



**ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
October 15, 2015**

PRESENT: Mr. Ben Buckwold, Chair
Councillor Waye Mason, Vice Chair
Mr. Walter Regan
Mr. Tristan Cleveland
Ms. Elizabeth Pugh
Councillor Tim Outhit
Ms. Julie Tompa
Councillor David Hendsbee

REGRETS: Mr. David Jackson
Ms. Terry Walker

STAFF: Ms. Jessie Debaie, Assistant Trails Coordinator
Mr. David MacIsaac, TDM Program Supervisor
Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant
Ms. Cathy Collett, Legislative Support

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

*The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to Active Transportation Advisory Committee are available online:
<http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/ActiveTransportationAdvisoryCommittee.php>*

The meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m. and adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. in Halifax Hall, City Hall, Halifax.

The Chair welcomed Mr. Tristan Cleveland to the Committee, noting that he was replacing Ms. Janet Barlow from the Ecology Action Center.

Committee members made a number of community announcements.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 17, 2015

MOVED by Councillor Wayne Mason, seconded by Ms. Elizabeth Pugh that the Minutes of September 17, 2015 be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions: 9.1 Walter Regan - ATR

It was noted that there were members of the public in attendance to address the Committee during Public Participation. Councillor Hendsbee suggested that Public Participation come first on the agenda this week.

MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor Outhit that Public Participation be moved to item 4 on the agenda for October 15, 2015. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Ms. Pugh suggested that this be a permanent change, and a brief discussion ensued.

MOVED by Councillor Outhit, seconded by Mr. Tristan Cleveland that Public Participation be moved to item 4 on the agenda on a permanent basis. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Jayne Hawkins, Training and Development Coordinator for Dexter Nova Scotia, explained to the Committee that Rocky Lake Drive is an ongoing concern as there is not a lot of room for cyclists on the road. She commented that this issue was raised at a recent meeting of the occupational health and safety committee of her company, and that Dexter is looking for support and information on what to do to increase safety.

Responding to questions from Committee members as to where this road fits in Halifax's Active Transportation Plan, Mr. David MacIsaac explained that at this time the road is designated as a sign-only route. The Committee discussed the proximity of the road to schools and members commented that frequently there are runners and pedestrians as well as cyclists on this road.

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Outhit, that the Active Transportation Advisory Committee recommend that the Transportation Standing Committee consider requesting a Staff Report regarding pedestrian and cyclist safety on Rocky Lake Drive and Duke Street, Bedford and explore potential options for mitigation. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Committee discussed whether or not to specify the municipally owned section of Duke Street and decided not to limit the motion to the portion of Duke Street that falls within the municipal jurisdiction, but rather to invite the province to participate.

Councillor Hendsbee questioned the narrow bridge issue; staff commented that this could be considered in the Staff Report.

The Committee offered to contact Ms. Hawkins with information about the Share the Road program and Ms. Hawkins agreed to leave her contact information.

Mr. Ben Wedge, Halifax Cycling Coalition, gave a powerpoint presentation to the Committee. He began by commenting that on-street bike parking has been installed on Agricola and Charles. He explained that no parking loss occurred as part of this project and that parking will remain in place until November 15, 2015, at which point it is required to be taken down in case there is the need for snow removal. The Halifax Cycling Coalition will come back next year with a request on how to formalize this parking, providing that the current test goes well.

Councillor Outhit questioned in what way would the temporary installation of bicycle parking prove it could work? Mr. Wedge commented that Transportation Staff worked hard to make the project possible, without changing the rule book, by using a temporary construction permit. He explained that every post in a two-block radius has bikes chained to it and that the project mitigates damage to the road by using a plywood bar to anchor the racks instead of bolting it into the road.

Councillor Hendsbee asked if there was a way to make the parking structures mobile; Mr. Wedge replied that they are looking into this possibility.

The Chair requested that Mr. Wedge attend the next meeting with an update on the project.

Mr. Wedge continued his presentation, commenting that while they are very happy that the Hollis Bicycle Lane has been established, there are too many cars parked in it for it to be very effective. HRM Staff have just put up no parking and tow away zone signs, which he is hopeful will deter people from parking there, but delivery trucks can still use it for parking, causing bicycles to still need to merge into traffic. Mr. Wedge stated that the Halifax Cycling Coalition wants to make it a protected bike lane with plastic bollards. He explained that in Toronto a bike lane such as the one on Hollis street would have a delivery lane on the other side of the road and that this system is quite effective.

Mr. Wedge showed figures from the study "Lessons from the Green Lanes," Portland State University, 2014 that demonstrate an increase in bike trips when protected bike lanes are put in. He showed a picture of how it is plowed with a brush plow, demonstrating that these lanes still work in the winter when the correct equipment is available. Mr. Wedge discussed the costs for the project, estimating that the total cost for Hollis and Lower Water Street would be \$40,000.

Councillor Outhit questioned if this area is recommended for a trial? Mr. Wedge explained that the Halifax Cycling Coalition do not recommend conduction a trial for protected bike lanes as they believe that they are internationally accepted as the best scenario for bike lanes. Mr. Wedge, commented that Hollis street is an area that needs protected bike lanes and that the road is scheduled to be repaved next year, which would be a good time to permanently install a protected bike lane.

Mr. Cleveland expressed agreement with Mr. Wedge's proposal and commented that, at this stage, the benefits far outweigh the costs.

The Chair asked Mr. David MacIsaac if there were any impediments on moving towards such a project. Mr. MacIsaac commented that staff would have to be given direction by Council and would need to work with the loading industry to understand where they operate now and see if there are ways to open loading space on the other side. Staff would also need to work with the residential buildings do develop strategies for taxi service and moving trucks.

Councillor Mason commented that he has been in consultation with the local business groups and that the stated compromise is to use the bike lane as a loading zone. If the lane becomes a protected bike

lane, all this work will need to be redone. He explained that some businesses are concerned that the bike lane is bad for their business and that if Staff are asked to continue working on this bike lane, that would mean they are taking the time from working on another project. Councillor Mason suggested that it would be a good idea to wait longer before enacting more changes to this location and to let the bike lane play out as it is for a year.

Mr. MacIsaac commented that plastic bollards might increase the cycling usage in the bike lane and thus give more justification to all the time and work put into the project. He noted that Hollis Street is up for a complete resurfacing in 2 or 3 years and that this might be a good opportunity to look at the results and maybe enhance it.

The Committee discussed the pros and cons of putting in plastic bollards on Hollis Street at this time and decided to wait for the evaluation of the Hollis Street bike lane to come back. Responding to a question from the Committee, Mr. MacIsaac noted that the evaluation would include a section on whether the street would work as a protected bike lane.

Mr. Regan moved a motion that ATAC request the Transportation Standing Committee to recommend to Council that protective bollards be put in place on Hollis Street immediately, however, this was not seconded and the motion was lost.

5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence - None

7.2 Petitions - None

7.3 Presentations - None

8. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

8.1 STAFF

8.1.1 ATAC Evaluation – Update

Ms. Catherine Barnstead informed the Committee that she had completed a staff report based on her evaluation and the discussion held at the last ATAC meeting. She explained that the report will go to the Transportation Standing Committee in November and from there to Regional Council.

The Chair requested that Ms. Barnstead give a brief summary of the recommendations for the sake of the new Committee member. Ms. Barnstead replied that the recommendations need to be seen by the Transportation Standing Committee before they are shared, but they are based very closely on the discussion held at the last meeting.

Councillor Hendsbee requested that the Committee be notified once the report is made public.

The Chair thanked Ms. Barnstead for the update

8.1.2 Active Transportation Staff

Mr. MacIsaac informed the Committee that staff would find out at the end of the month about the status of the University Avenue protected bike lane pilot. At this time staff are determining next year's capital project and are looking into integration opportunities. Staff are about to issue a RFP for the marketing

and promotion side of AT and are collaborating with Bicycle Nova Scotia on how to connect the Chain of Lakes Trail to the peninsula and up St. Margaret's Bay Road. Bi-annual screen counts at the Cogswell interchange are underway.

The Chair requested that the Committee be shown images of the Hollis Street Bike Lane.

Mr. MacIsaac showed a number of images to the Committee.

Responding to a question from Mr. Regan about the North West Trails public meeting, Mr. MacIsaac commented that it went well, with at least 50 people in attendance and over 70 responses to the online survey. He noted that the survey is still available online at Shape Your City.

The Chair commented that the South Park Lane disappears across Sackville Street, by the old CBC building, and that cyclists are usually in the middle of the right hand turning lane going straight. He explained that getting bike lanes up to the intersection is a key concern. Mr. MacIsaac replied that he is aware of this situation and that it is something to be addressed.

Mr. MacIsaac concluded his update by showing several options for a bike ramps to the MacDonald Bridge. He commented that work and public engagement on this matter will continue.

8.1.3 Regional Trails Staff

Ms. Jessie DeBaie informed the Committee that:

- Maintenance Proposals and Capital Proposals for maintenance and capital trails projects were received on September 19 & September 26 respectively. Both the HRTA Maintenance Committee and the Capital Committee reviewed the proposals and made their peer review. The results were presented at the October 5 HRTA meeting. AT staff will now begin deliberations about the funding priorities for greenways in the 2016/17 budget year.
- The challenge is LIVE and is being communicated via www.halifax.ca/trails as well as on LCD screens in the Rec/Community Centres. A PSA went out to the Media and is being communicated through the HFX gov social media.
- Construction is proceeding with the Sackville Greenway Phase b Section. Estimated time of completion is mid- November pending weather conditions.
- Trail counts are continuing of five greenways in HRM: Bedford Sackville Connector Greenway, Cole Harbour Greenway system, Mainland North Linear Parkway, Musquodoboit Trailway, Shubie Park Greenway. An infrared counter counts walkers as they pass by the beam. Some inaccuracies can result: two or three walking abreast is counted as one, large dogs walking by may be counted as a person, deer walking through greenways may be counted as people, often people walk into a greenway and return- the same person but it is counted as 2. The bike counters are buried in the ground or installed under a bridge. They pick up any metal object not just bikes – strollers, wheelchairs, maintenance vehicles too. So the accuracy of electronic is not 100%. Calibration needs to be conducted on a regular basis. This consists of volunteers taking counts for bikes and people on an hour to hour basis and then cross referencing this with the electronic counts. This provides them with a formula number to apply to the electronic counts.

8.2 Halifax Regional Trails Association

Mr. Walter Regan announced that the Annual Trail Camp will be held November 7,8,9 and that all Committee members are invited. He informed the Committee that the Capital Maintenance Funding request has been submitted and that the Association is in need of a replacement for Mr. Don Ambler, as staff is overworked.

8.3 Bike Week Sub-Committee

8.4 Committee Members

Mr. Cleveland commented that he would like the Committee to consider two issues: screenline counts, and sidewalk accessibility during construction.

He explained that screenline count data is fairly coarse and questioned if it would be possible for it to be broken down by cross street, time of day, and season. Mr. MacIsaac replied that the data is there and is given out when requested, but that the time it would take to organize the data is not available right now. Mr. Cleveland commented that he would follow up with Mr. MacIsaac on the subject at another time.

Mr. Cleveland explained that his other concern is that developers frequently take over large portions of the sidewalk for long periods of time which often results in areas that are completely inaccessible. He indicated that he had a motion prepared on this issue.

Councillor Mason explained that he has already made a motion very similar to this one and that the report is due back next month from the Transportation Standing Committee.

8.5 Crosswalk Safety Committee

8.5.1 ATAC Representative on Crosswalk Safety Committee

Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds, Legislative Assistant, explained that the ATAC Committee needs to appoint a member to sit as a representative on the Crosswalk Safety Committee to replace Ms. Janet Barlow.

The Chair commented that if we do get a member from Walk N Roll, it would be an ideal candidate for this position.

Ms. Sheilagh Edmonds clarified the process of how new membership would go forward.

The Chair asked if there were any volunteers to sit on the Crosswalk Safety Committee, hearing none, he commented that this item would be carried over to the order of business for the next meeting.

9. ADDED ITEMS

9.1 Halifax Regional Trails Association – Walter Regan

Mr. Regan commented that several months ago he raised the issue that the Halifax Regional Trails Association (HRTA) is not being supported and funded. Transportation is directed towards Active Transportation, and trails that are not considered part of the AT network are being ignored. Mr. Regan suggested that Parks and Recreation should address the issue of ATR not being recognized by AT

Councillor Mason suggested that the new Parks Manager could come and engage in discussion with the Committee on the matter of funding and staffing.

MOVED by Mr. Walter Regan, seconded by Councillor Mason that ATAC invite the Parks Manager to come to a ATAC meeting for discussion around funding, staffing and a general update. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: November 19, 2015

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at. 5:52 p.m.

Cathy Collett
Legislative Support