

TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES

September 22, 2011

- PRESENT: Councillor Reg Rankin, Chair
 Councillor Jennifer Watts, Vice-Chair
 Councillor Darren Fisher
 Councillor Debbie Hum
 Councillor Jerry Blumenthal
- REGRETS: Councillor David Hendsbee
 Councillor Jackie Barkhouse
 Councillor Bob Harvey
- STAFF: Mr. Ken Reashor, Director, Transportation & Public Works
 Ms. Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	CALL TO ORDER.....	3
2.	APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 23 & August 10, 2011	3
3.	APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS.....	3
4.	CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS	3
4.1	Correspondence	3
4.1.1	Correspondence re: Macdonald Bridge.....	3
4.2	Petitions - None	4
4.3	Presentation.....	4
4.3.1	Dalhousie Planning & Design Centre/Fusion Halifax – “It’s More Than Buses” presentation”	4
5.	BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES	5
6.	CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS - None	5
7.	REPORTS	5
7.1	STAFF - None.....	5
7.2	MATTERS REFERRED FROM REGIONAL COUNCIL - None	5
7.3	MATTERS REFERRED FROM STANDING COMMITTEES	6
7.3.1	ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY STANDING COMMITTEE – Functional Plans with Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee Oversight	6
7.4	MATTERS REFERRED FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL	6
7.4.1	COUNCILLOR WATTS – Request for Report – Metro Transit Ridership.....	6
7.5	ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE	6
7.5.1	Amendments to ATAC Terms of Reference	6
7.5.2	Update from Councillor Watts (verbal)	7
7.6	ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE	7
7.6.1	Update from Councillor Blumenthal (verbal)	7
8.	ADDED ITEMS	8
8.1	Funding Proposal – Natural Gas Opportunities in Municipal Fleet.....	8
8.2	Audible Pedestrian Signals (information item)	8
8.3	Councillor Watts – Commuter Rail	8
8.4	Councillor Rankin – Electric Bikes	8
9.	NEXT MEETING DATE – October 27, 2011	8
10.	ADJOURNMENT	8

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 11:34 a.m. in the Council Chamber, 3rd Floor, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – June 23 & August 10, 2011

MOVED by Councillor Fisher, seconded by Councillor Blumenthal, that the Transportation Standing Committee meeting minutes of June 23, 2011 and August 10, 2011 be approved, as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions:

- 8.1 Funding Proposal – Natural Gas Opportunities in Municipal Fleet (information item)
- 8.2 Audible Pedestrian Signals (information item)

MOVED by Councillor Hum, seconded by Councillor Watts, that the order of business be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

4.1 Correspondence

4.1.1 Correspondence re: Macdonald Bridge

Correspondence from Rocky Lis regarding the Macdonald Bridge was before the Committee.

Councillor Watts noted other pieces of correspondence have been received on this topic and bicycle access to the Macdonald Bridge was discussed at the Active Transportation Advisory Committee (ATAC) last week. The ATAC plan to invite members from the bridge commission to a future ATAC meeting to discuss the issues raised about the Macdonald Bridge bike lane, and opportunities for improvements to bicycle access to the bridge during the bridge re-decking planned for 2014.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Hum, that the correspondence from Rocky Lis regarding the Macdonald Bridge be referred to the Active Transportation advisory Committee for discussion.

Councillor Hum commented on the number of times the issue of bicycle access to the bridge has been discussed by Council and other boards and committees.

MOVED by Councillor Hum, seconded by Councillor Watts, that the Transportation Standing Committee request staff to compile background information (ie: reports, correspondence, studies, plans) from the time that the Macdonald Bridge was redesigned to incorporate the bike lane to the present, relating to concerns that have been raised regarding the bike lane. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4.2 Petitions - None

4.3 Presentation

4.3.1 Dalhousie Planning & Design Centre/Fusion Halifax – “It’s More Than Buses” presentation”

Correspondence from Mr. Ross Soward, Dalhousie Planning & Design Centre was before the Committee.

A pocket guide to High-Frequency Public Transit Network was distributed to members.

A copy of the Dalhousie Planning & Design Centre/Fusion Halifax “It’s More Than Buses” presentation is on file.

Ms. Kaitlin Pianosi, Fusion Halifax, presented to the Committee an overview of the Dalhousie Planning & Design Centre/Fusion Halifax series of public engagement sessions entitled “It’s More Than Buses”.

Mr. Mark Nener, Community Planner, Dalhousie Planning & Design Centre, further presented on the series. He reviewed the focus of the series, including the eight guiding principles for the evolution of transit in HRM and public session work and feedback to date. Mr. Nener stressed the importance of legible and easy to understand transit, and indicated that transit should be used as a tool to shape land use and transportation planning. He reviewed a map of proposed high frequency networks for the urban core.

Mr. Nener advised that the series will continue to engage citizens, and other groups and committees in this process. They would eventually like to share the findings of the sessions with Regional Council.

Councillor Watts thanked Ms. Pianosi and Mr. Nener for their presentation and for providing the opportunity for citizens to engage on this topic.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Hum, that the Transportation Standing Committee request Metro Transit staff to present at a future Transportation Standing Committee meeting a brief report outlining five key steps/projects that Metro Transit needs to implement to increase ridership

and provide improved service to residents of HRM, with cost estimates. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Councillor Watts suggested that with a new manager of Metro Transit it may be a good time to have these discussion and identify costs early on. She requested that this report be brought forward for the October Transportation Standing Committee meeting. Mr. Reashor suggested that November would be a more realistic timeline for a report of this nature.

At the request of Councillor Blumenthal, Mr. Nener commented on a presentation provided at one of the sessions by a Chief Transit Planner from Toronto entitled “Why Transit Matters”. The presentation focused on the “city-building powers” of transit, and when a city invests in high quality, permanent transit infrastructure, they then have that as a tool to shape land use, attracting development and reducing the need for parking and roads dedicated to car traffic. Mr. Nener suggested that no city has improved traffic congestion by widening roads.

At the request of Councillor Fisher, Mr. Nener advised that the “It’s More Than Buses” group had met with the Metro Transit Director and staff yesterday to share the outcomes of the public sessions. They talked about ideas for the future of transit in HRM and their ideas had much in common.

Councillor Hum suggested that the group prepare a finalized report compiling all of the feedback obtained from the public sessions to submit to HRM staff and Council. Mr. Nener advised that a final report would be completed within the next four-six months.

At the request of Councillor Rankin, Mr. Nener clarified that the map of proposed high frequency networks for the urban core is meant to illustrate a concept, and should not be taken too literally. Feedback they received is that people want to connect with these direct express routes. The idea is that if there is frequent and consistent coverage on a route, riders don’t need a schedule, making transit much easier to use. The high frequency networks would connect high density areas with employment areas.

The Chair thanked the group for their hard work and civic leadership, and commended them on the high engagement numbers for their public sessions.

- 5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - None**
- 6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS - None**
- 7. REPORTS**
 - 7.1 STAFF - None**
 - 7.2 MATTERS REFERRED FROM REGIONAL COUNCIL - None**

7.3 MATTERS REFERRED FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

7.3.1 ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY STANDING COMMITTEE – Functional Plans with Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee Oversight

A report from the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee dated September 9, 2011 was before the Committee.

The Committee considered the request from the ESSC to identify areas of interest with regard to the Functional Plans with ESSC oversight, as set out in the report from the Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Blumenthal, that the Transportation Standing Committee identifies the following areas of interest with regard to the Functional Plans identified in Attachment “A” of the July 25, 2011 staff report:

- **Open Space Functional Plan**
- **Road Network Functional Plan**
- **Active Transportation Functional Plan**
- **TDM Functional Plan**
- **Parking Strategy Functional Plan**
- **Capital District Functional Plan**

The Committee agreed that this list of identified areas of interest should not preclude consultation or input from the Transportation Standing Committee or members of Council on any other areas relating to transportation issues that may arise within the other Functional Plans listed in the July 25, 2011 staff report.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.4 MATTERS REFERRED FROM MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

7.4.1 COUNCILLOR WATTS – Request for Report – Metro Transit Ridership

This item was dealt with earlier in the meeting. See item 4.3.1.

7.5 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

7.5.1 Amendments to ATAC Terms of Reference

A report from the Active Transportation Standing Committee dated August 24, 2011 was before the Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Fisher, that the Transportation Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council approve amendments to the Active Transportation Advisory Committee Terms of Reference by:

- 1. Deleting the requirements to include “one (1) designate appointed by the Halifax Dartmouth Bridge Commission” and “one (1) designate appointed by the Youth Advisory Committee” in section 4.1 and;**
- 2. Amending the last line of section 4.1 by adding the words ‘one (1) youth’ so as to read “Four (4) members of the public at large, which would include one (1) youth representative and one (1) senior representative”; and**
- 3. Amending the document to state that the Committee reports to the *Transportation Standing Committee* rather than *Council*.**

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.5.2 Update from Councillor Watts (verbal)

Councillor Watts provided an update on the Active Transportation Advisory Committee, noting that the Committee recently made a submission by way of survey and recommendations for updates to the *Motor Vehicle Act* relating to cycling. The Committee has begun discussions on the Active Transportation Plan 5 year review, and will be reviewing the Terms of Reference developed by staff, which will be coming forward to the Transportation Standing Committee. The Committee reviewed their workplan for the coming year, which includes:

- Continuing work through the Education and Safety Sub-committee, with a particular focus on children and youth.
- Continuing to provide support to Bike Week events.
- Leadership around the Active Transportation Plan review.
- Development and updating of the bike map.
- Supporting staff with the cross town connector project.
- Reviewing the issues surrounding cycling and access in parks.

7.6 ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

7.6.1 Update from Councillor Blumenthal (verbal)

Councillor Blumenthal provided a brief update on the Accessibility Advisory Committee, noting that they are continuing work with the Accessibility Review of HRM Buildings. The Committee will be discussing at their next meeting the need for a cross walk and flashing pedestrian lights at the corner of Barrington and Young Streets, near the Wee Care Centre, which is a day care centre for children with disabilities.

MOVED by Councillor Blumenthal, seconded by Councillor Watts, that “Crosswalk and Flashing Pedestrian Lights at Barrington and Young Streets” be added to the next Transportation Standing Committee agenda for discussion. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

8. ADDED ITEMS

8.1 Funding Proposal – Natural Gas Opportunities in Municipal Fleet
(information item)

An information report dated September 15, 2011 was circulated to the Committee.

8.2 Audible Pedestrian Signals (information item)

An email from Mr. Ken Reashor, Director, Transportation & Public Works, dated September 19, 2011 was before the Committee.

8.3 Councillor Watts – Commuter Rail

Councillor Watts requested that the commuter rail strategy presented to Council at a Committee of the Whole session in February 2011 be added to the October agenda for discussion.

With the agreement of the Committee, the following item was also added to the agenda:

8.4 Councillor Rankin – Electric Bikes

Councillor Rankin read an email he received from Catherine Klefenz, Chair of the BLT Rails to Trails Association dated September 22, 2011 regarding electric bikes on trails.

MOVED by Councillor Hum, seconded by Councillor Watts, that the email from Catherine Klefenz dated September 22, 2011 regarding electric bikes on trails be referred to the Active Transportation Advisory Committee for discussion and to report back to the Transportation Standing Committee with any information or recommendations. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE – October 27, 2011

The next meeting of the Transportation Standing Committee is scheduled for Thursday, October 27, 2011 at 1:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, 3rd Floor, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:57 p.m.

Jennifer Weagle
Legislative Assistant

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Conventional Transit Accessibility Improvements

An information report dated September 1, 2011 was before the Committee.

2. Bike Lane Maintenance

An information report dated August 31, 2011 was before the Committee