

HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

November 18, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor Linda Mosher, Chair
Councillor Jennifer Watts
Councillor David Hendsbee
Mr. Friedeman Brauer
Ms. Laena Garrison
Ms. Gai Thomas
Mr. Michael Beiswanger
Mr. Walter Regan
Ms. Lauralee Sim
Mr. Tom Boyd
Ms. Elizabeth Pugh

REGRETS: Mr. Ted Scrutton
Mr. Ibrahim Orengo

STAFF: Ms. Hanita Koblents,
Ms. Sherrill Murphy, Deputy Clerk
Ms. Pam Lovelace, Legislative Support

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	CALL TO ORDER.....	3
2.	COMMITTEE UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS	3
3.	APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 21, 2010.....	4
4.	APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS	5
5.	BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – October 21, 2010	<u>5</u>
5.1	Subcommittee Updates	
5.1.1	Bike Week 2011.....	5
5.1.2	Safety/Education	6
6.	CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS	6
7.	CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS	6
7.1	Correspondence	6
7.2	Petitions.....	6
7.3	Presentations.....	6
7.3.1	Cross Town Connector Proposal - Ms. Hanita Koblents, Active Transportation Coordinator	6
8.	REPORTS	7
9.	ADDED ITEMS	7
9.1	Chain of Lakes Trail Association (COLTA) Update.....	7
9.2	Update re: Meeting with Minister Estabrooks- Bikelanes.....	8
9.3	Staff Update	9
10.	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	9
11.	NEXT MEETING DATE - December 16, 2010	9
12.	ADJOURNMENT	9

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:08pm at Bloomfield Centre, 2786 Agricola Street, Halifax.

New member Elizabeth Pugh from Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal, Province of Nova Scotia was introduced to the Committee.

2. COMMITTEE UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Walter Regan invited Committee members to the Halifax Trails Association's (HRTA) Holiday Party and Annual Shortbread Contest. HRM Councillors will judge the best shortbread. The event will take place at the Fairbanks Centre, 54 Locks Road, Dartmouth, Monday December 13, 2010, 5:00pm – 7:30pm. RSVP by December 9, 2010 to 490-1393.

Mr. Regan asked whether the Active Transportation Review will be part of the Five-Year Regional Plan Review in 2011. Councillor Hendsbee noted that he will check on the review process and get back to the Committee with updates.

Laena Garrison, Ecology Action Centre, came and spoke at the November meeting of HRTA about Active Transportation. Mr. Regan reported on trails damage on the Sackville River Trail due to recent rain storms. HRTA are sending a member of HRTA (John Hawkins) to the National Meeting Roundtable on A/T in Alberta.

Mr. Regan advised that Mr. Ken Lee, Health Prevention and Promotion (HPP), is updating all trails information on the provincial HPP internet site. Mr. Regan suggested Committee members should contact Mr. Lee to update or add information.

HRTA invited all members of Active Transportation Committee to attend a workshop update on the Cornwallis Workshop held in Cornwallis in October 2010.

Councillor Watts reported that she attended the Sustainable Transportation Task Force at Dalhousie. A meeting will take place within two weeks, on December 1st and a follow up meeting is scheduled for mid-December. A public meeting is being organized. For more information, contact Mark Nemmer .

Ms. Laena Garrison announced a fun cycling event organized by the Halifax Cycling Coalition and Dalhousie Bike Centre taking place Friday, November 19. There will be a bike movie screening at Killam Library, Dalhousie University. Admission is \$5 non-members, \$3 members.

Ms. Garrison invited Committee members to attend the Ecology Action Centre Annual Holiday Party on Thursday, December 2, from 4:00pm – 7:00pm at the Centre, 2705 Fern Lane, Halifax.

Ms. Garrison requested further information on the One Metre Rule that was recently passed by the provincial legislature. Ms. Elizabeth Pugh agreed to provide an update to the Committee later in the meeting during the discussion on the meeting with Minister Estabrooks.

Ms. Gai Thomas recommended that the Community show appreciation in some way for all the hard work that went into upgrading the cross walks. She suggests that citizens should show appreciation for safety. The Chair noted that it is not the place of the Committee to organize community groups to show appreciation; however, the community is encouraged to organize an event of thanks.

Roundtable introductions were made.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 21, 2010

Ms. Thomas requested a change on page 5, in paragraph one, sentence one, from 'would' to 'could'; and in paragraph two, sentence two from 'three-week' to 'three-wheel'.

MOVED by Ms. Thomas, seconded by Councillor Watts, that the minutes of October 21, 2011, as amended, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Watts requested that Ms. Allison MacDonald of HHB be asked to present to the Committee regarding the Halifax Harbour Bridges five-year plan that involves replacing the entire deck of the MacDonald bridge. The bridge work could impact the bicycling and pedestrian lane.

MOVED BY Councillor Watts, seconded by Mr. Regan, that Ms. MacDonald of HHB be asked to provide an update to the Committee. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Hendsbee agreed to take the request back to Ms. MacDonald.

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

Additions:

- 9.1 Chain of Lakes Trail Association (COLTA) Update – Chair, Councillor Mosher
- 9.2 Update re: Meeting with Minister Estabrooks – Bikelanes – Chair, Councillor Mosher
- 9.3 Staff Update

MOVED by Ms. Thomas, seconded by Councillor Watts, that the Order of Business, as amended, be approved. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF MINUTES – October 21, 2010

5.1 Sub-Committee Updates

5.1.1 Bike Week 2011

Ms. Thomas reported on her research into the Three-Wheel Bicycle Program and the possibility of including the use of 3-wheeled bikes during Bike Week 2011. Her report follows:

A total of six retail shops listed in HRM Yellow pages were contacted to inquire as to availability of 3-wheeled bicycles. None of the shops kept these bikes in stock but all could order them through their distributors. These bicycles are not purchased very often in HRM (less than 5/year) and their styles and costs vary from \$500-1000 depending on special features. All shops expressed willingness to participate in a 3-wheel bicycle event (forum, demonstration days, etc.)

Following a study done with a Research Grant by the Portland (Oregon) Office of Transportation created a *Biking is Back – The Older Adult Three-Wheeled Bicycle Program* in January 2007, free biking classes were held in a suburb of Portland on a paved car-free trail. The city provided seven free recumbent bikes with baskets, visible red flags, and helmets to enable seniors to try out bikes in classes and have their individual concerns expressed and questions answered in a safe environment.

The program continues successfully, directed by Kristine Canham, Senior Recreation Coordinator for Parks and the extensive use of trained volunteers. The bikes are owned and maintained by the Portland Office of Transportation. Classes are held weekly and users pay nominal fee of \$5/class to cover incidentals. Users now bike on trails, in parking lots and bike lanes in the city.

In summary, it would be a very healthy safe exercise program for HRM Senior and mobility-challenged citizens and deserves consideration. Kristine Canham is willing to share their program with us. It could easily be introduced during Bike Week 2011 to ascertain whether it will generate enough interest and support.

Councillor Mosher suggested that HRM Recreation staff could develop a program for seniors through a Health Promotion grant. Councillor Mosher asked whether she could refer the information on 3-wheel bikes to COLTA.

**MOVED BY Ms. Thomas, seconded by Councillor Watts, that the research on the 3-wheel bike program be referred to COLTA for review and consideration.
MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Ms. Koblents confirmed that there are no staff updates for Bike Week 2011.

5.1.2 Safety / Education

Ms. Koblents reported on a proposal and presentation she was given by the Ecology Action Centre (EAC) on the Making Trax program. The EAC is requesting \$18,000 in

seed monies to do a smaller version of the Making Trax program, targeting specific schools in the HRM. Ms. Koblents will meet with HRM staff and see if there is any interest from others to support this program. The Making Trax program meets goals, including safe routes to school, active living, sustainable transportation, and promotes alternative transportation and safe cycling.

Councillor Mosher suggested the Committee watch the CycLAvia video (www.ciclavia.org/) and indicated that she would forward it to the Clerk's Office for distribution. In Los Angeles, streets are shut down for safe walking and biking. Councillor Watts agreed, and noted that Ottawa is a good example of a Canadian city that promotes safe cycling.

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

None.

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence

None.

7.2 Petitions

None.

7.3 Presentations

7.3.1 Cross Town Connector Proposal

Ms. Koblents, Active Transportation Coordinator, is in the process of developing a public consultation program on the Cross Town Connector Proposal to deliver to various groups.

Ms. Koblents delivered her draft presentation and requested that the Committee provide feedback. A copy of the draft presentation is on file.

The following Committee recommendations were made:

- A great deal of information with few slides, more slides are needed
- Include more personal stories and videos within the presentation
- Include details on kilometers of bike lanes and trails in HRM
- Emphasis on safety which will be afforded to children travelling to and from school

- Suggestion that you have more than one version of the presentation, for example, presentation to business owners should have different emphasis than to Home and School meetings
- Promote as the 3rd National Dream - railway, highway and trail
- Idea of permitting on street car parking from dusk to dawn only
- How bicycle routes will intercept transit routes and identification of areas for centralized bicycle racks and storage
- Should include a slide as to the policy put in place by Council to identify that this is a long term project of Council
- A slide on what other municipalities are doing (perhaps integrate)
- A slide identifying the wide range of bicycle advocates: Capital Health, Doctors Nova Scotia, and other organizations to illustrate that this is not just the work of a fringe group, but is fully integrated within society
- Emphasis on traffic climate - safety for cyclist and pedestrians (i.e. in Germany there are bicycle streets on which bicycles have the right of way and the speed limit is 30 km/hr)
- Discussion around the image of the chain links. Identify it by using a bike/walking symbol(s). Easy to understand detail on each of the links, speak to each of the links; do not use acronyms; the links stand alone to form the chain.
- Councillor Hendsbee suggested integrating bike traffic signals
- Cross Town Connector image: magnify the spine that connects the trail system, with Dartmouth, the seaport, and Point Pleasant Park

Ms. Koblents will provide updates to the Committee on her progress.

8. REPORTS

None.

9. ADDED ITEMS

9.1 Chain of Lakes Trail Association (COLTA) Update – Chair

Councillor Mosher explained to the Committee that the Trail tender came in at \$ 300,000 less than expected to construct the Chain of Lake Trail. The COLTA group decided to expand the scope of the trail system due to room in the budget. The paved sections of the trail will be maintained throughout the winter.

Signage was put up to encourage users to share the trail, although there has been a few sightings of coyotes on trail. The trail is not yet officially open, but already, there is evidence that the trail system is well-used.

COLTA plans to install waste receptacles and dog waste boxes in three areas on the trail. Approximately 100-ft. of fencing from Springdale Ave to Ashburn will be installed due to safety concerns caused by steep grades and a pond. No trespassing signs have

been ordered, and a gate will be installed at Joseph Howe to prohibit motorized vehicles, but wide enough for wheelchairs and strollers.

COLTA is now a registered non-profit Society and has received a grant from HRM To conduct a greenway corridor study, which will enable the group to determine safe access to the trail from other areas.

Councillor Mosher requested feedback from the Committee as to what other amenities to include on the trail: lights, interpretive panels? Members of the public are invited to receive the COLTA newsletter by emailing COLTAnewsletter@gmail.com.

A discussion followed on accessibility issues, including the width of the double hung gates, access a bus stops, and appropriate curb for wheelchairs.

Mr. Regan confirmed that the provincial ability standards were followed. The trail officially opens at the end of November.

9.1 Update re: Meeting with Minister Estabrooks – Bikelanes – Chair

Councillor Mosher met with Minister Estabrooks, some of his staff members, and Ms. Elizabeth Pugh.

Councillor Mosher requested that the Province amend the Motor Vehicle Act to prohibit parking on bike lanes and lower the speed limit in school zones. The speed limit in school zones cannot be changed in HRM as it is provincially legislated, however Bill #93 was introduced and First Reading took place on November 15, 2010.

Bill # 93 amends the Motor Vehicle Act by:

- (a) adding rules respecting bicycle lanes;
- (b) replacing the rules respecting cycling on the extreme right;
- (c) requiring motorists to leave one metre of space between a motor vehicle and a bicycle it is passing;
- (d) allowing a motorist to cross the centre line in order to pass a bicycle; and
- (e) making uniform the references to cyclists.

Ms. Pugh explained the One Metre Rule to the Committee and answered questions to clarify. Discussion followed.

Ms. Koblents noted that HRM will ask for three minor amendments to Bill 93 which are presently being reviewed by Legal staff.

MOVED BY Mr. Regan, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee, that the Committee send a letter in support of Bill #93 to the Law Amendments Committee with the proviso that HRM's amendments are included. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9.2 Staff Update

Ms. Koblents has been working with a student intern to develop a plan to install more bike parking downtown and on Quinpool Road.

Ms. Koblents gave a presentation to Recreation Nova Scotia on Active transportation and will follow up with that group as they showed interest in learning more.

10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

11. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting is scheduled for December 16, 2011 at 4:00pm Bloomfield Centre.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:58pm.

Pamela Lovelace
Legislative Support