

# BID TO SILENCE HORNS A LENGTHY ENDEAVOUR

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Don's quality of life better. He suffered from Parkinson's and succumbed to the disease this past March.

"He was having difficulties sleeping, and just when he would get to sleep, the horns would wake him up," said Gordon.

As Don's illness progressed, Gordon said she was also sleeping poorly as she was up several times during the night with him. During the fleeting moments that she could close her eyes, a freight train would come through.

"At 1:55 in the morning, there would be one horn blast, followed by eight other long, loud ones from a freight train," she said. "I thought, why would you do that? There was one train where I counted 16 blasts of the horn. They're through the crossing and

they're still honking."

Worried about the detrimental health effects that lack of sleep would have on Don, herself and others in the neighbourhood, Gordon began strongly pursuing local elected officials and regional staff in an effort to initiate the lengthy whistle cessation process.

Now that it's finally almost a reality, she's cautiously optimistic.

"Because it's gone on for so long, I almost have to see it to believe it; see that final step where it's a done deal," she said. "It's been a very, very long, frustrating road for sure, but I had no intention of giving up. I've been waiting a long time for regional council to have this meeting. I'm happy, as this was a big step."

A staff report on the topic from Halton Public



Melanie Hennessey/Metroland

Susan Gordon, pictured with late husband Don, has been fighting for silence at the train crossing for years.

Works commissioner Andrew Farr explains that both the region and MetroLinx hired separate consultants to conduct detailed safety assessments at the Trafalgar Road crossing to determine if it's eligible for a train whistle exemption.

Both studies concluded that this location is "suitable for whistle cessation,"

he said.

During the regional council meeting, Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette thanked staff for seeing the lengthy process through.

"This has been a struggle for the neighbourhood over the last number of years," he said. "It's good to see there's a light at the



Graham Paine/Metroland

end of the tunnel on this."

He noted that the issues around this crossing aren't unusual, with other communities, like Acton and Milton, having similar problems with train noise.

Halton Hills Coun. Clark Somerville added that this situation isn't one where new residents moved in around the

crossing and complained about the nearby train track.

"This is one where the residents have been there for a long time, they noticed a change in whistling patterns and they brought it to us," he said.

While unfortunately Don didn't live to hear the trains go quiet, Gordon says she knows he would be pleased that all of her time and effort paid off.

"I think he was very proud of me for persevering," she said.

The whistle cessation is considered an interim measure as the crossing is slated for construction starting in 2024, when a railway overpass/road underpass will be built.

*STORY BEHIND THE STORY: We've been following the lengthy whistle cessation process at this train crossing since 2019 and wanted to let residents know about the impending horn prohibition.*

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