

Nareka Jacques

From: Laurie BurrIDGE [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, April 28, 2024 3:31 PM
To: Municipal Hall
Subject: Concerns Regarding Further Densification Issues, Lower Lochside and Mt. Newton Crossroad

Categories: Council Correspondence

You don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

To the Mayor and Council Members
Central Saanich

Dear Council Members:

My husband and I were 2 of many community members who attended the March 11 meeting of the Committee of the Whole as we are extremely concerned with the effects of the new construction on the traffic issues here in the lower Lochside Mt. Newton Crossroad area.

We already experience long wait times while waiting to turn left onto the Pat Bay Highway - often waiting 2 traffic light cycles before being able to turn, and this is at low traffic times. On occasion we also have had to wait on Lochside Drive before even being able to turn right on Mt. Newton due to congestion. I frequently walk in the area and my husband regularly cycles, and we have both experienced close calls as a result of impatient drivers.

I would like to share a recent experience with council. On a recent walk, on a Tuesday afternoon at about 3:30, as I approached Mt. Newton from Lochside Drive, the west bound traffic on Mt. Newton was lined up to the 4 way stop, and vehicles waiting at the 4 way stop were unable to proceed as the traffic was at a stand still. As I continued down Mt. Newton, I observed a line up of 5 cars waiting to exit the roadway from McDonalds, and cars waiting to exit both the Shell station and the Waddling Dog Inn. Of course none of those vehicles were able to exit due to the traffic lineup. I continued my walk along Mt. Newton Crossroad, and by the time I reached the pedestrian walkway at the highway, I observed that traffic was still backed up all the way to Lochside Drive and beyond. I took photos of the congestion at both ends, and the timestamps showed about 6 minutes between photos. I am attaching these photos for council's reference, although I have shared them with the Stakeholders Committee and they have also be forwarded to you via their communication.

During my walk, I observed first hand two VERY CLOSE CALLS with the traffic. The first car at the McDonalds road was signalling to turn left, so this meant an extremely long wait for everyone behind that car. The truck at the back of the lineup obviously was impatient, and pulled out into the southbound (oncoming traffic lane), and drove very rapidly along this lane to the front of the lineup and without pausing, turned right directly in front of the car at the front of the line who was waiting to turn left. Had anyone been trying to turn only this road from Mt. Newton, they would have either had to risk a head on collision or hopefully notice the oncoming truck and stop prior to turning. In addition, had the vehicle at the stop sign seen an opportunity to proceed with their turn they would have collided with the "impatient truck".

Moment later, the vehicle at the front of the "McDonalds" lineup decided to push their way into the lineup of traffic heading west, and despite there being no opening at all between cars, simply drove quickly in between cars as they began to move, and came within literally an inch or two of striking both vehicles.

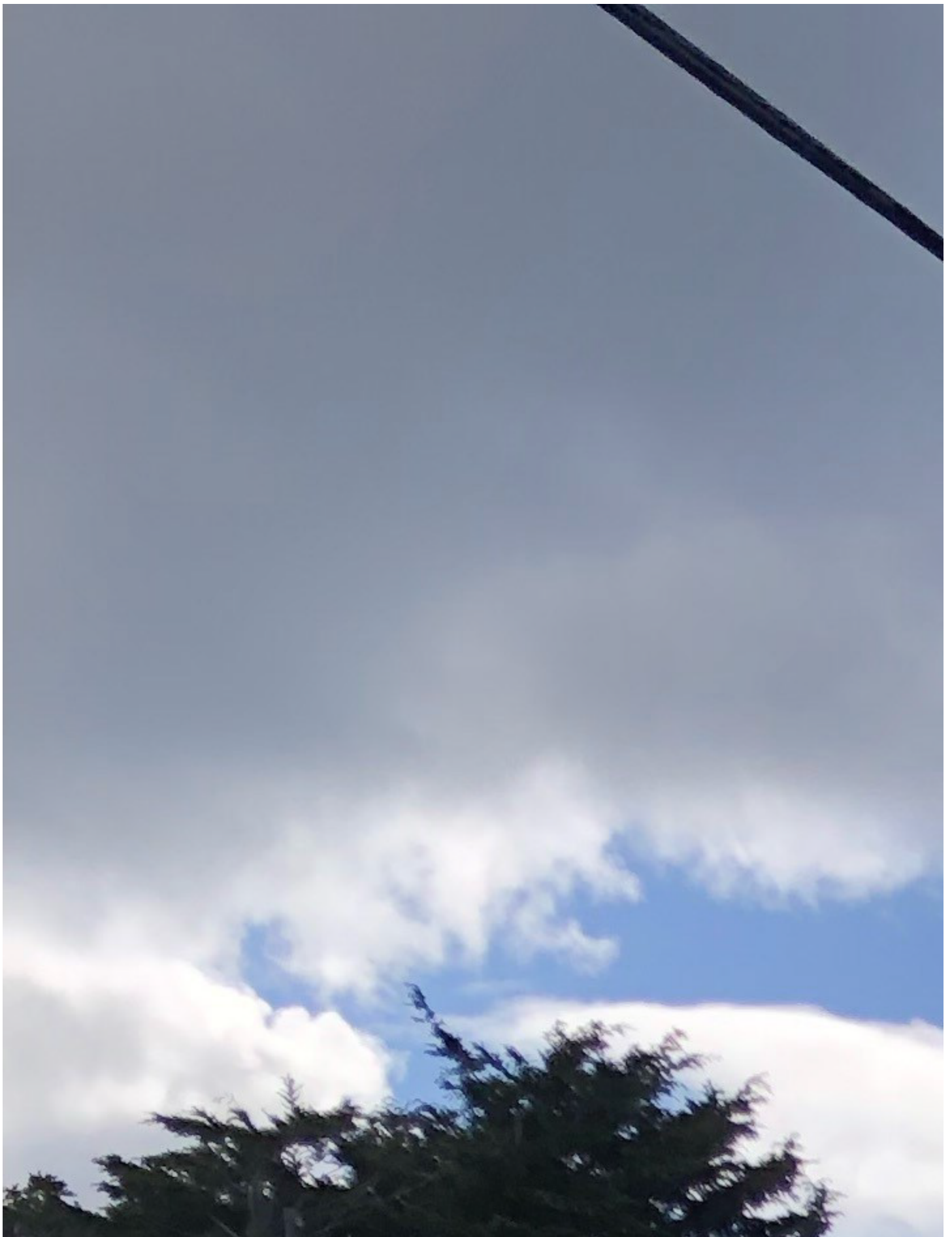
These incidents happened within possibly 90 seconds of one another as I walked, so it is very possible that other near misses also happened during that single traffic jam.

This, as noted, was at 3:30 on a mid-week afternoon. Not during morning rush hour when many people would be commuting into the Victoria area for work, not on a Friday afternoon when high numbers of people are trying to leave for the weekend. This is occurring BEFORE the current 300 or so units which are in progress have even been completed. When the 245 units with Starlight and the 50 current units being built by Hackett and Mann are completed, there is potential for upwards of 300 more vehicles being added to this singular exit from our area (unless we wish to backtrack all the way to the airport exit). There are almost no employment opportunities in the immediate vicinity, which means people must commute, and again, very few jobs are within walking or even cycling distance, except for a hearty few individuals. As many families have a second vehicle due to conflicting work/school schedules, there is the potential for far more than 300 new vehicles using these limited roadways. Bus transportation is very limited - one express bus per hour from the new stops on the Pat Bay Highway at Mt. Newton. I use this bus on occasion and already, at non peak hours, there is usually standing room only at our stop. This will not be a viable option as it stands for commuters. Parking during the daytime when construction is taking place is already non-existent for resident's visitors or even trades people who need to do work on our existing Arbutus condo. It is highly unlikely that there are 300+ vehicles which belong to the workers. (potential new vehicles who will likely not wish to - or be able to afford to pay for parking at the new Starlight development)

We would plead with council to please wait until the new units currently under construction are completed and fully occupied, and then perform traffic studies for several months to understand the full impact of the additional traffic in the area, prior to even considering approving further construction in this very limited area. Once further official studies have been completed, action must be taken to mitigate the serious traffic, pedestrian and cyclist issues which are already obvious, before allowing further densification in this area. In a perfect world, it would be ideal if a council member would live in one of the new suites for a number of months in order to experience first hand what the current and new community will be dealing with before making further decisions.

Thank you so much for your time in considering our letter and our plea.

Sincerely,
Laurie Dawn and Laurie Dwight BurrIDGE
The Arbutus
Hackett Crescent





Sent from my iPad

"The information contained in this transmission may contain privileged and confidential information of the District of Central Saanich. It is intended for review only by the person(s) named above. Dissemination, distribution or duplication of this communication is strictly prohibited by all recipients unless expressly authorized otherwise. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender by reply email and destroy all copies of the original message. Thank you."