

**ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

**September 16, 2010**

- PRESENT:** Councillor Linda Mosher, Chair  
Councillor Jennifer Watts, Vice Chair  
Councillor David Hendsbee  
Mr. Friedemann Brauer  
Mr. Michael Beiswanger  
Mr. Ted Scrutton  
Mr. Walter Regan  
Ms. Lauralee Sim
- REGRETS:** Ms. Alison MacDonald  
Mr. Tom Boyd  
Ms. Gai Thomas
- STAFF:** Ms. Jessie Debaie, Assistant Regional Trails Coordinator,  
Regional Planning  
Ms. Hanita Koblents, Transportation Demand Management  
Coordinator  
Tylor McDuff, Legislative Support

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:13 p.m. at Bloomfield Centre, 2786 Agricola Street, Halifax, without quorum present.

The Chair read for the Committee a communication from Ms. Alison MacDonald, Halifax Harbour Bridges (HHB), concerning continued representation on the Committee. Ms. MacDonald's letter explained that the role of HHB with respect to the Active Transportation Advisory Committee had changed significantly since the Committee's inception when bike lanes were being planned for the MacDonald Bridge.

The Chair explained that Ms. MacDonald was suggesting that her role become similar that of HRM staff in that she would be available to attend meetings when agenda items required input from HHB. The Chair added that she had left a message with Ms. MacDonald concerning her suggestion.

The Chair noted a problem with the Committee's membership and indicated that there were already vacancies for the Ecology Action Centre (EAC), the Province of Nova Scotia, Transportation and Infrastructure, and the Youth Advisory Committee. The Chair suggested that the Committee's Terms of Reference be amended to remove the representative from HHB and to adjust quorum to reflect the amount of sitting members.

**2. COMMITTEE UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mr. Walter Regan thanked Mr. David Backlund, a student from Bedford who had undertaken a Trail Bike Count.

Mr. Regan thanked the Chair for arranging a meeting between the Halifax Regional Trails Association (HRTA) and Halifax Water. Mr. Regan explained that there was a problem with access to trails due to some construction and added that Halifax Water was going to work with HRM staff to improve access.

Mr. Regan reported that all Trails groups were meeting their deadlines for requests for funding. He noted that the deadline was October 20, 2010.

Mr. Regan reported that there would be a Trails Camp on October 1, 2010. He circulated a copy of the application form. Mr. Regan noted the significance of the Camp and indicated that over twenty organizations would be attending.

Mr. Regan indicated that the HRTA awarded the Chain of Lakes Trail Association (COLTA) \$20,000 for a Greenway Plan. He explained that this would allow COLTA to make future plans and added that \$39,000 was available for other trails projects.

Mr. Regan commended HRM staff for the new Get Out, Check It Out brochures. He indicated that to celebrate the new brochures, a number of trail walks would be held at the following locations and times:

- St.Margaret's Bay Rails to Trails – Saturday, September 18, 2010
- Fort Sackville Walkway Bedford Sackville Connector Greenway –Sunday, September 19, 2010.
- Point Pleasant Park Trails – Saturday, October 16, 2010
- Sir Sanford Fleming Park –Sunday, October 17, 2010
- Shubie Canal Greenway Corridor – Saturday, October 23, 2010
- Atlantic View Trail – Sunday, October 24, 2010

Mr. Regan added that all walks were at 2:00 p.m.

Mr. Regan announced that the Portland Estates Trails Association recently put to tender a \$900,000 Active Transportation project that would connect many of the trails in Halifax and Dartmouth.

Mr. Regan stated that HRM Trails staff was developing templates that would clarify who was responsible for various aspects of trails. He explained the template would clarify a lot of the trail operations and facilitate staff response to problems.

Mr. Regan introduced Ms. Wendy McDonald, alternative representative for HRTA, to the Committee.

Mr. Friedemann Brauer entered the meeting at 4:20 p.m and quorum was achieved.

Mr. Ted Scrutton reminded the Committee of the Provincial Trails Conference from October 1 to October 3, 2010.

Ms. Lauralee Sim reported that the Halifax Cycling Coalition would be hosting hour-long bike tours during the Nocturne Art Festival on October 16, 2010.

Councillor Jennifer Watts advised the Committee that a petition from a Bedford resident that had gone before Council on Tuesday, September 14, 2010, noting that it would be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.

Councillor Watts reported that a group focused on sustainable transportation meets at the Dalhousie School of Planning every second Wednesday. Councillor Watts indicated she would provide contact information for anyone interested in attending a meeting.

The Chair indicated that a meeting of COLTA would take place at 6:00 p.m. on September 16, 2010. She added that a grand opening was to be planned and welcomed any volunteers or suggestions from the Committee.

The Chair reported that COLTA had a budget of \$1,000,000 and that the tender came in at \$7,000,000 for the planned paving from Joseph Howe Drive to Crown Drive in the Fairmount subdivision. The Chair explained that Federal, Provincial, and Municipal governments agreed the excess budget could be used to extend paving to Northwest

Arm Drive. She added that the total distance from Joseph Howe Drive to Northwest Arm Drive was three-and-a-half kilometres.

Councillor David Hendsbee announced that the Craig's Cause Pancreatic Cancer Society would be hosting the Fourth Annual Awareness Bike Tour on September 25, 2010 at Porter's Lake Provincial Park.

### **3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – JUNE 17, 2010**

Councillor Watts inquired about the letter to Mr. Roger Wells and Mr. Austin French referenced in the minutes for the June 17, 2010 meeting indicating the Committee's desire to contribute to the reviews of the Regional Plan and Active Transportation Plan. Mr. Tylor McDuff, Legislative Support, agreed to follow up on the status of that letter.

**MOVED BY Mr. Regan, seconded by Councillor Watts, that the minutes of June 17, 2010 be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

- 9.1 Commuting in Halifax, NS: Exploring Midlife Women's Perceptions and Experiences of Active Transportation
- 9.2 Correspondence – Bicycle Licensing/Registration

### **5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

#### **5.1 Proposed Bicycle Lanes, Herring Cove Road – Debrief – Ms. Hanita Koblents, TDM Coordinator**

Ms. Hanita Koblents, Transportation Demand Management Coordinator, presented to the Committee regarding the proposed bicycle lanes on Herring Cove Road. Ms. Koblents described the proposal to change the pavement markings on Herring Cove Road to one lane of vehicular traffic and one bike lane in each direction from the current marking pattern of two vehicular lanes in each direction. She noted that the proposal was defeated in Council by a vote of thirteen to nine. Ms. Koblents explained that one of the main persuaders in opposition to the proposal was a petition with 2,500 signatures.

A discussion followed regarding Council's decision.

Mr. Regan lamented the lack of safety for cyclists with the current pavement marking system.

Councillor Hendsbee indicated he felt that more information for Councillors such as the Herring Cove Road Streetscapes Report would have given Councillors a better idea of

the goal of the proposal. He suggested that future phases of the resurfacing be consistent with the Active Transportation plan and staff recommendation.

The Chair clarified that the Streetscapes Report did not request bike lanes but wider curbs.

The Chair indicated she disagreed with the use of boulevards and noted that the space could be used to accommodate bike lanes.

Mr. Scrutton underscored the importance of educating all stakeholders of the benefits of bicycle lanes. He noted data that suggests how bicycle lanes could result in increased business and property value and suggested that this information needed to be understood by everyone involved before the changes would be welcomed.

Councillor Watts explained that she had received correspondence from municipalities across the county that demonstrate the obstacles involved in implementing bicycle lanes.

Councillor Watts noted the weight of the petition presented to Council. She disagreed that more reports would have changed the outcome and suggested the need to mobilize support for bicycle lanes.

Mr. Steve Bedard, Halifax Cycling Coalition, informed the Committee of a video presentation that addressed some of the concerns of the Committee regarding education of the public on the benefits of bicycle lanes.

The Chair requested that a presentation of Mr. Bedard's video be added to the agenda of a future meeting for the Committee's review.

## **5.2      Workplan**

The Chair explained that from the workshops in January and February, 2010, the Committee expressed a desire to focus on deliverables. She noted that a report should be submitted to Council on the Committee's activities. The Chair indicated that subcommittees were needed to coordinate the various aspects of the Committee and in order to inform Council.

### **5.2.1      Bike Week 2010 Debrief – Ms. Hanita Koblents, TDM Coordinator**

Ms. Koblents presented to the Committee regarding Bike Week 2010. She reported that Bike Week lasted ten days and included over thirty separate events. Ms. Koblents added that there were more than 4,700 participants and indicated that popular events included the kick-off, the AI Fresco Movie Night and the Halifax Cycling Coalition street party. She added that the IWK participated for the first time and that Mountain Equipment Co-op coordinated events at HRM schools.

Ms. Koblents showed pictures from various events including the winning bike rack design from the contest sponsored by the Wooden Monkey and WHW Architects.

Ms. Koblents reported that the Mountain Biking Association was founded during Bike Week. She highlighted an education piece that taught cyclists how to ride on the road with traffic and noted a ride-to-school initiative that saw more than 1,100 students and 200 parents participate.

Ms. Koblents explained that HRM contributed \$5,000 towards Bike Week and that additional funding is procured from other sources. She added that more partnerships and sponsors would add to increasing the success of Bike Week.

The Chair requested that information regarding participants and the Bike Week budget from Ms. Koblents report be forwarded to the Legislative Assistant as data for a future report to Council.

**(i) Bike Week 2011 Subcommittee & Workplan**

Ms. Koblents requested suggestions for representatives to sit on an organizing subcommittee for Bike Week 2011 as well as suggestions for activities.

A discussion followed regarding representatives for the subcommittee and activities to be included in Bike Week 2011.

Mr. Regan suggested contacting Mr. David Backlund of Bedford.

Councillor Hendsbee noted that the RCMP used to conduct bike seminars with various schools.

Mr. Scrutton noted that Dunbrack Street and Northwest Arm Drive are excellent locations for activities on account of the many communities in the area.

The Chair reported a video regarding 'ciclovia' that addresses connecting various communities with bicycle lanes and indicated she had passed it on to Mr. David McCusker, Manager of Strategic Transportation Planning, for consideration. She indicated the Committee should put forward any concrete suggestions that address the issue of connecting communities.

The Chair suggested that the group meeting at the Dalhousie School of Planning might have some valuable input.

Councillor Hendsbee suggested contacting Canadian Tire or another corporation in order to coordinate promotional sales on cycling equipment.

Councillor Watts recommended including information online about volunteer opportunities in HRM as a recruiting measure.

Ms. Sim volunteered to sit on the Bike Week 2011 subcommittee.

### **5.2.2      Safety/Education Subcommittee & Workplan**

The Chair explained that one of the goals that came forward from the workshops in January and February 2010 was to “establish a complete, integrated and readily-accessible region-wide Active Transportation Network for Rural and Urban Areas”. She added that one of the deliverables was “coordination and promotion of education and safety”. The Chair requested volunteers for the necessary subcommittee.

Mr. Scrutton, Mr. Regan, and Councillor Watts volunteered to sit on the subcommittee.

The Chair noted that Mr. Orengo and Ms. Gabrielle Riley-Gallagher, Active Living Coordinator, had expressed an interest in this issue.

The Chair suggested a representative from the group meeting at the Dalhousie School of Planning would be valuable on this subcommittee.

Mr. Scrutton suggested that organizations with expertise such as Capital Health, would contribute to the subcommittee.

The Chair requested that the Ecology Action Centre be approached to provide a representative.

The Chair requested that the subcommittee should meet and review the templates developed at the January and February, 2010 workshops to determine what resources might be necessary.

The Chair noted that subcommittees would report to the Committee at each meeting.

## **6.            CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE**

## **7.            CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS**

### **7.1          Correspondence**

#### **7.1.1       Education of Bicycle Riders**

- August 5, 2010 correspondence from Ms. Janet Brush was before the Committee.

Councillor Watts indicated she had received an email from Ms. Janet Brush and suggested to Ms. Brush she direct a letter to the Committee.

The Committee agreed to refer the matter to the Safety/Education Subcommittee.



### **7.1.2 Results of HRM Bicycle Use Survey**

- Results of HRM Bicycle Use Survey were before the Committee.

The Committee agreed to refer the report to the Safety/Education Subcommittee for review.

### **7.2 Petitions - None**

### **7.3 Presentations**

#### **7.3.1 Wrong Way Sewer Grates – Mr. Steve Bedard, Halifax Cycling Coalition**

- Maps indicating the locations of wrong way sewer grates in HRM were before the Committee.

Mr. Steve Bedard, Halifax Cycling Coalition, presented to the Committee regarding the locations of wrong way sewer grates that posed a safety hazard to cyclists.

The Chair indicated that sewer grates were the responsibility of the Water Commission and offered to bring the information to the Commission.

**MOVED BY Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Mr. Regan, that the Active Transportation Advisory Committee refer the issue of wrong way sewer grates to Halifax Water and Municipal Operations staff for consideration to replace those that have been identified by the Halifax Cycling Coalition. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

## **8. REPORTS**

### **8.1 Safe Cycling Practices**

- July 26, 2010 Montreal Gazette Article “Are We Pedalling Backward?” was before the Committee.

The Committee agreed to refer the item to the Safety/Education Subcommittee for review.

**9. ADDED ITEMS**

**9.1 Commuting in Halifax, NS: Exploring Midlife Women't Perceptions and Experiences of Active Transportation was before the Committee**

The Chair explained that the Commuting in Halifax, NS research looked at accessible AT infrastructure with minimal hazards. She suggested it might be something the Safety/Education Subcommittee could look at in more depth.

**9.2 Correspondence – Bicycle Licensing/Registration**

- Correspondence from Mr. Bruce Church was submitted.

A discussion ensued regarding the merits of licensing bicycles as per Mr. Bruce Church's correspondence.

Councillor Hendsbee agreed with the proposal and suggested a lifetime registration for bicycles for identification purposes.

Mr. Brauer noted that adding a licensing fee would pose a barrier for some cyclists and become another obstacle to increasing bicycle use.

Ms. Koblents indicated that a report was made to Council on possible bicycle licensing and noted that implementing such a fee would become a detriment to promoting cycling which was contrary to the Active Transportation Plan. She added that the cost of licensing would not cover the administrative costs of coordinating the licensing and registration.

Ms. Sim noted that some bicycle infractions, such as riding on the sidewalk, were more traffic avoidance behaviours than poor habits.

**10. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was no one wishing to speak at this time.

**11. NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting was scheduled for October 21, 2010.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:58 p.m.

Tylor McDuff  
Legislative Support