



**Minutes 2-2008
Greater Niagara Circle Route Committee**

**Regional Municipal Building
Committee Room 4
Wednesday, March 12, 2008 – 5:00 p.m.**

Present

D. Bruce Timms (Chair) - Regional Councillor, City of St. Catharines
Fred Neale - Councillor, City of Thorold
Peter Randall - Councillor, Town of Lincoln
Ann Marie Noyes - Councillor, Town of Fort Erie
Gary Bruno - Councillor, City of Port Colborne
John Bedard - Welland Canals Foundation
Barbara Skelton - Niagara Bruce Trail Club
Stephen Wilson - Niagara Timberline Riders Motorcycle Club

Regrets

John Durley - Councillor, Town of Pelham
Marjorie Hotte - Upper Canada Equestrian Association
John Gregoire - President of Niagara Timberline Riders
Gary Price - Niagara Timberline Riders Motorcycle Club
Dennis Paris - Niagara Timberline Riders Motorcycle Club

Guests

Brian Baty - Regional Councillor
Peter Skelton - Niagara Bruce Trail Club
Brent Van Leuvenhage - Student, Brock University
Kithio Mwanzia - St. Catharines Chamber of Commerce

Staff

Connie McCutcheon - Regional IT Web Services Administrator
Mary Rae - Regional Legal Services
George Nicholson - Regional Niagara Planning & Development Department

1. Minutes of January 30, 2008 meeting

Moved by Fred Neale
Seconded by Stephen Wilson

That the minutes of the January 30, 2008, meeting be approved as circulated.

Carried

2. Regional Niagara Bicycling Committee Strategic Plan

Regional Councillor Brian Baty, Chair of the Regional Niagara Bicycling Committee, made a PowerPoint presentation, attached as Appendix 1, regarding the Bicycling Committee's Strategic Plan and some possible implications of that. Councillor Baty asked the Committee for its reaction to his presentation.

The presentation involved the following three aspects:

- Three priorities emerging from the Strategic Plan,
- The possibility of hiring a Sustainable Transportation Coordinator to integrate all of the sustainable transportation initiatives underway at the Region, and
- The possibility of a revised organizational structure to promote the various ongoing sustainable transportation initiatives.

Councillors Baty and Timms reported that the first of the above items had been endorsed at the Planning and Public Works Committee meeting held earlier in the afternoon but that the others had been referred to staff for a report.

In discussing Councillor Baty's presentation, the following were some key points that were raised:

- The question was raised as to whether or not the Coordinator position would include marketing. The answer was that it could help to increase awareness of the various initiatives that are underway and depending on the exact job description, could involve some marketing which is presently primarily being carried out by NEDC staff,
- The question was raised as to whether one Committee would be preferable to those which presently exist. If this Committee was focused, it could integrate all of the work now being done by the others. In pursuing this aspect, it was also emphasized that the existing structure provides emphasis on different aspects and has been highly productive in accomplishing things, whereas a reorganized Committee with a broader mandate might reduce some of the volunteer enthusiasm, especially on the Bicycling Committee, where the members are highly focused on promoting that mode of transportation. Thus some members thought that a Coordinator position should coordinate the work of the various committees.

- In further consideration of the role of a possible Coordinator position, the question was raised as to how the person in that position could adjudicate between competing interests especially where funding issues were involved. Another aspect of this was that if the existing committees were Sub-Committees of a larger more-coordinated Committee, the role of a coordinator would be simplified especially in dealing with competing priorities of the existing committees.
- The point was made that, irrespective of committee structure, there needs to be a consistent emphasis on the needs of the end-user; resident or tourist, and that whatever is being done should focus on user needs if the maximum economic and health benefits of the initiatives, are to be realized.

After considerable discussion, it was:

Moved by Fred Neale
Seconded by John Bedard

That this Committee recommend to Regional Council:

That Councillor Baty's report, attached as Appendix 1, be received and circulated as part of the Minutes for consideration at the next Greater Niagara Circle Route Committee, and that the comments of this committee be forwarded to staff for consideration in the report requested by the Planning and Public Works Committee.

Carried

3. Presentation by Brock University Student

Brent Van Leuvenhage, who is a student at Brock University, accompanied by Kithio Mwanzia of the St. Catharines Chamber of Commerce, made a presentation outlining their plans for the "Brendan Ford Run For Success", a 5km or 10 km timed race on April 5, 2008 to raise funds that would help create a Brendan Ford Scholarship Program. The race would extend over a period from 7.30 am to 12 noon with runners leaving in waves every five or ten minutes. The route would be between Lock III and 5kms North of that in St. Catharines with the 10 km runners also covering the return leg. Information on the proposed event is attached as Appendix II.

The presentation was made to inform the Committee about the plans and to indicate that a permit had already been obtained from the City of St. Catharines and \$2 million of insurance has been obtained that will indemnify the Region.

Moved by Fred Neale
Seconded by Barbara Skelton

That this Committee recommend to Regional Council:
That the "Brendan Ford Run For Success" be supported and that Regional Niagara express no concern about the event having exclusive use of the affected portion of trail during the morning of April 5, 2008.

Carried

Two aspects were however noted. One is that there is a need for volunteers to assist at any road crossings to ensure safety and the organizers assured the Committee that this would be included in their plans. The other aspect is that it would be useful to have some indication of where the participants came from, how long they planned to stay in the area and how much expenditures they were considering while here. Stephen Wilson agreed to provide the organizers with a brief survey prepared by the Niagara Timberline Riders Motorcycle Club which had been used for equivalent events run by the Club.

4. Logos and Website Protection

At the previous meeting staff was requested to arrange for the Greater Niagara Circle Route logo and the words GREATER NIAGARA CIRCLE to be protected in the United States. Mary Rae from the Region's Legal Services Division attended to discuss this with the Committee and to emphasize that before these items could be registered in the U.S.: (1) the trademark must be used in the U.S.; and (2) there was a need to specify the uses to which they would be put. Also there needed to be a careful evaluation of the risk to which the Region might be exposed by not registering the marks as there was an estimated cost of about \$3,000 for each one.

The Committee repeated its concern that these items should be protected in the U.S. due to the closeness of the border. Concerns were also raised about a "Greater Niagara Circle Route" being created in the U.S., thereby drawing business away from the Niagara Region. Also the ongoing efforts to increase travel between both sides of the border – the Bi-National Region – were viewed as an important context for protecting the items. The proposed use was expected to be for promotional purposes – informational pamphlets, and items to encourage travel and tourism.

Moved by Gary Bruno
Seconded by Stephen Wilson

That this Committee recommend to Regional Council:
That arrangements be made to have the logo and words GREATER NIAGARA CIRCLE registered in the United States.

Carried

It was recognized that NEDC staff distribute Niagara Seasons and other tourism publications in the United States and that this information could be useful in support of the promotional based registration efforts.

A similar discussion occurred regarding a request through the previous Minutes to protect several names through appropriate website addresses. Connie McCutcheon reported that she is a member of the Regional Internet Advisory Team (RIAT) which has a policy that one domain should be identified and protected. Ms. McCutcheon, Regional Niagara's Website Administrator, reported that it was impossible to protect all name configurations and combinations and therefore she recommended that the additional names not be pursued. However, she proposed that the three names which have been protected should continue on the basis that they were approved before the Regional policy came into effect and she indicated that she would suggest that to RIAT.

Based on the above information the Committee agreed that the existing names were adequate and that no additional names should be protected at least at this time.

5. Promotional Initiatives

George Nicholson distributed a copy of a brochure that Betsy Foster of NEDC, in association with Planning staff, had prepared on the Greater Niagara Circle Route Trails. These have been circulated to libraries in the Region and to local municipalities around the route and a large number had been distributed at the International Bike Show in Toronto on March 7th – 9th.

George Nicholson also showed an updated Website for the Greater Niagara Circle Route prepared by Planning staff and which will be added to the Region's Website in the next few weeks.

Staff also reported that NEDC are making efforts to have some freelance articles written about the Circle Route and information, attached as Appendix III, was also distributed about the upcoming Bike Train Initiative.

The Committee asked staff to investigate the possibility of having Cogeco feature the Circle Route.

6. Possible Future Initiatives

A draft report containing some suggestions regarding improvements to the Circle Route had been distributed with the Agenda. A few additional suggestions have been received and these have been added to the previous material. The updated suggestions are attached as Appendix IV and the Committee agreed that these suggestions should be discussed at the next meeting.

Councillor John Durley of Pelham, who was unable to attend the meeting, had forwarded an email indicating that Pelham and Welland Councils are cooperating in developing a connection between the municipalities using the Steve Bauer Trail. That email was reported to the Committee and is also attached in Appendix IV.

A few brief comments were made on this item indicating that both Pelham and Lincoln had expressed interest in having connections made between their municipalities and the Greater Niagara Circle Route.

7. Adjournment and Next Meeting

The meeting adjourned at 7.00 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for April 23 in Committee Room 4.

Prepared by

George Nicholson
Associate Director, Policy/Implementation

APPENDICES

Appendix I	PowerPoint Presentation re Bicycling Committee's Strategic Plan and possible organizational implications.	Page 7
Appendix II	Info re "Brendan Ford Run for Success"	Page 15
Appendix III	Updated info re Bike Train 2008	Page 19
Appendix IV	Memo from George Nicholson re Possible Initiatives for Trail Development & Enhancement	Page 21