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North West Community Council
March 25, 2010

TO: Chair and Members of North West Community Council

SUBMITTED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken Reashor".

Ken Reashor, P.Eng., Acting Director Transportation Public Works

DATE: March 12, 2010

SUBJECT: Waterstone Neighbourhood Association - Margeson Drive

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

Northwest Community Council February 25, 2010 meeting, Item 5.1.

BACKGROUND

A presentation was made by the Waterstone Neighbourhood Association accompanied with the submission of a letter outlining concerns and recommendations regarding the implementation of the proposed Margeson Drive collector road.

DISCUSSION

The Waterstone Neighbourhood Association acknowledges that it has had ongoing dialogue with HRM staff on many of the issues raised in its letter. The following specific recommendations were made by the Association, with comments from HRM staff following each one:

Recommendation One: Build all of Margeson Drive in one phase

Staff has agreed with the Association in the past that constructing Margeson Drive from the Sackville River to Lucasville Road in a single phase is preferred. Difficulties arise in doing so however, as portions of Margeson Drive will need to be built by the developers whose land it crosses. These developers appear to be at a range of readiness in their development plans, so sections of the road may not be open at the same time. Furthermore, only a preliminary alignment for the road has been set to give individual developers flexibility in shifting the final alignment to optimize developability of their lands. Building the road before site layout can be designed may reduce the developers lot yield.

Staff will continue to work with the Association and developers to strive to meet the goal of opening the road in one continuous segment.

Recommendation Two: Shift the Margeson Drive alignment off of Cranley Road

Staff disagree with the letter's assertion that collector road traffic is proposed to be introduced to a local street. Cranley Road was already part of the designed alignment of the future Margeson Drive well before the street was constructed and residents moved onto it. This alignment was chosen for its intersection point on the Lucasville Road which would create a major four-leg intersection with good sight distance.

Nevertheless, HRM staff has begun an evaluation of alignment alternatives, including one that would use the NSP corridor as suggested in the letter. This assessment will take another 4-6 weeks to complete.

Recommendation Three: Margeson Drive should not be a truck route

The creation of collector roadways in these neighbourhoods is intended to collect generated traffic and deliver it to the regional roadway network. Shortcutting of any traffic, including trucks, is not intended to be accommodated. Margeson Drive south of Highway 101 will not be a truck route. Measures needed to reinforce truck management in the area will be developed prior to opening the roadway.

Recommendation Four: Design vehicle noise and light abatement strategies

HRM will follow standard roadway design procedures for Margeson Drive and design it to minor collector standard. Collector roadways like this are an essential part of large residential

neighbourhoods and exist throughout HRM. The noise and light that come with traffic generated by these neighbourhoods will always be part of them.

In their letter, the Association notes that a change from the original Margeson Drive alignment creates a new intersection on Stonewick Cross. While this is true, the original alignment used the existing Westpoint Drive with seventeen existing residences along it. By shifting to an alignment where access is better controlled, we believe that residential impact, overall, will be greatly reduced.

Recommendation Five: Address safety concerns

Issues related to intersection performance and sight distance will be assessed as part of the engineering design work. Methodologies have been established for the implementation of traffic control devices for pedestrians based on demonstrated need. These methodologies are intended to make ALL intersections operate as safely as possible whether devices are installed or not. The need for such measures at intersections along Margeson Drive will be assessed once the traffic and pedestrian flow characteristics can be measured.

Recommendation Six: Build Margeson Drive for Active Transportation

Encouragement of Active Transportation is an important aspect of moving sustainable transportation forward in HRM. Particular emphasis is made on creating active transportation connections to major transit terminals, such as the one proposed at the Margeson Drive Interchange at Highway 101. Although investments in active transportation are being made, it is not possible to commit to any specific project at this time. It should be recognized that accommodating bicycle traffic will require a greater street width and potentially greater property impacts. It will also add cost to the construction of the roadway.

Recommendation Seven: Designate Margeson Drive as a minor collector for its entire length with a 50 km/h speed limit

Roadway networks require a hierarchy of streets to provide effective traffic management. Traffic destined for the new Highway 101 interchange will be collected from a number of different directions and it is natural that the highest volumes will be collected nearer to the interchange. Accordingly, it was determined that the section of Margeson Drive nearest to the interchange should be built to an arterial standard with limited access points.

Limiting access points does not necessarily isolate adjacent parcels from development. It simply requires greater effort to minimize access points while still allowing development potential of lands to be realized.

Achieving a standard of limited access arterial requires significant additional expense, particularly in corridor acquisition. The value of this investment needs to be retained by protecting the intended function of the road. This function includes posting speed limits in the range of 60-70 km/h.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no budget implications.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ALTERNATIVES

There are no alternatives.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments.

A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by:
Report Approved by:



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