July 15, 2020) and the documents received from my FOI request.

The Traffic Study and Report was prepared by Howes Technical Advantage Ltd for Empire Joint Venture. The terms of reference were approved by the RMOW with the study done at the intersection of Alta Lake Road and Nita Lake Drive and Alta Lake Road and Highway 99 with the traffic data collected on **October 9, 2019**.

The obvious concerns with this report are:

- The date that data was collected. A mid-weekday in the “shoulder season” would not appear to reflect the high peak traffic demands experienced in the winter and summer months, especially weekends.
- This data was then used to extrapolate the traffic conditions into the future which would not be an accurate projection.
- The report does not take into account the large undeveloped parcels on Alta Lake Road that will also affect the traffic at Alta Lake Road and Highway 99 which includes the Prism Lands, the proposed undeveloped parcel at the south property line of 5298 Alta Lake Road which is reserved for future WHA development, the large parcel of land owned by a company of which councillor Duane Jackson is a director and officer, PID 025-519-956 to the north of 5298 Alta Lake road and the possible re-development of the Tyrol Lodge lands.
- Estimations of the number of car trips used. This is a car dependent neighbourhood no matter how much Mayor Crompton insists it is a walkable neighbourhood. The reality is that increasing the number of car trips is not consistent with the new OCP and reducing carbon emissions. If you live on the west side, you are car dependent and it is a pain to get anywhere. The bus line was so scarcely used, it was canceled.
- The report does not take into account current and future bicycle and pedestrian traffic which council is promoting.
- The safety concerns of traffic along Nita Lake Drive expressed by owners of the Residences at Nita Lake and the Nita Lake Estates have not been addressed and the contractor for the traffic report has provided no comment about the increased traffic, or the impact on Nita Lake Drive in relation to the proposed development as well as the yet to be developed WHA parcel and there is no discussion about the safety risks.

Through my Freedom of Information request, emails (December 23, 2019) show that Jan Jensen, also expressed the same concerns as we have, that the data was collected “at a quiet time of year” (he was mistaken thinking that October 9, 2019 was a Friday) and that “summer and winter counts would likely show higher traffic volumes on Highway 99 as well as Alta Lake Road, travelling north to Alpine Meadows, then south on Alta Lake Road to access the highway below Creekside and Bayshores traffic lights.” Chelsey Roberts from the Engineering Department (in an email dated January 27, 2020) agreed with Mr. Jansen. It was decided that counts during winter and summer peak season would need to be included. On March 5, 2020, Roman Licko, Senior Development Planner wrote to the applicant and stated **“Staff have completed their review of the traffic study. Staff have similar concerns to those expressed by members of the public regarding the timing of the study during the shoulder season. Staff respectfully request a revised study during the peak season to reflect peak traffic in the affected area.”** This request was refused. So despite our continued objections to the timing of the study, the concerns with the continued increase in traffic on Alta Lake Road and the impact on Nita Lake Drive as well as the concerns expressed by RMOW staff, nothing was said about these concerns with the Traffic Study at the June 23, 2020 council meeting other than that Nita Lake Drive is built to municipal standards. Without being fully informed, council approved the first and second readings.

When I raised my concerns with the Planning Department, I was told I needed to write to you for answers. *Can you provide the answer as to why the recommendations of RMOW were not followed as far as getting better data during peak season and why traffic and safety concerns have not been addressed?* I would just like to see a correct process followed and the concerns of residents, especially in regard to safety be taken seriously and discussed in a transparent forum. Do we know enough from the results of the Traffic Study to really confirm that this new development will not have significant impact of the owners along Nita Lake Drive and Alta Lake Road into Rainbow Drive and those using those routes?

I have clearly documented in past submissions how Nita Lake Drive is a one way street in the winter. There will be significant increased traffic with 70-80 more cars (along with bicycles) using this road and there are very real safety concerns associated with that increased traffic. We have asked for the separate access by having the developer pave the original access to the Hillman Site from Alta Lake Road. The easements are in place and the road is there which crosses the parcel of land owned by a company of which councillor Duane Jackson is a director and officer

We all know how difficult it is right now to turn onto Highway 99 left or right at any point in time. Traffic is really bad in the winter and summer. A light would certainly help and certainly decrease any chance of a tragic traffic accident. However, this will not stop the cars avoiding the traffic by circumventing along Alta Lake Road. We all know that there is more bicycle traffic on Alta Lake Road, a narrow road in need of repair with non-existent shoulders. These problems are only going to grow with time. How can anyone not see that the traffic report is flawed and was done to support the developer's interests?

As for the new development, Mr. Crompton, I cannot understand how you can insist this is a walkable neighbourhood. Many of the WHA units as well as the Market Townhomes appear to be aimed towards families. There is no way a busy mom and/or dad is going to walk all the way to Creekside, to buy groceries for their family (especially in the winter), walk young kids back and forth to the ski hill or drag a child and a hockey bag to the Creekside bus to get to the ice rink. Sure if you happen to have time, a walk after dinner would be lovely but this will be a car dependent neighbourhood. This goes against the guidelines of the new OCP.

Mr. Jackson has indicated any safety or parking/road issues with our development is not the problem of the Empire Club and they should not be responsible for solving the problem. Mr. [REDACTED] agrees with him. Clearly the owners at 5151 Nita Lake Drive do not have enough parking. However, by approving this new development in this form, you are perpetuating the same problem, not enough parking that leads to street parking. The other issue appears to be insufficient or non-existent guest parking that will lead to street parking. Also, there is likely to be increased car traffic to access the park. Where will they park? Of course, more parking on site, only takes a larger chunk of the environmental footprint.

There is no reason for council to approve any rezoning bylaw that adversely affects the quality of living and the safety for any owners in any neighbourhood. This new development is simply too big for the location. Councillor Jen Ford at the June 23 council meeting described how the owners of employee housing at the Residences at Nita Lake described their homes as a "little piece of heaven". With the proposed development at 5298, the little piece of heaven will surely become a little piece of hell.

Sincerely,
Cheryl Green
5205 Jordan Lane