

**ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

May 20, 2010

- PRESENT:** Councillor Linda Mosher, Chair
Councillor Jennifer Watts, Vice Chair
Mr. Ted Scrutton
Mr. Walter Regan
Ms. Lauralee Sim
Ms. Alison MacDonald
Ms. Gai Thomas
Mr. Friedemann Brauer
- REGRETS:** Councillor David Hendsbee
Mr. Tom Boyd
Mr. Michael Beiswanger
Mr. Ibrahim Orengo
Ms. Janet Barlow
- STAFF:** Mr. Roddy MacIntyre, Transportation Engineer
Ms. Roxane MacInnis, Transportation Demand Management
Planner
Mr. Mike Connors, Transportation Planner
Ms. Hanita Koblents, Transportation Demand Management
Coordinator
Mr. Richard MacLellan, Manager, Sustainable Environment
Management Office
Ms. Nicole May, Landscape Architect
Mr. Tylor McDuff, Legislative Support

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm.

2. COMMITTEE UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Vice Chair introduced Ms. Jennifer McGowan, Community Adviser for the School Travel Planning and Making Tracks Programs with the Ecology Action Centre.

Mr. Walter Regan announced that on June 12, 2010 at 1:00 p.m., there would be a special presentation and dedication ceremony, renaming the Lower Sackville Bridge after one of the past presidents of the Trails Association.

Ms. Sim reported that the Halifax Cycling coalition (HCC) had completed a bike count report. She added that the report is available on the HCC website at www.cyclehalifax.ca. The Vice Chair requested that a presentation of this report be added to the next meeting agenda.

Councillor Watts highlighted a meeting on June 5, 2010, which involved a variety of organizations. She described the meeting as a “think tank” or “fusion group meeting”. She explained that the meeting would involve a focus on Transit and Active Transportation.

Ms. MacDonald announced that Clean Nova Scotia would be hosting a relay on June 5, 2010, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the empty parking lot on Lower Water Street. She explained that the goal of the relay was to drive one’s vehicle over a planned route as efficiently as possible. Ms MacDonald added that there would be a barbecue and that volunteers would be available to inspect vehicles to ensure maximum efficiency.

Mr. Scrutton noted that June 5, 2010 was International Trails Day.

Ms. Sim announced that the Halifax Bike Race and Halifax Cycling Coalition Street Party would be held on Sunday, May 30, 2010 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the streets around the Halifax North Common. She added that more information was available in the HRM Bike Week Brochure and on the HCC website, www.cyclehalifax.ca.

Ms. Nicole May, Landscape Architect, introduced herself and explained she was working on a project involving Lower Water Street that was parallel to the One Way Street discussion (5.2).

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - April 15, 2010

Mr. Brauer indicated that the reference on page five of the Minutes to a “movement in London, England to increase the number of streets with twenty mile an hour (...) speed limits” should be amended to “forty mile an hour”. He also supplied the source of the information for inclusion with the minutes.

Mr. Scrutton noted that on page five of the minutes, in the paragraph regarding the Provincial Trails Conference, the reference to a “Rural Café” should be amended to “World Café”.

MOVED BY Mr. Scrutton, seconded by Ms. Thomas, that the minutes of April 15, 2010 be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions:

- 9.1 Proposed Budget - Mr. Regan
- 9.2 Pedestrian Issues - Ms. Thomas

Ms. Hanita Koblents, Transportation Demand Management Coordinator, indicated she would refer to the Bike Week and Bike Summit Update (8.2) during the presentation on Traffic and Right of Way Services Work Relating to Active Transportation (7.3.3).

5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

5.1 One Way Street Discussion - Mike Connors, Transportation Analyst

- Proposal to Change Traffic Patterns in Downtown Halifax was submitted.

Mr. Mike Connors, Transportation Analyst, reported that HRM was looking at changing traffic patterns in the downtown core which would result in alternating one-way streets in some areas as opposed to two-way. He explained that this shift was in order to produce more travel lanes and to implement more non-traffic street uses such as bike lanes, parking, patios and cafes.

Mr. Connors highlighted the two bike lane corridors that would result from the proposed shift in traffic patterns: a North-bound lane on Lower Water Street and a South-bound lane on Hollis.

Mr. Connors explained that the North-bound bike lane on Lower Water Street would

have to end at the Morses' Tea Building on account of the narrowing of the street and the necessity of moving two lanes of traffic past the 'choke point'.

Mr. Roddy MacIntyre, Transportation Engineer, noted that this termination of the bike lane has been identified as one of the missing links in the proposed changes.

Mr. Connors reported that the bike lanes range in width from 1.5 to 1.7 metres and added that the lanes would be opposite the vehicle parking, on the right hand side. He indicated that it was hoped the proposed changes would be implemented sometime next year after more public consultation.

Ms. Nicole May, Landscape Architect, reported that she was looking for a solution to the problem of the bike lane termination point. She indicated she had done a survey of all available widths and that the study was a work in progress. She added there was ongoing dialogue between all the groups involved in the matter.

Mr. Scrutton advised to consider maximum possible widths for bike lanes wherever possible.

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS - None

Councillor Mosher arrived at 4:19 p.m. and assumed the Chair.

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS, AND PRESENTATIONS

7.1 Correspondence - None

7.2 Petitions - None

7.3 Presentations

7.3.1 Herring Cove Road Bike Lanes Project - Mr. Roddy MacIntyre, Transportation Engineer

Mr. MacIntyre presented to the Committee regarding the Herring Cove Road Bike Lanes Project. He explained that staff had been approached by Real Property Planning concerning putting islands along Herring Cove Road, from Old Sambro to the Captain William Spry Library, and added that Design and Construction were also doing some repaving. He related that he had done some graphic modelling of the traffic patterns with the inclusion of bike lanes, since the area had been identified in the Active Transportation Plan, and noted that there was little change. He described the traffic delays as being, at worst, the same as the lane system currently in place.

Mr. MacIntyre explained that the current cross section is six lanes across and added that the current traffic volumes do not necessitate that many, resulting in leftover capacity. He presented a cross section that removed one lane of traffic in each direction which transformed the central area into two-way left turn lanes to provide access to businesses. Mr. MacIntyre reported that with the proposed system there was still reserved capacity.

Mr. MacIntyre indicated that it was relatively simple to revert to the current model, with no bike lanes, as it was simply a matter of repainting the lanes.

Mr. MacIntyre reported that most of the public response has been negative and that the most frequent criticisms were regarding the road's ability to handle the traffic and that customers would not be able to access businesses. He explained that staff brought the issue forward to the Committee in order to advise Council.

Mr. Cecil Kane, Spryfield Business owner, presented the concerns of the Spryfield Business Commission. He explained that the vast majority of business owners in the area were against the proposal. He described the concerns of property owners and the negative affect the proposed changes would have on new development in the area.

A discussion ensued surrounding the actual amount of reserve capacity and how long it would last. Mr. MacIntyre explained that it depended on the rate of development of growth in the area.

The Chair indicated that more information was needed and requested available data regarding the concerns brought forth by the Spryfield Business Commission. She added that the Committee cannot make changes to the AT Plan approved by Council and noted that the area is designated in the AT Plan as to include bike lanes.

Mr. MacIntyre clarified that when conducting the graphic modelling, he made no reductions for bicycles. He explained he took all the existing traffic and projected it onto the new design.

MOVED BY Councillor Watts, seconded by Ms. Thomas, that the Active Transportation Advisory Committee request a staff report outlining the following issues: width of the bike lane and the issues of congestion raised by the Spryfield Business Commission that might be negatively impacted. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

Mr. Scrutton noted that the focus of the Committee was on Active Transportation and that issues from other industries such as business need not necessarily be considered in their discussions. He added that the Terms of Reference limited the Committee to

the implementation of the AT Plan as approved by council.

7.3.2 Traffic and Right of Way Services Relating to Active Transportation - Ms. Hanita Koblents, Transportation Demand Management Coordinator

- Bike Week Brochure was submitted.
- Bike Lanes and Trails Maps Brochure was submitted.

Ms. Hanita Koblents, Transportation Demand Management Coordinator, presented on her role as TDM Coordinator and informed the Committee on some of the responsibilities of her department. Ms. Koblents added she would be attending meetings on a more regular basis.

Ms. Koblents explained that TDM had input into on-road infrastructure by reviewing annual capital projects. She described that one way of developing AT infrastructure was to partner with existing construction projects. She added that TDM was responsible for ensuring appropriate signage however not on trails unless the trail was impacted by a right of way.

Ms. Koblents reported that each year students are hired to do traffic counts and occasionally pedestrian counts. She added that she hoped to conduct some bike counts this year.

Ms. Koblents indicated that TDM was also responsible for crosswalks and explained that crosswalks were only installed where they were warranted. She noted that studies were conducted to identify where crosswalks were necessary using a formula concerning ratios between vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Ms. Koblents added that bike parking was also a facet of TDM's work and noted that information was available online at www.halifax.ca/cycling regarding how to request a bike rack. She explained that bike racks were only installed on public property. She also reported that there were ten transit terminal bike lockers.

Ms. Koblents described a Bike Valet Pilot Program that would offer secure bike parking at special events. She noted that the Program could be a fundraiser and added that she was looking for a community partner to help move the initiative forward. She explained that, from a TDM perspective, the large number of people attending special events encourages people to travel by means other than cars. Ms. Koblents explained that some venues have regular bike parking however they may not be capable of accommodating larger than normal attendance and added that some equipment has been purchased to alleviate the costs for a community partner to take charge of the

initiative.

Ms. Koblents indicated she wanted to see a publication detailing Bike Parking for Explore HRM and for posting online. She added there were also plans to revise the Crosswalk Safety Booklet and reported she had current editions available and welcomed any feedback. She noted that the Bike and Trail Map was revised in 2009 and that she could be contacted for copies.

Ms. Koblents reported that Bike Week would start on Friday, May 28, 2010. She indicated that the event operated on \$5,000 from Council and another \$5,000 raised from sponsors. She explained that Bike Week brought together about 30 different organizations.

A discussion followed regarding recent legislation adopted in Ontario concerning safe passing distance for passing a cyclist.

MOVED BY Mr. Brauer, seconded by Ms. MacDonald, that the Active Transportation Advisory Committee request that staff explore new legislation in Ontario regarding safe passing distances for motor vehicles passing cyclists. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Chair reported that the Chain of Lakes Trail would be celebrating the completion of a paved section of the Trail in October 2010 and suggested the Committee host a cycling event.

Mr. Regan reported that he had attended the Saltscapes Exhibition and noted the number of attendees visiting the Trails Association booth. He suggested there should have been some form of AT presence at the Exhibition.

7.3.3 UNSM Active Transportation Video - Ms. Roxane MacInnis, Transportation Demand Management Planner

- **UNSM Active Transportation Video was presented.**

Ms. Roxane MacInnis, Transportation Demand Management, presented a video developed by the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM). She noted that the video would also be shown to Council.

The video presented statistics concerning the lack of physical activity by Nova Scotians and also explained some of the benefits of Active Transportation. It highlighted that most AT initiatives occurred within communities and noted that many of the municipalities in Nova Scotia have adopted AT plans.

The video outlined a Framework for Action that involved commitment, planning, facilities, and promotion and communicated the importance of building accessible Active Transportation into every aspect of decision making.

The video identified the adoption of the Active Transportation Resolution by the UNSM as a step towards making AT a priority throughout Nova Scotia and noted that provincial and municipal government policies were now required to make AT infrastructure an integral part of planning for future sustainable transportation. It explained that nearly every sector of society and economy stood to benefit from investment in AT.

Ms. MacInnis indicated that the video was available on the UNSM website, www.unsm.ca, and added that it would be sent to all municipalities across the province accompanied by relevant literature.

8. REPORTS

8.1 Bike Rack Design Competition

- The Bike Rack Design Competition Report was before the Committee.

Mr. Richard MacLellan, Manager, Sustainable Environment Management Office, provided an overview of the Bike Rack Design Competition. He explained that a local restaurant owner, involved with community and environmental organizations, had an idea about an annual competition in order to encourage cycling in Halifax. Mr. MacLellan reported that the response to the Competition was great and that the winning design would be announced on the first day of Bike Week.

Mr. MacLellan noted that the cost per rack was between \$1800.00 and \$4000 and indicated that there was available funds to cover the costs of the Competition through 2012. Mr. MacLellan recommended that the Committee act as municipal contact for the competition.

MOVED BY Mr. Scrutton, seconded by Mr. Regan, that the Active Transportation Advisory Committee act as the municipal contact for an annual Community Bike Rack Art and Design Competition, to be open to all residents of HRM, and support the fabrication of the winning prototype in 2011/12. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9. ADDED ITEMS

9.1 Proposed Budget - Mr. Regan

Mr. Regan wanted to inform the Committee of the proposed cuts in funding for trails in the upcoming budget. He noted that capital funds were being cut but not funds for trail maintenance.

The Chair clarified that staff recommended the cuts however the budget had not yet been approved by Council.

Mr. Regan encouraged Council to maintain the current amount of funding for trail maintenance.

9.2 Pedestrian Safety - Ms. Thomas

Ms. Thomas recalled the request from the previous meeting to explore pedestrian issues and reported that she had collaborated with residents in her community. She noted that there were two intersections where pedestrians never receive a walk signal and added that there was also no push button.

Ms. Koblents suggested there could be a mechanical problem and Ms. Thomas offered to verify the street locations and forward the information.

10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no one wishing to speak at this time.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for June 17, 2010.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:53 p.m.