



**Minutes 1-2011
Greater Niagara Circle Route Committee**

**Regional Municipal Building
Committee Room 4
Wednesday, April 6, 2011 – 5:00 p.m.**

Present

D. Bruce Timms	- Chair; Councillor, Niagara Region
Nick Andreychuk	- Grimsby Resident
Mark Buma	- The Niagara Parks Commission
Eamon Grant	- St. Catharines Resident
John Gregoire	- Niagara Timberline Riders Motorcycle Club
Marjorie Hotte	- Upper Canada Equestrian Association
Dennis Paris	- Niagara Timberline Riders Motorcycle Club
Bill Phillips	- Councillor, City of St. Catharines
Russell Vamplew	- Upper Canada Equestrian Association
Tony Vandermaas	- Thorold Resident

Guests

Paul Humber	- Shorthills Cycling Club
David Jordan	- Niagara Freewheelers Bicycle Touring Club

Staff

Mary Lou Tanner	- Integrated Community Planning, Niagara Region
Travis Macbeth	- Integrated Community Planning, Niagara Region

Administrative Note to Begin the Meeting:

As only one Regional Councillor was in attendance at Meeting 1-2011, it was determined that the one councillor present, Councillor Timms, would function in the interim as an acting Chairperson for this meeting. The positions of Chair and Vice-Chair for this term of Council will be re-visited at the next meeting of the GNCR Committee.

1. Minutes of GNCR Committee Meeting 7-2010

Moved by: Tony Vandermaas
Seconded by: Bill Phillips

That the minutes of GNCR Committee Meeting 7-2010, from Wednesday, September 15, 2010 be approved.

CARRIED

2. Strategic Planning

Staff presented an overview of the proposed work plan for the review of Active Transportation (AT) related committees and initiatives. A copy of the presentation is attached as Appendix I.

Staff highlighted Council's direction for Committee Review in reports CORC 1-2010 and ICP 3-2011. Staff highlighted Council's direction to review the mandate, resources, structure and activities of the GNCR Committee and other AT-related committees. The Role of the Committee within the Review was emphasized, including their opportunity to act as Subject Matter Experts for the trail user survey.

An overview of Council's recommendations was also presented. This presentation reiterated that the review is to include a GNCR "user survey and economic benefit assessment", and that Council decided that until the Review is completed, the GNCR Committee is to "be convened for the specific purpose of continuing their Strategic Planning process in order to provide input to a renewed mandate for the Committee".

Regional Councillor Timms wanted to know to what extent Council's decision that the GNCR Committee is convened to "only do Strategic Planning" would impact the Committee's ability to undertake other activities. In support of pursuing additional activities, Councillor Timms presented a letter, which included a list of "left over business" from the last term of Council that he wishes the Committee be allowed to continue pursuing during the Review, in addition to new business the Committee wishes to pursue.

Staff responded that some of the items of "left over business" from the last term of Council might be considered as part of the Committee's Strategic Planning exercise, so some activities could possibly be considered as consistent with report ICP 3-2011. Staff also noted that any additional activities done aside from the Review cannot detract from the Review.

Regional Councillor Timms asked that a motion to receive the letter be moved by the GNCR Committee in order to have Council be aware of additional activities beyond the Strategic Planning activity. The letter was circulated to the GNCR Committee members, but no motion was moved.

Further GNCR Committee comments regarding the Committee Review included:

- The desire by Paul Humber, a guest from the Shorthills Cycling Club, that the renewed mandate resultant of the Committee Review include GNCR Committee involvement in more off-road trails;

- A guarantee was sought so that any donations made by the Niagara Freewheelers Bicycle Touring Club would in fact be used for future trail development relating to the Greater Niagara Circle Route. Regional Councillor Timms gave the Freewheelers assurance that it would be used accordingly;
- St. Catharines City Councillor Bill Phillips stated that the phrase “Maintaining the Integrity of the Circle Route” should be emphasized. Councillor Phillips’ concern was that if the Committee goes by the wayside, so too will the Trail be abandoned. He stated that the GNCR Committee is required to manage the Trail, rather than having Staff manage the GNCR Trail;
- Marjorie Hotte expressed disappointment that Regional Council sees a review of mandate and resources as warranted after the achievements the GNCR Committee has made over the past 15 to 20 years;
- Nick Andreychuk stated that the Committee is needed on an ongoing basis because of the potential connections to West Niagara and Hamilton/Stoney Creek. It is because of the potential connections to other trails and the potential tourist draw that makes the GNCR Committee part of economic development, and therefore the Committee should continue.
- Tony Vandermaas stated that the GNCR Committee is about more than the Circle Route Trail itself; it is about a transportation system;
- Councillor Timms concurred and reinforced that in relation to Transportation the GNCR Committee should deal with more than just the Circle Route Trail.
- Dennis Paris expressed concern that the Committee is needed to continue development of trail staging areas and replacing signage so there is common signage around the entire GNCR Trail.
- Russell Vamplew stated that the economic benefits for local peoples should be included in the economic benefit study, and that the economic benefit study should not just consider tourists from outside Niagara.
- David Jordan stated that the GNCR Committee should, in its arguments, consolidate the gains made by the Committee already, e.g. the Bike Train.

Staff then highlighted the GNCR Committee’s contributions to the Review in relation to the user survey. The Committee was asked for their perspectives as Subject Matter Experts and informed that their suggestions, such as on where and when to conduct the surveys along the Trail, would be integral to the success of the survey.

Staff were also asked how the GNCR Committee may go about the continuation of their Strategic Planning process. Staff supported the Committee’s continued Strategic Planning as a parallel to the Committee Review. The GNCR Committee recommended to ICP Committee that Dianne Coppola be contracted to facilitate their future Strategic Planning sessions through the following motion:

* * Moved by: Nick Andreychuk
Seconded by: Tony Vandermaas

That Dianne Coppola be contracted by Niagara Region to facilitate future GNCR Committee Strategic Planning sessions of the current term of Council, relating to the disposition of recommendations made in report ICP 3-2011.

CARRIED

3. Other Business

Ontario Trails Council

Announcement made for information that the Ontario Trails Council will this year be holding their annual trails conference in Niagara Falls. GNCR Members were encouraged to attend.

Timberline Riders

Timberline Riders, represented by Dennis Paris, announced for Committee's information that the Seaway Authority has told the Timberline Riders that 2010 was to be the final year their organization will be allowed to hold their annual dirt bike event along the East Side Trail. The event has been held for approximately 20 years. The Seaway has stated that they will no longer allow motorized events on their property.

GranFondo Bicycle Race

Tony Vandermaas stated for information that the GranFondo bicycle race organizers, who had made initial inquiries into holding part of their GranFondo race along the Circle Route, have decided to no longer use the Trail and have found an alternative route. Mr. Vandermaas noted that this would be one item of unfinished business from the last term of Council that could be considered closed.

New Business

Flora Plantings to Attract Honey Bees Along the Welland Canal and GNCR

Regional Councillor Timms stated that he has recently been approached about the possibility of supporting honey bee populations by attracting them to plants along the Welland Canal corridor. Regional Councillor Timms has not spoken to Regional Legal staff regarding this issue. In response to declines in bee populations, and in response to a proponent's research finding that there is an especially large number of bees found within one (1) kilometre of the Welland Canal, the proponent has approached Councillor Timms about the potential to conduct plantings of specific types of plants that attract bees. Councillor Timms was given assurances from the proposed project's proponents that the types of plants would attract honey bees but not yellow jackets or wasps or hornets or other such insects, only honey bees. Therefore there would, Councillor Timms

felt, be no conflict in land use with increasing bee populations along the Welland Canal and the adjacent tourist/recreational GNCR and East Side Trails. The proponents have found that the Seaway Authority's lease agreement along the East Side of the Canal will not allow for such plantings to occur. As such, the following motion was made by the GNCR Committee:

* * Moved by: Bill Phillips
Seconded by: Tony Vandermaas

That the Seaway Authority's lease agreement along the East Side of the Welland Canal be reviewed for the specific purpose of allowing the proponent to conduct plantings of specific plants in an effort to help attract honey bees to the Welland Canal corridor.

CARRIED

Friends of the GNCR

The GNCR Committee asked what the rules, regulations, and labour agreement issues would be if volunteers from the Friends of the Greater Niagara Circle Route were to put up signage along the East Side Trail. Regional Councillor Timms stated he would follow up on this matter with mayors of the affected lower-tier municipalities.

International Mountain Bike Association Trail Care Visit

Paul Humber shared with the Committee, for information, that the Shorthills Cycling Club had applied for, and been awarded, the International Mountain Bike Association's Trail Care visit. It will be a workshop held later in April 2011 on the praxis of "sustainable trail development" and will include a field study with sustainable trail development work to take place in Shorthills Provincial Park.

4. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

5. Next Meeting

Date to be determined.

Prepared by:

Travis Macbeth, MA, MES (Pl.)
Planner
Regional Policy Planning Division
Integrated Community Planning Department
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Overview of Proposed Work Plan for Review of Active Transportation Related Committees and Initiatives

Council Organization Review Committee

- Report CORC 1-2010
- June 24, 2010, Regional Council approved the following recommendation:

"That the Regional Clerk be authorized to further investigate the possibility of consolidating the Bicycle Committee, the Greater Niagara Circle Route Committee and the mandate of the staff Healthy Living Committee into a new Advisory Committee to be named following consultation with the parties involved."

Follow-up from CORC 1-2010

- Council approves Report ICP 3-2011, Functional Review of the Greater Niagara Circle Route Committee.
- Regional Council approval of ICP 3-2011 on February 10th (CL 2-2011) included amendments to the report's recommendations.
 - Functional Review of Mandate and Resources
 - Renewed Mandate

Council's Report Recommendations

Functional Review of the Greater Niagara Circle Route and its Committee ICP 3-2011

That Report ICP 3-2011, January 12, 2011 respecting Functional Review of the Greater Niagara Circle Route and its Committee, be approved ***as amended***;

That a functional review of the mandate and resources of the Greater Niagara Circle Route, its Committee ***and other Committees having interest in various forms of transportation***, be undertaken;

That the functional review be facilitated by an external expert administrator ***and that the scope include a user survey and economic benefit assessment of the Greater Niagara Circle Route***;

That funding for the review be drawn from the consolidated reserve funds for the Greater Niagara Circle Route initiative; and

That until the review is completed, Councillors appointed through the 2011 Committee appointment process and volunteers from the 2006-2010 Greater Niagara Circle Route Committee be convened for the specific purpose of continuing their Strategic Planning process in order to provide input to a renewed mandate for the Committee

Objectives of Functional Review

- A. Disposition of issues raised in Report ICP 3-2011 with respect to the Greater Niagara Circle Route;
- B. Identification of a governance model for active transportation, including in relation to the Greater Niagara Circle Route;
- C. Role clarity between area municipalities and Niagara Region regarding administration, operations, and management of active transportation assets and trails; and
- D. Recommendations regarding Regional Policy Plan policies arising from Objectives 'A' and 'B'.

Roles and Responsibilities

Staff

- Manage the review and external administrator.
- Staff team chaired by project sponsor Patrick Robson, MCIP, RPP, Commissioner of ICP Department.
- Commissioner Robson reporting to ICP Committee.

Roles and Responsibilities

Committee

- Pre-consultation meetings: roles, priorities and objectives of review to be discussed prior to external consultant being contracted.
- Committee members interviewed individually by external administrator.
- Advise external administrator on User Survey component
- Act as local knowledge Subject Matter Expert group
- Committee consultation at each stage of review will provide key information and ideas that will be integral to the success of review process.

Roles and Responsibilities

External Administrator

- Active Transportation Governance Best Practices.
- Interview and consult with Committees and their members.
- Deliverables:
 - 1: Background Report
 - Best Practices
 - 2: Findings and Recommendations Report
 - Potential 3rd Deliverable: If development of an RPPA is approved by Regional Council, consultant is to produce any Amendment policy and mapping, and conduct required consultation processes.



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