

Summary of Citizens' Sound Wall Committee (CSWC) Meeting

BEACONSFIELD SOUND WALL MEETING September 3rd, 2015
Citizens Sound Wall Committee (CSWC),
Ministry of Transport (MTQ), City of Beaconsfield

MEETING OBJECTIVE

- Request the MTQ and the City of Beaconsfield to collaborate in finding an effective and expedient solution to the noise pollution problem in Beaconsfield along the south side of autoroute 20.

HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE ISSUES

- Beaconsfield residents have been subjected daily to noise levels above the MTQ's action level of 65 dBA Leq(1) for the last 30 years.
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has documented seven categories of adverse health effects of noise pollution on humans(2).
 - Hearing Impairment
 - Interference with Spoken Communication
 - Sleep Disturbances
 - Cardiovascular Disturbances
 - Disturbances in Mental Health
 - Impaired Task Performance
 - Negative Social Behaviour and Annoyance Reactions
- Beaconsfield residents are urging the provincial and municipal governments to protect them from these adverse effects of road noise. The ever increasing negative effects of noise pollution from autoroute 20 over the past 30 years are taking a toll on its residents.

QUÉBEC ENVIRONMENT QUALITY ACT

- (see in particular R.S.Q., c. Q-2, X s.94 pertaining to noise pollution)
- Every person has the right to a healthy environment and to its protection from contaminants of pollutants which are likely to affect a person's life and well-being.
- **NOTE: The MTQ and the City of Beaconsfield have never taken any action to mitigate excessive levels of traffic noise affecting our health, well-being and quality of life.**

GOVERNMENT OF QUÉBEC "SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN 2009 – 2015"

- a) "HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE": People, human health and improved quality of life are at the centre of sustainable development concerns. People are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature;
- i) PREVENTION: In the presence of a known risk, preventive, mitigating and corrective actions **must** be taken, with priority given to actions at the source;

MTQ 1986/87 SOUND SURVEY

- The MTQ issued a sound survey(3) in 1986/87 making recommendations to the City of Beaconsfield to mitigate noise pollution from autoroute 20. **No action taken.**

MTQ SOUND SURVEY OCTOBER, 2010

- The release of the MTQ's October 2010 comprehensive report "Étude de pollution sonore"(5) indicates at least 726 homes along Beaufort Drive in Beaconsfield are subjected to traffic noise levels over 55 dBA Leq, and that for 227 homes, the noise level is over the acceptable level of 65 dBA Leq. **Yet no action taken.**

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- According to the Government of Québec, when sound levels are over 65 dBA Leq mitigating steps **MUST** be taken. The report recommends sound walls 4½ metres high for 4,887 metres in Beaconsfield along the south side of autoroute 20 between Pointe Claire and Baie d'Urfé. **Yet no action taken.**

1998 WOODLAND UNDERPASS

- No environmental impact study was carried out to determine the effects to Beaconsfield residents of the MTQ's planned changes **before** the Woodland Avenue underpass was built.
- Changes included the **removal of traffic lights**, an **increased speed limit** (70 km/h \diamond 100 km/h), **raised** and **widened roadbed**.
- As a consequence of MTQ changes, traffic noise levels in the backyards at 427 – 439 Beaurepaire Drive in Beaconsfield, are as much as **10 TIMES HIGHER** than the MTQ's 65 dBA Leq recommended level for mitigating action, yet **no action taken**.
- **NOTE:** When the 1988 Cartier underpass was built a sound wall was installed as part of the project; contrary to the building of the Woodland underpass.

MTQ 1994 POLITIQUE SUR LE BRUIT ROUTIER

- The MTQ published the politique(6) to improve quality of life for citizens living along autoroutes in two ways:
 - **Integrated planned approach:** when road projects are planned, the environment is assessed and sound abatement measures are implemented, OR
 - **Corrective approach:** corrective actions are taken to reduce noise levels near existing road infrastructures.
 - **No action taken** when the Woodland Avenue underpass was built.
- The politique also constitutes an acknowledgment of the MTQ's responsibilities over environmental matters, and clarifies the rules on which it bases its interventions. **No action taken** when the Woodland Avenue underpass was built.

HISTORY OF URBAN BLVD. 2-20, BEACONSFIELD

- **The average year of construction for the 63 homes backing onto autoroute 20 on Beaurepaire Drive in Beaconsfield is 1968. This is 30 years BEFORE the MTQ repurposed the 2-20 from an urban boulevard to a highway autoroute including increasing the speed limit.**
- **The average year of construction for 245 homes in a 340 metre wide band south of autoroute 20 in Beaconsfield, between St. Charles and Pointe Claire is 1957(7).**

CSWC RECOMMENDATIONS

- The CSWC is urging the MTQ and the City of Beaconsfield:
 - To work collaboratively to implement an effective and expedient solution to the noise pollution problem created by autoroute 20 traffic so the surrounding area is restored to a healthy environment for all Beaconsfield residents.
 - To develop and adopt an action plan for the rapid installation of effective sound walls, with priority given to east of Woodland Avenue on the south side of autoroute 20, that should have been installed when the MTQ built the Woodland Underpass, and to the east of St. Charles Blvd.
 - To work together to explore different types of sound wall structures, so that the one retained, is cost and performance effective.

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- The CSWC is requesting as an interim measure that the MTQ immediately reduce the speed limit on autoroute 20 from 100 km/h to 70 km/h, and install photo radar to help enforce it. This temporary measure would alleviate some of the noise pollution and improve road safety.

NOTE: Autoroute 20 on the West Island is the only thoroughfare on the Island of Montreal that traverses residential neighborhoods with a maximum speed of 100 km/h.

- A reduction in the noise pollution to an acceptable level would also benefit elementary and high school students and staff, CPE children and staff, municipal employees, cyclists, walkers, visitors, users of the parks, playgrounds and swimming pool in the vicinity of Beaurepaire Drive.
- We are asking both governments to respect their moral and legal obligations towards protecting the health of their citizens.

QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD

- When will the MTQ and the City of Beaconsfield work in collaboration to develop an action plan to mitigate the noise pollution in an effective and expedient manner?
- As an interim measure, when will the MTQ reduce the speed limit on autoroute 20?
- Does the MTQ and the City of Beaconsfield recognize that the level of noise pollution from autoroute 20 is a significant risk to public health?

NEXT STEPS...

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Références

1. http://www2.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca/dynamicSearch/telecharge.php?type=3&file=/S_2_1/S2_1R13_A.HTM DIVISION XV
2. Summary of Adverse Health Effects of Noise Pollution, prepared by Louis Hagler, MD, Based on the World Health Organization Guideline for Community Noise, 1999 (see: <http://www.who.int/docstore/peh/noise/guidelines2.html> for complete report)
3. Étude de la pollution sonore de l'autoroute 20 sur les aires résidentielles situées du côté sud dans une bande de 300 mètres, Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère des Transports, Service de l'Environnement, décembre 1986, révisé janvier 1987
4. Sound Level Survey of Residences from 41 to 79 Beaurepaire Drive, Beaconsfield, Quebec, May 17 to 19, 2010, Cameron W. Sherry, Eng.
5. Autoroute 20 Ville de Beaconsfield, Étude de la pollution sonore, Services des inventaires et du Plan Direction de l'Île-de-Montréal, Octobre 2010
6. Politique sur le bruit routier, Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère des Transports, Mars 1998
7. <http://evalweb.ville.montreal.qc.ca>