

BIKEWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

June 8, 2005

PRESENT: Councillor Sheila Fougere, Chair
Councillor Patrick Murphy
Councillor Stephen D. Adams
Rebecca O'Brien
Ward Skinner
John Smith
Candace Stevenson
Gerard Walsh

ABSENT: Cheryl Bidgood
Ken LeMoine (regrets)

**STAFF
AND OTHERS:** Ms. Rochelle Owen, Federal Department of Environment
Mr. Kelvin Sams, Burnside Bikes, Buses & Walking Committee
Mr. Ken Reashor, Manager, Traffic Authority
Mr. Greg Rice, Design Engineer, Design and Construction Services
Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:03 pm in the Media Room, 1st Floor, City Hall.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - February 16, 2005 and April 20, 2005

MOVED BY Ms. Candace Stevenson, seconded by Mr. Ward Skinner that the minutes of February 16, 2005 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Approval of the April 20, 2005 minutes was **deferred** as they were not available.

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

Additions:

- 7.1.1 Bike Safety - Ms. Rochelle Owen, Federal Department of Environment and Labour
- 7.1.2 Bicycle Initiatives - Mr. Kelvin Sams, Burnside Buses, Bikes and Car Pools
- 7.1.3 Bedford Highway - Mr. Ward Skinner
- 7.1.4 Information Flow - Ms. Candace Stevenson

MOVED BY Ms. Candace Stevenson, seconded by Mr. John Smith that the agenda be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

4.1 Status Sheet Items

4.1.1 HRTAT & HUGA May 9th Meeting

Mr. Gerard Walsh attended the May 9th meeting of the Halifax Regional Trails Advisory Team (HRTAT) hosted by the Halifax Urban Greenway Association (HUGA). He advised a tour of the HUGA route was given and there are cycling opportunities along that route.

Councillor Fougere explained that the HUGA route is the post trail between Chebucto Road to Point Pleasant Park. The concept design is done and the next step is construction. **It was suggested that HUGA be asked to present at a fall meeting (September) of the Bikeways Advisory Committee.**

4.1.2 Membership

The Legislative Assistant advised she has forwarded invitations to serve on the Bikeways Advisory Committee to four members of the local office for the Insurance Bureau of Canada (IBC). No response has been received as of yet.

The Legislative Assistant further advised that the report requesting an amendment to the BAC Terms of Reference for an additional member at large will be going forward to Regional Council on Tuesday, June 14th.

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

5.1 Membership Update

Dealt with under item 4.1.2 Membership. See page 3.

6. REPORTS

6.1 Bike Map Sub-Committee

6.1.1 HRM Bike Route Map - Electronic Availability

Mr. John Smith advised that the bike map is complete, copies have been distributed and it is also available on the web. He suggested any amendments to the map should come through the Bike Map Sub-Committee.

Mr. Ward Skinner commented that reception of the bike map has been wonderful. He suggested it would be beneficial to integrate the trails on the map (or just the trail connections) for the next printing. Mr. Smith advised that Ms. Jessie Debaie of HRDA is working on a trails map. Unfortunately, there would not be enough room to show all the trails outside the urban core on the map. The Committee suggested a note be included on the Bike Map that there is (will be) a separate trails map.

6.1.2 Bike Map Distribution

The Legislative Assistant advised there were 150 boxes of maps received, each box containing 135 maps. Thirty-six (36) boxes of maps have been distributed to; HRM Customer Service Centres, HRM Recreation Centres, HRM Libraries, the Nova Scotia Provincial Tourist Information site on the Halifax waterfront as well as to various bike shops throughout HRM and the province. (Cape Breton responded they want more maps).

Councillor Fougere suggested that Bicycle Nova Scotia (BNS) write to the province informing them how great the BNS safety pamphlet is. The Deputy Minister is Mr. Brian Stonehouse.

6.2 Bike Week Sub-Committee

Mr. Ward Skinner reviewed the bike week activities and circulated the Bike Week Events pamphlet. He added volunteers are needed on Sunday to assist with distribution of the brochures/maps and bottled water. Councillor Fougere suggested copies of the provincial children's booklet on bicycling be available for distribution.

Mr. Skinner thanked Councillor Fougere for ensuring a budget (\$4,000) was available for organizing Bike Week. He added there was some paid advertising (the French CBC). Mr. Skinner advised that he would submit a budget for \$8,000 (cash) for next year's budget which would cover advertising and assist in obtaining more sponsors. Ms. O'Brien suggested "in kind" figures be included in the budget preparation as each event organized has a value.

The Committee thanked Mr. Skinner and the members of the Bike Week Sub-Committee for all their work. Councillor Fougere also thanked Ms. Margaret Soley, Coordinator in the Deputy Chief Administrator's Office, for her assistance in obtaining the \$4,000 in funding for the Bike Week Event.

7. **ADDED ITEMS / NEW BUSINESS**

7.1 Added Items

7.1.1 Bike Safety Course - Ms. Rochelle Owen, Federal Department of Environment and Labour (Presentation)

Councillor Fougere introduced Ms. Rochelle Owen, Representative from the local office of the Federal Department of Environment and Labour (DEL).

Ms. Rochelle Owen explained that the local DEL office is adding bicycles to their fleet (currently five bikes in the fleet; three car assisted and one motorized). This initiative is to assist in the Federal Government efforts to reduce greenhouse gases and encourage active transportation. Ms. Owen commented that DEL will be tracking the trips by bicycle to show the reduction in greenhouse gases. She added the provincial DEL office is also interested setting up a similar bicycle program.

Ms. Owen explained that at a March 2005 (DEL) Regional Management Committee meeting, it was determined that all DEL employees are required by Occupational Health and Safety to have a defensive driving course for cyclists before being permitted to use the bicycles. She added her department has been searching for a bike safety course offered by a certified Instructor. She contacted the Nova Scotia Training Council concerning defensive driving

courses but was told there was no such course offered at this time. The Halifax Regional Police (HRP) provided two bike safety courses for DEL using training material developed for the HRP Officers. HRP is interested in assisting DEL in the interim but are not able to provide safety training for corporate organizations. She added there are fifteen employees on a waiting list for the next course and that three or four bike safety training courses would be required per year.

Ms. Owen concluded her presentation indicating she would like to work with whomever necessary to obtain a Certified Instructor/Trainer for ongoing bike safety training courses.

The Committee raised the following comments/concerns during the ensuing discussion:

- Corporate workplaces want hybrid bicycles for employees going to meetings etc.
- The Trainer/Instructor should be a paid position and not a volunteer.
- Perhaps the "Y" might offer the bike safety training courses.

Mr. Smith advised there are two programs for bike safety training: Can Bike and Sprock Kids. Two members of Bicycle Nova Scotia took the Can Bike training and were offering the safety training as volunteers but it became too time consuming. The Can Bike program involves two weekends of training and the cost is \$750 to become certified.

Mr. Smith further advised he had developed a *Lunch and Learn* session and approximately twelve people attended (only three of those persons rode a bicycle). He added eleven Sprock Kids have been trained as Instructors. He intends to work with HRM to have the courses offered at the HRM Recreation Centres.

Ms. O'Brien commented that TRAX has money from the Office of Health Promotion to do training. The Office of Health Promotion will sponsor one "Instructor" from HRM and one province wide. She added that Mr. Ted Scrutton is involved with that initiative. Ms. O'Brien further commented that workplace bicycle use is a great incentive. She added the Ecology Action Centre (EAC) will follow-up to make sure there is an HRM presence at the Instructor training.

Councillor Fougere suggested the Chief of Police and HRM's Manager of Recreation Services be e-mailed and asked what role they see themselves playing in this initiative on an ongoing basis.

7.1.2 Bicycle Initiatives - Mr. Kelvin Sams

Councillor Fougere introduced Mr. Kelvin Sams, Director of the Greater Burnside Business Association and Chair of the *Burnside Buses, Bikes and Car Pools Committee*.

Mr. Sams indicated that his company, Windows Plus Home Improvements, employs approximately thirty people. Given the increasing cost of car insurance etc, his company is attempting to make it easier for his employees to get to work. Many employees of Burnside are from the Highfield Park area. Commuting from Highfield Park to the Burnside Industrial Park is dangerous (crossing the highway). The focus of *Burnside Buses, Bikes and Car Pools* is on making travel to and from the Burnside Industrial Park safe for all commuters.

Mr. Sams distributed a picture of the Wright Avenue / Burnside Drive intersection that was installed last year. He explained that he had asked if this was considered a bike friendly interchange and was told yes. Mr. Sams commented that the curb has been extended to meet the white line of the shoulder so commuters must merge with the traffic at this point and cross the white line. Larger vehicles (transport trucks) are assuming the space is there for the commuter (cyclists/pedestrian) but the commuter is forced to “jump” out in the traffic at the point where the curb is extended into the vehicle lane.

Mr. Ken Reashor, Manager, Traffic Authority, explained that there had been an error in construction and medians were constructed incorrectly. He added the contract is out and the error will be corrected at all four locations.

Councillor Murphy commented that perhaps HRM should send notice to the truckers regarding the need to be aware of cyclists and to share the road. Mr. Sams responded that signage and lanes are important but that communication would be difficult as the truckers come from all over Canada and the United States. Ms. O'Brien added that truckers are used to highways and may not be aware of cyclists using the local routes.

Mr. Sams advised that the main frustration faced by the *Burnside Buses, Bikes and Car Pools* Committee was in determining who to talk to regarding commuter concerns. He added their Committee knows Burnside very well and would like to “feed” the Bikeways Advisory Committee with information regarding hot points in Burnside and to look at Capital Costs for related work projects. Mr. Greg Rice, HRM Design Engineer, suggested Mr. Sams speak with Audrey MacKinnon.

Councillor Fougere commented that knowing where bike traffic is being generated (coming from and going to) would be helpful. The Committee agreed that the common perception is that the majority of commuters are heading to the downtown core.

Councillor Adams left the meeting at 1:14 pm.

Mr. Ken Reashor further advised that an overpass (over Highway 111) from Highfield Park to Burnside is anticipated. The design will start this year and construction in perhaps one more year. He added that Burnside is probably one of the best areas served in terms of bicycling as there are more signs there (for example along Wright Avenue and Akerley Boulevard). Mr.

Sams added that the problem is getting to Burnside. Mr. Sams requested the (construction and design) plans for the next two years that involve Burnside in order for the *Burnside Buses, Bikes and Car Pools* Committee to review them and perhaps offer comment.

On behalf of the Committee, Councillor Fougere thanked Mr. Sams for his presentation.

7.1.3 Bedford Highway - Mr. Ward Skinner

Mr. Ken Reashor, Manager, Traffic Authority, commented that substantial misinformation has been circulating in regards to the Bedford Highway. He explained that a submission was made for \$300,000 for a major project but that initiative never made it through budget approval as there were 150 initiatives submitted. He added money was allocated for traffic signals and another \$80,000 was added to that from his budget for a total of \$200,000. The \$300,000 was based on just widening the shoulders of the Bedford Highway as long as there were no additional issues involved such as drainage/paving. He added staff are looking at how much work can be done on the Bedford Highway with the \$200,000. Projects such as signage will be completed but it is uncertain what other work will be done. Design and Construction Services are assisting the Traffic Authority in determining what other work can be done. There is a micro-surfacing project for the Bedford Highway, it may look like new asphalt but it is not. It is hoped that work to widen the shoulders will be done at this location.

Mr. Walsh commented that the Bedford Highway is a high use route and has tremendous demand on it as it is the only convenient way to get to Halifax. The Bedford Highway was the original priority of the HRM Bike Plan. As a cyclist, he commented that the worst section of the Bedford Highway is at Nelson's Landing to Larry Uteck Boulevard as it is very narrow. A significant portion of highway in that area is already paved due to the parking lots for the Down East Cellular location. He added he did not have the impression that work on the Bedford Highway would be done in one year. Mr. Reashor commented that he would not like to see a bike lane around the parking lots of Down East Cellular as there is uncontrolled access in and out of that location. He indicated some type of curb or sidewalk would be required to offer some protection.

Councillor Fougere commented that every household in HRM received information in the Naturally Green paper that the Bedford Highway would be done.

The Committee commented on the following bicycle related general road work projects:

Mr. John Smith advised he has chosen the following eight streets for priority consideration:

1. Novalea Drive - resurfacing project. Mr. Reashor added that Mr. Smith will be assisting with reviewing new locations for bicycle route signage.
2. Highfield Park Drive - Victoria Road to end of existing sidewalk.
3. Portland Street

4. Beaver Bank Road - Stokil Drive to Beaver Bank Junction - installing a sidewalk. Lane will be 5 m wide on outside lane. Mr. Walsh commented it will be a wide curb lane. Mr. Rice responded it could be a marked curb lane. Mr. Smith added that all primary routes connecting to it are wide curb lanes. Mr. Reashor and Mr. Rice both agreed that stripping an outbound bike lane (400-500m) at this location is possible. Mr. Walsh commented that it is a "tricky" area right now. Ms. Stevenson added this would help drivers be more aware of cyclists using the road as well.
5. Cobequid Road to Judy Ann Court - sidewalk project one side inbound. Mr. Walsh commented that the Cobequid Road has very narrow pavement and suggested 5m there as well. Mr. Rice explained it would depend on what other factors are involved such as the earth sloping drastically as HRM cannot go onto private property. He explained there was more room on the Beaver Bank Road so 5m was given at that location. Mr. Reashor added that continuity is part of the issue and 4.5 m has already been built, this will be an extension to it. Mr. Reashor added that staff are trying to conform to the standards being placed in the Red Book.
6. St. Margaret's Bay Road to Civic 19 - Timberlea Village Parkway to Highway103 - installing a sidewalk - lane width 4.5 metres wide - pavement width will be extended by 1 metre.
7. Purcells' Cove Road from Flemming to Burns: sidewalk will go on Dingle side as there is right of way there. Mr. Smith added there is a narrow section where the pavement is in poor condition. Mr. Rice added that this could be a shopping list item and if there is money left at the end of the budget the project could be considered. Mr. Reashor added that in the long term, the Purcells Cove Road is one of the projects.
8. Cole Harbour Road - Smith to Morash - sidewalk. Very short section - design has not been started yet as it is a shopping list item.

Ms. Stevenson advised that a *Share the Road* sign is required at the location of the Maritime Museum on Lower Water Street, near the Robertson store as the road narrows at that location. Mr. Smith commented that he moves to the middle of the lane at that location. Mr. Reashor responded that speed is not high at that location and the drivers will either be cognizant of the pedestrians/cyclists or not and explained that signage is given to indicate a continuous route not necessarily one pinch point. Ms. O'Brien commented that there is a signed pinch point area on Quinpool Road.

Mr. Skinner inquired on the status of the proposed bridge near Lake Bannook that would join the trails system. He added this is a challenging area and a lot of joggers/walkers use this area therefore the matter has to be resolved as it is a major connector. Councillor Fougere commented that the area is part of the Trans Canada Trail and there was not enough funding to complete the job. Mr. Reashor commented that the Active Transportation Consultant has been made aware of this issue.

7.1.4 Information Flow

Ms. Stevenson withdrew this matter from the agenda.

7.2 New Business

7.2.1 Bike Safety Course

This issue was discussed during Item 7.1.1 Bike Safety Course. See page 5.

7.2.2 Metro Link Bike Racks

Councillor Fougere advised the *Metro Link* buses will begin operating in September. *Metro Link* was designed as a commuter “link” service from the “burbs” to downtown. Trails will also “link” to a BRT terminal and there will be bike lockers and bike racks available. Each *Metro Link* bus has space for two bikes on the bike racks located at the front of each bus. The bike racks are user operated and are very simple to use. Metro Transit has a video that demonstrates how to place the bike on and off the racks. Mr. Ward Skinner advised there will be a demonstration on Friday at the Maritime Museum from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Mr. Walsh commented that the bike racks at the Portland Hills BRT Terminal are temporary as the specified bike racks were not ready. He added that Mr. Geoff Wright of Metro Transit confirmed the temporary bike racks will be replaced as soon as the proper ones are available.

7.2.3 Report to Regional Council

Councillor Fougere invited the Committee to attend the Regional Council session on Tuesday as she will be presenting the first annual BAC report.

Mr. Walsh commented that there is no information available as to what has already been accomplished in regards to the HRM Bike Plan. The Committee suggested that whatever Councillor Fougere presents in the annual report could be incorporated onto the bike page to summarize the work that has been done. Councillor Fougere advised that Mr. Reashor, Manager, Traffic Authority, will be providing information for her presentation as well.

Ms. O'Brien indicated there were approximately five letters regarding bicycle matters in the Chronicle-Herald paper yesterday saying “GOOD WORK” for the bike initiatives. Many comments were also reflecting that they see “bits and pieces” but now HRM has to connect the dots.

8. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting will be held on July 20th. Committee members are encouraged to confirm availability with the Legislative Assistant as a quorum is required.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:29 pm.

Chris Newson
Legislative Assistant