

# HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

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## ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

May 19, 2011

- PRESENT: Councillor Jennifer Watts, Chair  
Councillor Debbie Hum, Vice Chair  
Mr. Walter Regan  
Ms. Elizabeth Pugh  
Mr. Scott MacPhee  
Mr. David Jackson  
Mr. Myles McCallum  
Mr. Lawrence Plug
- REGRETS: Ms. Gai Thomas  
Mr. Ted Scrutton  
Councillor David Hendsbee  
Mr. Troy Nauffts  
Mr. Steve Bedard
- STAFF: Ms. Hanita Koblents, Transportation Demand Management  
Coordinator  
Ms. Jessie Debaie, Assistant Regional Trails Coordinator  
Ms. Pam Lovelace, Legislative Support

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## **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Councillor Watts, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:06pm in Room 108, Bloomfield Centre, 2786 Agricola Street, Halifax. Councillor Watts asked members to introduce themselves.

## **2. UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS – Staff and Committee**

The following updates were noted:

- Mr. Regan provided an update to the committee on the Halifax Regional Trails financing approvals from HRM. Mr. Regan attended recent active transportation workshop events supported by HRM and promoted the June 4, 2011 Bike Rodeo organized by the Sackville Rivers Association.
- Councillor Watts attended a Halifax Regional Trails Association (HRTA) meeting and spoke to representatives from over 20 trail groups.
- The annual MacNabs Island Beach Clean Up will take place on June 5, 2011
- The grand opening of the Chain of Lakes Trail will take place on June 18, 2011

## **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – April 14, 2011**

**MOVED by Mr. Walter Regan, seconded by Mr. Scott MacPhee, that the minutes of April 14 be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Amendments to April 14 minutes:

Mr. David Jackson's last name was listed incorrectly as Johnson. Ms. Anne Sherwood was present the meeting.

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

Deletion:

8.1.1 Amended Terms of Reference

Additions:

9.1 Active Transportation Corridors

9.2 Update on Cross Town Connector

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

### **5.1 Subcommittee Updates**

#### **5.1.1 Bike Week 2011**

Ms. Koblents provided an update on Bike Week 2011 activities. The kick-off event will take place on May 27, 2011 at the Seaport Farmers' Market, from 6pm-10pm. A full listing of events is online: <http://www.halifax.ca/bikeweek>.

Councillor Watts requested information on the status of the Ride your Riding invitations.

Ms. Pugh noted that June is the Provincial Active Transportation month.

### **5.1.2 Safety/Education**

Councillor Watts noted that the Safety/Education Committee met just prior to the Active Transportation Advisory Committee meeting and there were many questions regarding the new One Meter Rule.

Ms. Pugh confirmed that there will be a campaign launched to promote awareness of the One Meter Rule. She has promotional postcards that she can bring to the Committee.

Councillor Watts reported that the Safety/Education Committee discussed the eventual goal of having pedestrian and bike safety as part of the school curriculum. In the meantime, the subcommittee target is to educate 1000 children per year on pedestrian and bike safety.

Ms. Koblents told the committee about a cross-provincial relay taking place to promote bicycle safety and Bill 93. Riders are travelling throughout the province passing a Bill 93 Baton, which will culminate at the Legislature for proclamation at 1pm on June 1, 2011. The Justice Minister will make the final ride.

Mr. MacPhee commended Mr. Plug and Bicycle Nova Scotia for building a good website to promote the provincial relay, found here: <http://cyclingrelaybill93.wordpress.com/>

Mr. Regan said he saw mention of a Youth Active Transportation Summit presented by Metro Transit. Councillor Watts requested that notice of the event be sent to committee members.

Ms. Pugh told the Committee that advertisements on the one-meter rule will play in movie theatres.

## **5. 2 Reimbursement for Work-Related Bicycle Trips**

**MOVED by Mr. Regan, seconded by Ms. Pugh that the Active Transportation Advisory Committee:**

- 1. Supports workplace travel by bicycle as an efficient, cost saving, sustainable, and healthy option;**

2. **Encourages the Administration to adopt practical, efficient, and cost effective measures required to support workplace cycling at HRM to demonstrate leadership in this vital component of Regional Plan; and,**
3. **Requests same endorsement from the Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee and the Transportation Standing Committee of Council.**

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS**

**6.1 Regional Trails Program – Ms. Jessie Debaie**

Ms. Debaie provided a verbal presentation on the Regional Trails program from its beginnings to the current structure today. She handed out maps of the trail system and discussed the history of the trails and the community management process.

Councillor Watts attended the recent HRTA meeting and was impressed with their level of detail, interest and accountability. There will be a longer presentation on trails at next month's meeting.

Mr. Plug entered the meeting at 4:46pm.

**6.2 HRM Bike Program – Ms. Hanita Koblents**

Ms. Koblents provided a verbal presentation on her role as Coordinator of Transportation Demand Management.

Ms. Koblents suggested a sub-committee be struck to update the now outdated bike routes and trails map. This will be discussed further at next month's meeting.

**7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND DELEGATIONS**

**7.1 Correspondence – None**

**7.2 Petitions – None**

**7.3 Presentations – None**

**7.3.1 Institutional District Bikeways Plan, Mr. Ross Soward and Mr. Mark Nener**

Mr. Ross Soward and Mr. Mark Nener with the Sustainable Transportation Taskforce gave a presentation on the Draft Halifax Institutional District Bikeways Plan. Dalhousie University, Saint Mary's University, Capital Health and the IWK Health Centre have joined together to develop safe and sustainable transportation options for students, staff

and visitors to the institutional district. The Bikeways Plan is one option the Sustainable Transportation Taskforce is exploring. Others include Bike and Ride, Bike sharing and better bus-ferry-bike connections.

The following was noted in discussion:

- Mr. Plug asked if all the bikeways will be one-way. Mr. Nener confirmed that they will be one way routes.
- Mr. Plug asked if two-stage left turns would be required in this model. Mr. Nener confirmed that two-stage turns are needed if the barriers are there separating the bike traffic from the vehicle traffic.
- Mr. Plug requested a bike ways solution that accommodates cyclists who are comfortable driving with vehicular traffic.
- Mr. McCallum explained that he has cycled in many large cities and although initially he was frustrated with the two-stage turns, he found it to be faster.
- Ms. Rochelle Owen, Office of Sustainability, Dalhousie University, asked the Active Transportation Advisory Committee for support to build a partnership with HRM as a funding partner.
- Councillor Hum suggested that the presentation be given to the Transportation Standing Committee and/or HRM staff so that they might better understand the Bikeways Plan. There are significant factors in the Plan that require staff to review impact from a legal and management perspective. There are national transportation standards that must be considered, and a report from staff would help answer many of those questions.
- Councillor Watts asked about the next steps for the Plan.
- Ms. Owen explained that determining funding is a priority, as is the university Avenue project because it could act as a showcase project. Ms. Owen requested further dialogue with HRM.

**MOVED by Mr. Myles McCallum, seconded by Mr. Scott MacPhee, that the Active Transportation Advisory Committee acknowledges the tremendous impact of the Institutional District Bikeways Plan to HRM, and recognizes the value of the Plan to these four major employers in HRM, and recommends that the Plan be considered by all partners to work together in the advancement of this Plan.  
MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

- Councillor Watts asked that Ms. Owen, Mr. Nener and Mr. Soward report back to the Active Transportation Advisory Committee. She asked which model of the three suggested in the Plan would be the best fit for the project.
- Ms. Owen said that she felt that separating vehicular traffic from cyclists is the safest option. Connectivity that is safe, clearly marked and colour coded.

## **8. REPORTS**

### **8.1 Staff Reports**

### **8.1.1 Amended Terms of Reference Extension Update**

Item 8.1.1 has been deferred to the next meeting on June 16, 2011.

## **8.2 Committee Members**

### **8.2.1 Status of Push Button Activated Crosswalk Lights at Traffic Light Intersections**

Councillor Watts talked about the ongoing issues around push button activated crosswalk lights at traffic light intersections. There is a commitment from HRM staff not to install anymore of these push button lights before consulting with the area Councillor.

Initially, the lights were used to ease congestion, but people can spend quite some time waiting for the traffic cycle before crossing the street. The staff response to the issue has been to remove the cycle during the day. However, a resident who brought up the issue to Councillor Watts suggested that during the evening hours there are many residents crossing the road, therefore why is the push button needed to cross the street.

**MOVED by Mr. Lawrence Plug, seconded by Councillor Hum, that an update and explanation be provided by staff to the Active Transportation Advisory Committee on the use and installation of the push button activated cross walk lights at traffic light intersections. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

Mr. Regan said he uses the push buttons and they lock up during times of freezing rain.

Councillor Hum said that in her area the push button crosswalk lights have assisted residents as it is much easier and safer for residents to cross the road.

Mr. McCallum questioned whether or not those lights actually do ease traffic congestion because not all of them initiate a sequence.

Mr. Plug asked if there is an alternative to the push button.

### **8.2.2 Work Plan**

Councillor Watts said that there will be a full discussion on the Work Plan at the June meeting and much needs to be considered.

## **9. ADDED ITEMS**

### **9.1 Active Transportation Corridors - Chair**

Councillor Watts read the motion that came to Regional Council.

**Active Transportation Corridors:**

**Motion passed that Halifax Regional Council request, in the context of the wider mandate of the transportation capital budget envelope, a staff report relative to inclusion by the Project Steering Committee of the construction of major high priority Active transportation corridors as identified in the HRM AT plan in the capital budget commitments over the next 5 years and including public consultation.**

Councillor Watts said the upcoming Regional Plan review, and the review of the AT plan will be included in a larger discussion with other pressing issues, including trails and institutional district bikeways planning. There will be further discussion at the June meeting to discuss the role of public consultation and how the AT Advisory Committee can provide guidance and direction to the Transportation Standing Committee.

**9.2 Update on Cross Town Connector**

Ms. Koblents gave a verbal update on the Cross Town Connector project.

Councillor Watts noted that an open house component to public engagement would be beneficial.

**10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no one wishing to speak at this time.

**11. NEXT MEETING – JUNE 16, 2011**

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:08 pm.

Pam Lovelace  
Legislative Support