

BIKEWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

NOTES

October 19, 2005

PRESENT: Councillor Sheila Fougere, Chair
Councillor Patrick Murphy
Ms. Laena Garrison
Mr. Ward Skinner
Mr. Steve Lane
Mr. Ken LeMoine
Ms. Candace Stevenson

ABSENT: Mr. John Smith (regrets)
Councillor Stephen D. Adams
Mr. Gerard Walsh
Mr. Ken LeMoine
Ms. Cheryl Bidgood

**STAFF
AND OTHERS:** Ms. Roxane MacInnis, Planner II, Regional Planning
Mr. Ken Reashor, Manager, Traffic Authority
Ms. Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. in the Media Room, 1st Floor, City Hall **without quorum**.

Councillor Fougere introduced the following members of the Halifax Regional Police that were in attendance: Sargent Mike Spearns, Constable Michael O'Sullivan, Constable Kris Barr and Constable Joe Fougere. Councillor Fougere also introduced Mr. Paul Carey, Operations Manager, Halifax-Dartmouth Bridge Commission, who was attending as an observer at the request of Ms. Cheryl Bidgood.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - April 20, 2005 (notes), June 8, 2005, and August 31, 2005 (notes).

Deferred until quorum is present.

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

The agenda, as distributed, was agreed upon by the Committee.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

4.1 Status Sheet Items - none

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS - None

Councillor Murphy joined the meeting at 12:11 p.m.

6. REPORTS (verbal updates)

6.1 Bike Week Sub-Committee

! A Proposed Budget for HRM Bike Week 2006 was distributed to Committee members.

Mr. Ward Skinner provided an overview of the Proposed Budget. He advised that planning for the June 2006 event will be starting next week. As indicated in the proposed budget, advertising is most significant budget cost of the event. HRM will be providing in kind assistance such as design and production of pamphlets and posters and set up costs. The sub-committee will be working to attract sponsors to offset costs of the event.

Ms. Garrison advised that TRAX is applying for funding for a “street opening” bicycle promotion event. She proposed that TRAX and the Bike Week Sub-Committee could work together to incorporate the street opening as part of the Bike Week event.

Councillor Fougere advised that she will request feedback on the budget from Heritage and Culture, who prepare budgets for special events.

Sargent Mike Spears informed the Committee of the efforts by the Halifax Regional Police to promote motorcycle and bicycle awareness. Constable Spears informed the Committee of Operation Headway, dealing with brain injury prevention through the use of helmets. The HR Police have also been working with local grade schools and universities to promote bike safety and educate about Nova Scotia’s laws regarding cycling.

Mr. Steve Lane joined the meeting at 12:25 p.m.

7. NEW BUSINESS / ADDED ITEMS

7.1 New Business

7.1.1 Quinpool Road and Vernon Street Traffic Control - Ryan Hall

! A copy of Mr. Ryan Hall’s presentation was before the Committee

Mr. Ryan Hall presented on the Quinpool Road and Vernon Street traffic control to the Committee. Mr. Hall advised that he conducted a visual survey of the Quinpool Road and Vernon Street intersection in the summer of 2005, noting that approximately 260 bicycles drove through the intersection during an eleven hour time span. He advised that 93% of cyclists observed during this time frame used the intersection illegally and, in particular, that cyclists are not obeying the traffic signs. Mr. Hall discussed various bike plans from other countries and how these countries are promoting and supporting cycling. He further outlined options for the Quinpool/Vernon intersection to allow cyclists to ride through the intersection safely and legally.

Mr. Ken Reashor advised that HRM can only select from signs already approved by Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Public Works and of the process to have new signs adopted by TPW.

Councillor Fougere advised the Committee that part of the of the development agreement for Killam Properties Quingate Place included a clause that traffic cannot drive straight through the Quinpool intersection from Vernon Street.

Ms. Roxane MacInnis suggested that to create consistency between provinces, a recommendation should go forward for standard bicycle signage throughout the country.

The Committee discussed the use of coloured bike lanes such as those used in Brisbane, Australia, as shown in Mr. Hall's presentation, during which the following points were noted:

- C Signage is not always noticed by motorists, however, the use of a coloured bike lane would increase visibility of the bike lanes.
- C To paint and maintain the bike lanes would be costly.
- C The paint used on the bike lanes indicated in Mr. Hall's report is known to be very slippery to cyclists, motorists and pedestrians. Tinted asphalt is also an option for indicating bike lanes, however, it is very expensive.

The Committee thanked Mr. Hall for his presentation.

7.1.2 Cyclists vs. Pedestrians on Sidewalks

- C An email from a citizen regarding cyclists vs. pedestrians on sidewalks dated September 8, 2005 was before the Committee.
- C Sargent Spears distributed an HRM Partners in Policing Traffic Safety pamphlet to Committee members.

Councillor Fougere advised she has been receiving feedback from pedestrians regarding cyclists on sidewalks. Councillor Fougere indicated that care must be taken to ensure cycling is safe for both the cyclist and the pedestrian, yet still encourage cycling. She suggested amendments need to be made to the *Motor Vehicle Act* to further incorporate cycling and that rules for cyclists must be made more clear for the purpose of public education.

Further discussion followed regarding cycling on sidewalks and the promotion of bicycle safety, during which the following points were raised:

- C Educational information regarding bicycle safety could be provided to retailers to be distributed to customers upon purchase of a bicycle and/or accessories.
- C Retailers could possibly sell packages including bicycle safety accessories that are required under the *Motor Vehicle Act*, such as a helmet, bell and light.
- C HR Police (Bicycle Patrol) should communicate to the Traffic Authority areas where officers note that cyclists are driving on the sidewalks for safety reasons, so the Traffic Authority are aware of areas that need to be made safer for cyclists.
- C Sidewalks cannot be used for shared use path-ways, as this contravenes the *Motor Vehicle Act*.
- C Alternate routes should be promoted to cyclists on low traffic streets, as opposed to high-traffic streets. Low traffic bike routes are indicated on the Bikeways Map.

- C A potential partnership with the Department of National Defence is being considered to install multi-use pathways on and near military property, particularly along Barrington Street near the MacDonald Bridge.
- C Cyclists on sidewalks should be fined more often by the Police, where appropriate, to discourage cycling on sidewalks.
- C As a part of public education, public service announcements using diagrams could be published in newspapers regarding such bicycle safety issues as how to safely and legally use the Armdale Rotary by bike. Sponsorship opportunities with the corporate community for such PSA's could be considered.

Mr. Reashor advised that the Active Transportation Plan identifies problem areas for cyclists. Mr. Reashor confirmed that Transportation and Public Works are aware of the issues discussed at this meeting, and are actively researching solutions for these problems. Mr. Reashor advised that Transportation and Public Works meets monthly with HR Police and the RCMP to discuss traffic issues, including bicycle safety issues. A safety campaign is being set up with the Traffic Authority regarding pedestrian and cyclist safety.

Ms. MacInnis informed the Committee that she is also a member of the Vulnerable Road Users committee, along with an HR Police representative, an Ecology Action Centre rep, a Traffic Authority rep, a Bicycle Nova Scotia rep, among other cross representation. This Committee is a sub-Committee of the Road Safety Advisory Committee, and was formed by TPW, the Department of Justice and Service Nova Scotia. Ms. MacInnis advised that the committee discusses many of the same issues as the Bikeways Advisory Committee but from a provincial perspective.

Sargent Spears left the meeting at 12:45 p.m. Constable Kris Barr and Constable Joe Fougere left the meeting at 12:56 p.m. The Committee thanked the officers for attending the meeting.

7.1.3 License Cyclists

- C An information package including a copy of the City of Halifax Ordinance No. 15 - Bicycle Licensing, with amendments, was before the Committee.

The Committee discussed the history of Ordinance No. 15, including course requirements, costs, procedures and fines, and how the By-Law would be applied to HRM's current legislation. The following was noted during the discussion:

- C The Ordinance was passed in 1938, amended several times, and repealed in 1980 because "it is no longer economic and represents an administrative cost to the City".
- C The By-Law would be enforced by By-Law Enforcement, a division of Community Projects under Environmental Management Services.

- C Re-enacting the By-Law would provide education to cyclists and would be a minor revenue source for HRM, however this minor revenue would not cover the administrative costs and other costs to HRM associated with the program.
- C Some states in the United States have implemented bicycle licensing.
- C HR Police already have a Bicycle Registry program for the return of stolen bikes and bicycle safety education programs.
- C The costs to citizens involved with fees, plates, education and logistics may discourage cycling, which would be contrary to HRM's Active Transportation Plan.

After discussion and debate of the issue, the Committee agreed that it would not go forward with a recommendation to Council for the implementation of a bicycle licensing program.

7.1.4 Proposed report card of HRM's Bikeways Advisory Committee or TDM website

- C Councillor Fougere distributed to Committee members a copy of the Bikeways Advisory Committee Annual Report previously presented to Council (this report can be found on the BAC website)

Councillor Fougere advised that as part of the Committee's mandate, an annual report on the Bikeways Advisory Committee is presented to Council and that the 2005 report will be available on the website shortly. Ms. MacInnis noted that further information on HRM's cycling related projects is available on HRM's cycling website at www.halifax.ca/cycling.

Ms. Garrison informed the Committee that the Ecology Action Centre has received a number of phone calls from cyclists concerned about bicycle infrastructure in HRM. Ms. Garrison suggested that a report card of the Committee would ensure transparency and responsibility to the public. It would also serve to educate the public about the processes and costs involved with implementing bicycle infrastructure in HRM. Ms. Garrison suggested that the report card could include separate columns for the project, a grade, and details of the progress of projects. The report card could be posted on the HRM and TRAX websites.

Ms. MacInnis commented that such a task would require an extensive time commitment since the progress of projects are constantly changing. She also pointed out that in order to make the best use of HRM's money, they try to "piggy-back" bikeways projects with other Transportation and Public Works projects, as they arise. Ms. Garrison offered to compile the report card, with the aid of a student volunteer, and will aim to make the report readable to the average citizen. Mr. Skinner advised that he has an updated report of bikeways projects from last year and can provide this to Ms. Garrison. Mr. Reashor added that Transportation and Public Works will provide information and support for Ms. Garrison to complete this project.

The Committee briefly discussed the legislative process involved with the posting of minutes to the website only after they are approved by the Committee, which can only be done when a quorum is present.

7.1.5 Proposed 30% surtax on imported bicycles

The Committee discussed the issue of a proposed Federal 30% surtax on imported bicycles. Councillor Fougere suggested, that if a quorum is reached at the next meeting of the Bikeways Advisory Committee, the Committee make a motion recommending to Council to send a letter to the Federal Government in opposition to the proposed surtax on imported bicycles. This item will be added to the agenda for the November 2005 meeting.

7.1.6 Membership

7.1.6.1 Automobile Representative

The Committee discussed this vacant position and the difficulties encountered in trying to fill the position since it was created over one year ago. Councillor Fougere recommended that in the new year, the Committee make a motion to Council to have this position removed and replaced with a member at large. This item will be added to the agenda in the new year.

Ms. Candace Stevenson left the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

7.2 Added Items

Mr. Reashor updated the Committee on the status of hiring a TDM Coordinator, advising that they hope to have a candidate selected by the beginning of November.

Councillor Fougere advised that capital budget recommendations will be discussed at the next meeting.

Ms. MacInnis advised that there will also be a presentation of the draft network plan for the Active Transportation Plan at next meeting, as well as a presentation of options for the Bikeway Connection to the Angus L. MacDonald Bridge.

The Committee discussed issues regarding reaching a quorum. It was requested that the Legislative Assistant poll Committee members regarding whether members would prefer to hold meetings at 4:30 p.m. as opposed to 12:00 p.m. It was also requested that the Legislative Assistant look into whether the Committee could arrange for conference calls meetings for Committee members that cannot attend meetings in person. Councillor Fougere reiterated that if members are not able to attend a meeting, to please contact the Legislative Assistant with regrets, in order to make the best use of Committee members' time.

Ms. Garrison distributed an article entitled "Wheels In Motion" from the October 20, 2005 edition of The Coast, for the review of the Committee.

Ms. Garrison advised the Committee that there will be a “train-the-trainer” session on injury prevention in the near future. She will forward details of the session to Committee members as they come available.

Ms. Garrison also advised that ADAPT (Association of Doctors for the Advancement of Physically Active Transportation) is meeting on the corner of Summer Street and University Avenue in Halifax at 7:30 a.m. on Monday, October 24, 2005 for a bike ride to promote the relationship between transportation habits and health. She extended an invitation to Committee members to participate in the bike ride.

Ms. Garrison further advised that she has had an offer from Dalhousie School of Planning to do a bikeways design project. She will email the draft proposal to Committee members for their feedback.

Mr. Paul Carey provided the Committee with copies of the Halifax Dartmouth Bridge Commission Bike Path and Pedestrian Study on the Angus L. MacDonald Bridge along with copies of the Bicycle Path & Pedestrian Walkway Survey Results (July 2000 - September 2005). Mr. Carey clarified that surveys are undertaken in July and September of each year. The survey is conducted over a 24 hour period in both directions on the bridge. The next survey will include helmet counts.

7.2.1 Bike Map Distribution

This item was not addressed.

8. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meetings of the Bikeways Advisory Committee are tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, November 16, 2005 and Wednesday, December 14, 2005.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Jennifer Weagle
Legislative Assistant