

# HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

## ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 31, 2011

PRESENT: Councillor Jennifer Watts, Vice Chair  
Councillor David Hendsbee  
Ms. Elizabeth Pugh  
Mr. Ted Scrutton  
Mr. Steve Bedard  
Mr. Tom Boyd  
Mr. Scott MacPhee  
Mr. Lawrence Plug

REGRETS: Ms. Gai Thomas  
Mr. Walter Regan

STAFF: MS. Hanita Koblents, Active Transportation Coordinator  
Ms. Lauralee Sim, Environmental Performance Officer  
Mr. Peter Bigelow, Manager, Real Property Planning  
Ms. Pam Lovelace, Legislative Support

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Councillor Watts called the meeting to order, without quorum present, at 4:05 pm at Bloomfield Centre, 2786 Agricola Street, Halifax.

**2. UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no updates at this time.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Dec 16, 2010 & Feb 17, 2011**

**MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Mr. Plug, that the minutes of December 16, 2010 and February 17, 2011 be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

Additions:

9.1 Revise Active Transportation Advisory Committee Terms of Reference

**5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES**

**5.1 Subcommittee Updates**

**5.1.1 Bike Week 2011**

i) Bike Week Subcommittee Minutes dated December 15, 2010 & January 12 & March 7, 2011

Ms. Sim provided a verbal update on Bike Week 2011. There are over 30 events currently registered, most of them are organized by community groups. Detailed information is available at [www.halifax.ca/bikeweek](http://www.halifax.ca/bikeweek)

Ms. Sim will provide a complete list of volunteer jobs to the Committee.

ii) Draft 2011 Calendar

The Calendar of events will continue to be updated and distributed.

iii) Ride your Riding Invitation

At this time nothing is organized until Councillors endorse the event. HRM staff will go on the ride with Councillors to encourage them to understand how people can navigate their ridings on a bike.

**MOVED by Mr. Plug, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee that the Ride your Riding invitation be sent to Councillors. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

### **5.1.2 Safety / Education**

The Safety/Education Committee has not met since December. Councillor Watts requested that the Safety/Education Committee members remain after the current meeting to discuss the next meeting dates.

## **6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE**

### **7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS**

#### **7.1 Correspondence - None**

#### **7.2 Petitions - None**

#### **7.3 Presentations**

##### **7.3.1 SWITCH Project – Mr. Mark Nener, Sustainable Transportation Task Force**

This item was dealt with later in the meeting. Please see page 5.

Mr. MacPhee entered the meeting at 4:35 pm and quorum was achieved.

### **8. REPORTS**

#### **8.1 Staff Reports**

##### **8.1.1 Bicycle Rack Design Competition**

Ms. Sim provided a verbal update on The Bicycle Rack Design Competition. The goal is to develop a nice looking and functional bike rack for public spaces. The competition is open to the public. There is a budget of up to \$5000 to construct the bike rack. Contest closes on Monday, April 4 2011 with the winner being announced on or near Earth Day, April 21. The winning rack will be installed outside the Dartmouth Ferry Terminal.

Staff requested that two Committee members volunteer as judges for the selection panel. Mr. Plug and Mr. Bedard volunteered.

The competition may be extended if more submissions are not received in time for the deadline.

## **8.2 Committee Members**

Councillor Watts made note that appointments will be made soon under the new Standing Committee structure.

### **7.3.1 SWITCH Project – Mr. Mark Nener & Mr. Ross Soward, Sustainable Transportation Task Force**

Mr. Mark Nener, a Community Planner with the Dalhousie Architecture and Planning Department and member of the Bicycle Action Committee gave a verbal presentation on SWITCH, Open Street Sundays. The SWITCH project aims to engage the public and identify actions that will take Halifax to a more sustainable transportation system. Mr. Nener will provide a copy of his presentation to staff.

Councillor Watts thanked Mr. Nener for his presentation. Discussion followed:

- Councillor Hendsbee noted that there may be a possibility for HRM to adapt the parade process for SWITCH and close streets earlier on parade days and holidays.
- Ms. Hanita Koblents, Active Transportation Coordinator, noted that there is the opportunity to cost share by working with other HRM events that put up enclosures and barricades.
- Mr. Scrutton suggested that to get around the cost of street closures, HRM must endorse Open Streets Sunday as a civic event in order to run it effectively, both financially and with needed resources.
- The next step in Mr. Nener's research is to look at how other cities manage street closures. In some examples, there are staff members that are trained to act as marshals along the route. There are models and examples to work to minimize those costs.
- The Committee discussed a pilot project to advance SWITCH to the next phase.
- Mr. Soward suggested growing the concept slowly to build a base of support for Open Street Sundays in Halifax.
- Mr. Scrutton recommended Dunbrack and Northwest Arm Drive as a potential area to pilot the idea.
- Councillor Watts suggested Mr. Soward and Mr. Nener look into partnership options with summer parades, cost out the event and present options back to the Committee.
- Mr. Nener and Mr. Soward agreed to review and will look at holding a regular event, but not every Sunday during the summer.
- Ms. Koblents suggested Vaughn Perrin, Traffic Analyst, would be a good resource for information on street closures in Halifax.
- Mr. Soward will return to present on the Sustainable Transportation Task Force.

Councillor Watts requested that Earth Day be added to the next meeting agenda.

### **8.2.1 Overview of Active Transportation Strategy and Implications for the 2011/ 2012 Budget – Vice Chair**

A presentation was submitted.

Councillor Watts met with staff close to a month ago to discuss how to advance the Active transportation Strategy. Staff were asked to present five key projects to the committee within the budget parameters.

Today, staff will recommend five key projects that the Committee can advance by forwarding them to the Transportation Standing Committee for review.

Ms. Hanita Koblents, Active Transportation Coordinator, provided a verbal presentation on five key projects that HRM could undertake to advance the Active Transportation Strategy. Currently, the top three priorities are a) regional trails program, b) side walk program, and c) bike lanes. The five key projects suggested by staff and, outlined in the presentation, will be in addition to the current activities.

There was much discussion during and following the staff presentation:

- Ms. Pugh suggested that the Province may for the shoulders of trails, but the province and HRM have not yet reached the point of cost sharing discussion.
- Councillor Hendsbee pointed out that the graphic map should be revised to include the St. Margaret's Bay bike lane. Also included in the maps should be transit connectors, bus and ferry terminals.
- Mr. Scrutton noted there are no sidewalks on Burnside Drive, and having bike lanes is only one aspect of the Active Transportation Strategy.
- Ms. Koblents noted that there are many projects that could move forward, the key is to make them priorities and put resources towards them. The list for sidewalk construction has roughly 250 on it, but there are only approximately 8 installed per year.
- Councillor Hendsbee suggested that the Nova Scotia Bikeways Plan be reviewed in order to advance some of those action items.
- Mr. Scrutton cautioned that the Committee not concentrate solely on bike lanes, rather look at the broader issues of Active Transportation (AT).
- Ms. Pugh noted that the Nova Scotia Bikeways Plan was not endorsed as a final route. The municipalities have the final say in the design.
- Councillor Hendsbee requested that the eco-tourism routes be brought into the mix and attempt to advance some of the provincial initiatives.
- Mr. Plug pointed out that both the Chain of Lakes and St. Margaret's Bay trails meet those concerns.
- Mr. Bedard noted that the AT Plan would have to be reviewed at year end and pushing these five suggestions until then may be a good idea.
- Mr., Scrutton agreed with the five projects proposed by staff and requested that more work be focussed on safe routes to school.

- Ms. Koblents suggested that Ms. Anne Sherwood, Design Engineer, attend an upcoming meeting to inform the Committee on how school routes rate within the list of criteria for sidewalks.
- Councillor Hendsbee requested a measurement of the AT Plan to review what was planned and what was completed.

**MOVED by Mr. Scrutton, seconded by Mr. MacPhee, that the Active Transportation Advisory Committee recommends that the Transportation Standing Committee consider the implementation, beginning in 2011, of the 5 Active Transportation Projects for incorporation into the multi-year planning cycle. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Discussion followed:

- Mr. Soward offered to come back to the Committee with information on some of the key actions in the Nova Scotia Bikeways Plan.
- Councillor Hendsbee requested that the Halifax Regional Trails Association review the presentation on the five projects and have an opportunity to respond.
- Councillor Watts noted that the next meeting of the Transportation Standing Committee was scheduled for April 13, 2011. Budget deliberations start on April 28, 2011.
- Mr. Peter Bigelow, Manager of Real Property Planning, could not provide budget details for the five projects, but advised that they be registered. These may not be the projects that move forward; rather this is a strong recommendation for serious investment of approximately \$4,000,000 a year for five years.

## **9. ADDED ITEMS**

### **9.1 Revise Terms of References as There Are Empty Positions**

Ms. Koblents will review the Committee's Terms of Reference and bring forward to the next meeting.

## **10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no one wishing to speak at this time.

### **11. NEXT MEETING DATE – to be determined**

## **12. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:03pm.